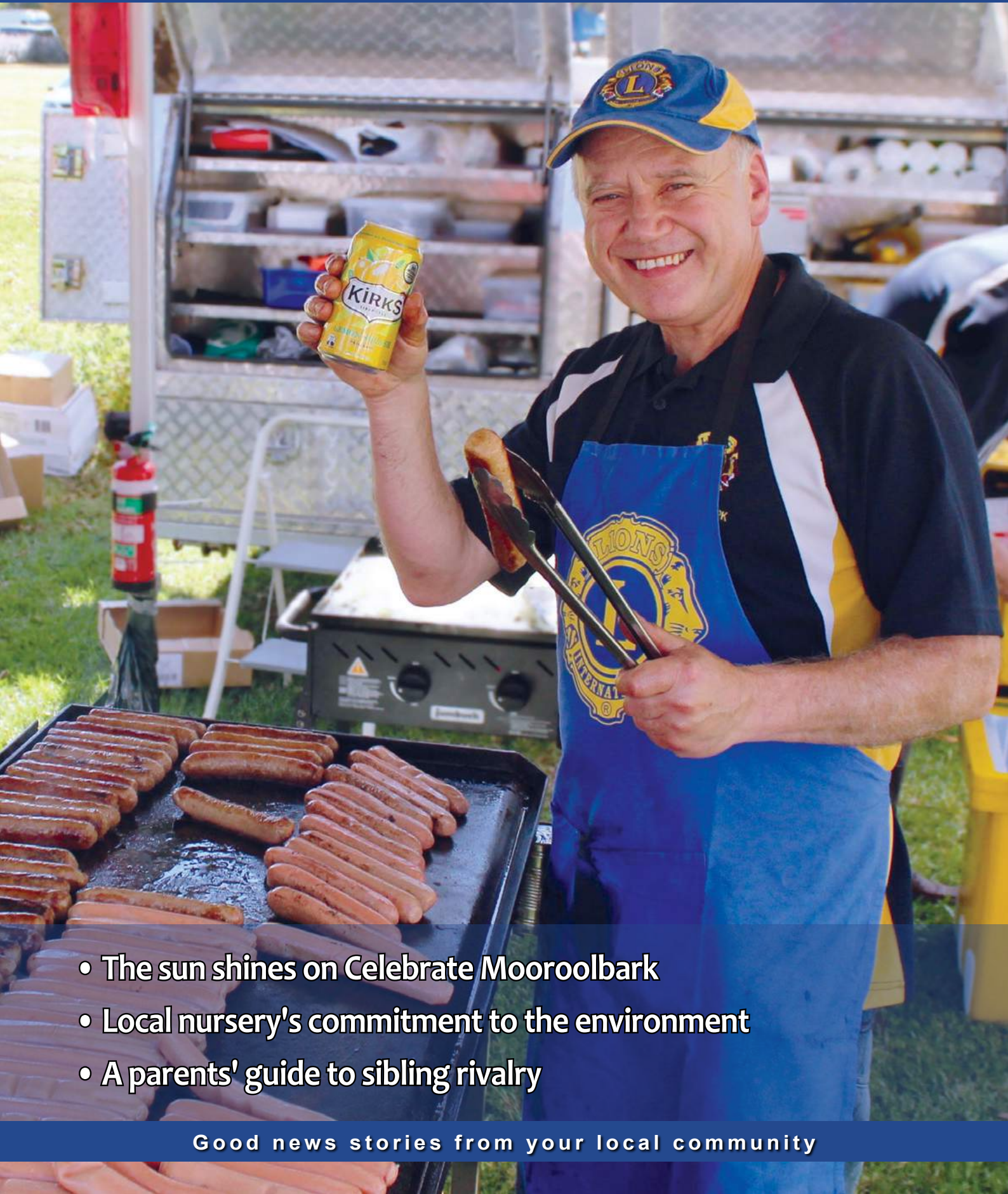


# LIVING TODAY

in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges

NO. 59 JUNE 2017



- The sun shines on Celebrate Mooroolbark
- Local nursery's commitment to the environment
- A parents' guide to sibling rivalry

Good news stories from your local community



PHOTOS SUPPLIED

# Jim's Focus on Customers

## How do you rate success?

The business name Jim's Mowing is well known in our region. Perhaps you are also aware that the business is very successful financially. Perhaps less well known is that the originator of Jim's lives and works in Mooroolbark.

Jim Penman's life presents an intriguing story: a move from Adelaide to Melbourne during childhood; early lessons in business from his neighbourhood odd-jobbing and lawn-mowing during his childhood and teens; his chequered path towards completion of a PhD in history; and his self-acknowledged stumbling towards developing a successful business.

In the introduction to his book *Every Customer a Raving Fan: The Story of Jim's Group*, Jim writes: "I am an unlikely person to build a successful business...I am lazy by nature...I am also a poor manager, not well organised, not good at sticking to systems, and with very little head for accounts."

"On top of that I am socially inept...have no capacity for small talk...but my business is one that totally depends on relating to people. I have no formal business training, have never done a business plan or written a proper mission statement. I have never been able to create or stick to budgets..."

So how did Jim come to run Australia's largest franchise system, 3500 and growing? According to Jim, "It is a messy story, full of dumb mistakes and blind alleys, financial and family crises."<sup>1</sup>

When I visited Jim at his business headquarters in Edinburgh Road, I was struck by a lack of ostentation bordering on austerity in his working environment. Jim seems to be an unassuming person who, refusing an offer of help from a staff member, hospitably made me a cuppa to enjoy during our conversation. It's plain that the trappings often associated with "success" are not important to Jim. He speaks rather about the significance he places in the joys and fulfillment of family and church relationships.

I asked Jim about his core business values and he answered enthusiastically:

"The basic, fundamental value of Jim's is service. Service first of all to franchisees and then to clients. And I believe that it's that single-minded focus more than anything else that explains the really quite surprising growth of the business. When I started off I thought I might have 100 franchises. I actually set that as a goal. Now we have closer to 3,700 and it keeps on growing."

"At every stage of the business you look at it from the point of view of what's the interest of the person you're dealing with? How can you make them into raving fans? How can you make them really want to do business with you at any level?"

Jim admits that the business doesn't always do that perfectly. In fact, he said, "We do it very imperfectly at every level—but you always try to do it better. And that's my job, more than anything else. I devote only a small amount of time to marketing, for example. It doesn't interest me, quite frankly. I'm more interested in the reasons

why people are being looked after and not looked after. What can we do to improve that?"

Improving customer service is a particular focus for Jim. "We measure complaints very carefully at Jim's, and we see the level go down year by year, as we put better systems into place," he said. "For example, during the past few months we've been getting all our clients to rate franchisees with a star rating. Within a couple of months' time, that will be made public, so that when a person comes online, they'll look at Jim's and they'll be given a selection of franchisees and they can check their star ratings. The idea of that is to give the franchisees a very powerful incentive to give great service to clients."

When I queried whether that might be perceived negatively as a kind of "big brother is watching you", Jim suggested that the measure grew out of his concern for the wellbeing of both client and franchisee:

"The interesting thing about Jim's is that in the last year we had over 134,000 unserved leads—more than 134,000 clients ring us and ask if we can service them. We've had to say no, and it's getting worse, year by year. As our franchisees' customer service improves, the volume of leads they're getting is rising all the time. What that means is that our ability to grow is not primarily dependent on our ability to find customers, but on our ability to find good quality franchisees."

For Jim, the most distressing thing about his business is having a franchisee fail. "When a franchisee buys their business

<sup>1</sup> Penman, Jim. *Every Customer a Raving Fan: The Story of Jim's Group*. Self published, 2016. ISBN 978-0646-91252-3 p.7

from us they commit their family, their life, their financial interest, everything to our care, and that's a very big responsibility," he said. "Some people ask me, 'What's your goal, what's your ultimate goal? Would you like 10,000 franchisees?' And I say, 'No, my ultimate goal is that no franchisee of mine would ever fail in their business'. We'll never achieve that, obviously, but that's what we're aiming at."

A person who pays franchise fees is considered by Jim to be his customer. "I'm not his boss. He doesn't work for me. I work for him. I'm very protective of my franchisees but I'm also very tough with them. We work very hard to ensure that customers have a good experience. All throughout my business I teach that you do the right thing not for the sake of money primarily, but for the sake of the people you're dealing with. Throughout my business career whenever I've decided to put the interest of the person ahead of my own, it's always come out to be a fantastic business decision."

"All of us need to develop a deeply ingrained characteristic of serving the other person," Jim continued. "Dealing honestly and fairly and being true to your word are all part of this."

"I think, too, that humility is one of the most underrated virtues in business and when I see people fail, it's not usually because they're stupid, or because they haven't had enough education or are not strong enough. It's because they won't listen—their attitude is 'I'm right, you're wrong!' As a leader, I always have to be willing to listen. Even the newest franchisee may point out something where we can improve. It means, too, that where you're wrong, you apologise."

Jim's franchisees are each serviced by regional franchisors who help to foster and develop a culture of service through the organisation. These franchisors are experienced mentors who have learned the business from the inside out and who regularly provide advice and encouragement to their group of regional franchisees. Servicing the franchisees through regular contact, the most effective franchisors are those who phone their franchisees weekly for a brief chat in addition to their regular six-weekly meetings.

Jim has recently developed Jim's TradeNet, which his website describes as "a purpose-built system enabling members (businesses) to trade for products and services without the use of cash."

"Each member has the opportunity to purchase needed products and services from other members using a trade currency called Trade Dollars that normally would have been paid out of the profits of their cash-paying customers. A Trade Dollar has the same spending value in our system to that of a cash dollar—that's our guarantee."<sup>2</sup>

Although the business is in its infancy, Jim is excited about its long-term prospects, its steady growth and the potential benefits it offers to member businesses.

But there's another side to Jim. Interestingly, in his writings he discounts the notion that the size of his operation designates success. Rather, his key measures for business success are related to customer service and franchisee satisfaction.

Jim explained that material success does not mean much to him. "I drive a ten-year-old Mitsubishi and wear clothes until they develop holes or someone throws them

out. I clean my own chook pen, make the bed and take turns with the washing up. This is not the 'lifestyles of the rich and famous.'"

And speaking of his great passion—his theory of biohistory and related academic research, which he sponsors very generously—Jim continued:

"A greater success is that by 2007 my finances had improved enough to follow up the implications of my PhD thesis. Though completed in the early '80s my theory predicted that our civilisation was heading for decline. Following the news in the years since then, the situation had become very much worse ... If our civilisation was to have any hope, some serious biological research was needed into areas that no-one was currently looking at. This research also had potential for improving the treatment of mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, and addictive behaviour. That had always been my key motivation for building Jim's group."<sup>2</sup>

Jim also writes about a different kind of success, experienced within the richness of his relationship with his wife Li: "God grants a man no greater blessing than a loving and supportive wife."<sup>3</sup>

"Li is my closest friend, the mother of our four beautiful children, my partner in business and mission and faith. Not that she has an easy life. Though I love her dearly and would do almost anything to make her happy, I am still an intense, driven person who is often unaware of the needs of those around me. She tells her friends that 'Jim has more faults than the stars in the sky, and his good points are few, like the sun. But when the sun comes out, you do not see the stars.' And that, I think, is success."<sup>4</sup>

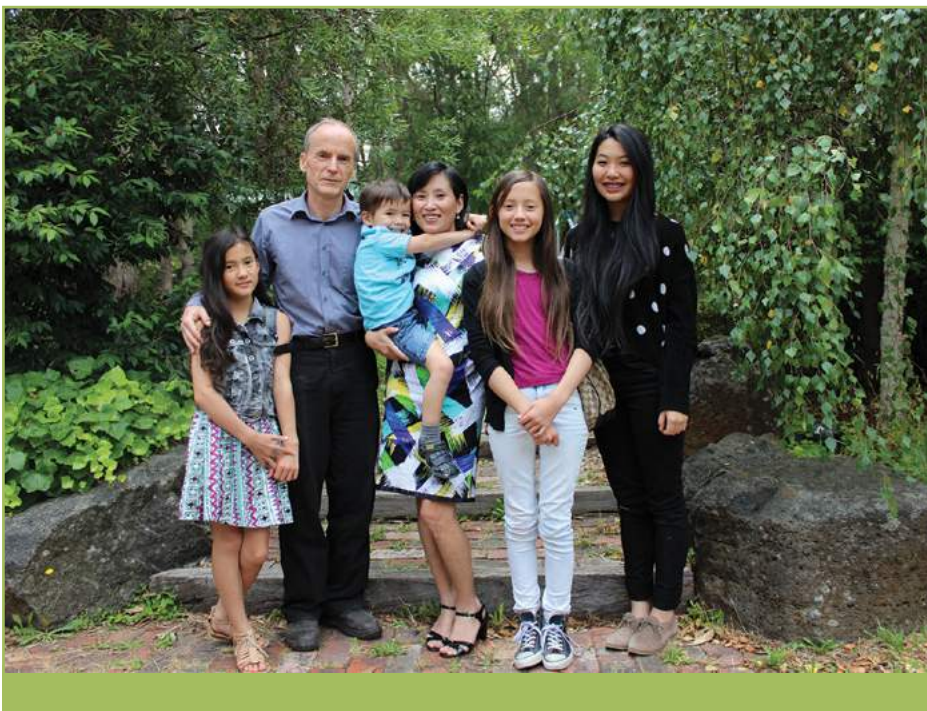


PHOTO: JASMINE PENMAN



Randall Bouchier

<sup>2</sup> More information on Jim's research can be found at [biohistory.org/](http://biohistory.org/)

<sup>3</sup> Penman, Jim. *Biohistory: Decline and Fall of the West*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015, Acknowledgements.

<sup>4</sup> Penman, *Every Customer a Raving Fan* pp. 175-6, 178

# celebrate mooroolbark Inc.

## What a celebration—what a festival!

With better weather this year, the festival was once more the event that we know and love. The crowds were back up to normal levels and the festival was bigger and better than ever. We stretched right across the oval, and it is now becoming hard to see at first glance all that the festival has to offer.

The celebrations began on Friday night with Red Earth Unearthed. There was a full program—including a magician—and a wide variety of talent was "unearthed". The following day began with a colourful street parade. Many participants got into the spirit, picking up on our theme, "It's easy to be green". The committee worked hard to reduce the festival's carbon footprint and is committed to making the festival not only family friendly, but environmentally responsible.

This year there were more stalls and community groups providing free or low-cost activities, making this a wonderful family outing. There were a few new faces in the market place, as well as many who have supported us over past years. The day is a great one for catching up with old friends and making new ones.

This year we added the Active Living Hub and sustainable living talks, and we have plans to continue to expand the festival in 2018.

There was plenty of entertainment across the day. As well as the community stage there was a new feature: Youth Zone. New committee members Alex and Brad and team found some amazing youth acts to put on a show running throughout the day.

Already we have plans to make the festival bigger and better in 2018. This is where you come in—we need more volunteers to get involved and we are especially looking for great ideas to expand the options on the day.

Our thanks go to many members of our community who contributed to the success of the weekend, especially the hard-working Celebrate Mooroolbark Committee. We thank also the community centre staff, the many stall holders and volunteers who all worked together to make it an event to remember and to all who supported the event by coming along on the day. We extend special thanks to the Yarra Ranges Council and our other generous sponsors who made the day possible. And thank you, Mooroolbark, for your support.

Planning for 2018 is under way, so mark 23 and 24 March on your calendar today. We invite you to get involved—perhaps as a new sponsor, or maybe as a member of the event committee or one of our subgroups. Look at some of the things we do on our Facebook page, or contact us on [admin@celebratemooroolbark.com](mailto:admin@celebratemooroolbark.com).

Cover: Local favourite "Rocky the Cobbler" takes his usual place at the Mooroolbark Lions' food stall.



PHOTO: RUDA PHOTOGRAPHY / RUPERT LANG

Andrew Lang  
Celebrate Mooroolbark Inc.



PHOTO: BARBARA ALSTIN



PHOTO: RANDALL BOURCHIER

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The significant contributions of the following groups were also greatly appreciated: Commercial King Lilydale, FReeZa, Goodlife Mooroolbark, GympaROO Mooroolbark, James Merlino MP, Kilsyth Centenary Pool, Lilydale Rotary, local MPs Tony Smith, Christine Fyffe & David Hodgett, Mooroolbark Men's Shed, Mooroolbark Traders & Community Group, VP Music, Wot A Kebab Mooroolbark.



## A Bond for Life

**Kate Chivers**

Kate is a registered psychologist who works with children and families.

Many of us have been touched by the relationship between Australian actor Samuel Johnson and his sister Connie, who is battling terminal cancer. The award-winning actor recently put his acting career aside to join his sister in her quest to raise \$10 million for cancer research on behalf of the Love Your Sister campaign.

The tangible devotion between Samuel and Connie can inspire us as parents to think about the quality of the relationship between our own children. The sibling relationship can potentially be the most enduring of all relationships. There can be times, however, when squabbles between siblings are so frequent that family life becomes unpleasant. Caught in the crossfire, parents may feel frustrated by arguments over what seem to be the smallest reasons.

Conflict between siblings is inevitable, normal and functional. Through conflict, children learn about another person's point of view and how to hold and defend opinions they believe in. They also hone important social skills such as cooperation, negotiation and tolerance.

Helping your children work through these issues can strengthen their love for each other and help develop valuable life skills. The following strategies can help us to respond positively to disagreement between our children:

- **Step back.** First, take some time to observe what is happening. When there is conflict, consider: What was it really about? When and where did it occur? What happened before and after? Take note also when your children treat each other well, for example if they have played a game together or happily shared the bathroom. Try to observe for at least a week, to obtain a clearer picture of what is happening.

- **Look for hotspots.** Based on your observations, consider times of the day, places or situations where your children are

more likely to start fighting. For example, children might be more likely to squabble on car trips or when brushing their teeth. What could be changed so that conflict is less likely to occur? There may be scenarios that occur repeatedly, such as fighting over certain toys or doing chores. These situations may call for some special ground rules—for example, a roster may help to ensure that children have equal responsibility for chores. Involve your children in the discussions so that they feel more committed to the outcome and learn valuable problem-solving skills.

- **Acknowledge feelings.** In the rush to quieten our children or stop aggression, we may overlook the intense feelings that our children are experiencing. What seems petty to us may be extremely important to them. Try to imagine how you might feel in a similar, comparable adult situation. If your child finds it hard to share, think about how you might feel sharing something that is equally precious to you (your new car?) Encourage children to share their feelings, and take time to acknowledge them.

- **Teach skills for getting along.** Teach children how to divide things fairly, to listen to each other, to take turns and work together. Use family activities that promote cooperation—such as board games or caring for pets—as chances to build skills for getting along. Think about an incentive or reward that children can work towards to build a particular skill or to establish a habit. A reward that emphasises togetherness is ideal, as this is what you are aiming for.

- **Allow them to work it out for themselves.** Don't intervene in minor squabbles that are not aggressive; give your children the opportunity to work it out for themselves. Praise them if they resolve it. If the squabble escalates, separate them until they are calm, then provide each child an opportunity to talk about the problem and how they feel. Help them to come up with a range of alternate

solutions, then decide on a way forward that they all agree on.

- **Set an example.** Think about how you handle times of conflict or strong emotion. Are you able to calm yourself when upset? Children observe and mimic what they see adults do in these difficult situations. You may notice that your children deal with conflict in the way you or other family members do. If necessary, get some support for yourself, perhaps through counselling, so that your handling of conflict will have a positive effect on your children.

- **Build positive feelings.** Children who fight frequently may feel that they just can't get along with their siblings, leading to feelings of discouragement. You may need to focus on developing feelings of goodwill between them. Reminisce about times when they have enjoyed each other's company. Display photos of them together and let them know how much you enjoy seeing them get along. Highlight times when they are able to resolve their issues and let them know how proud you are. Be quick to notice and praise when your children play together well, speak kindly to each other or work together in a cooperative way, even if it is brief.

Sibling conflict is an inevitable part of family life. However, if managed well, it often declines as children grow and mature. Our care and support as children navigate this stage of life can help them to develop valuable lifelong skills for relating, and bring greater levels of peace and harmony to the whole family.

### Further reading:

*Sibling Rivalry: Your Child.* University of Michigan Health System. [med.umich.edu](http://med.umich.edu)

*Getting on with Others: How to Teach Your Child Essential Social Skills* by John Cooper

*Siblings Without Rivalry: How to Help Your Children Live Together so You Can Live Too*, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

*Why Children and Siblings Fight.* [raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au)



Taking part in a boxing class is a great way to exercise and reduce stress

# Eastern Lifestyle Centre

Shop 5, The Terrace Shopping Mall 66 -74 Brice Avenue, Mooroolbark

Barbara Austin

In 2012 Phil Haydon opened the first office of what was then known as Level Ten Nutrition. Located on the corner of Brice Avenue and Manchester Road, the company also ran an outdoor exercise group, FitClub, which was held on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the Red Earth Community Park.

Four years later, the company is now called Eastern Lifestyle Centre and has grown so much that it has moved to The Terrace shopping mall, where they have two large rooms. One of the rooms is used for children, who are looked after by a member of the group while mum or dad work out in the other room. The

presidents of the centre are Minh and Sokheng Tang.

Not only has the number of customers increased but so has the range of classes, which provide something for all ages and levels of health. The range now includes yoga, dancing, boxing, Mums and Bubs, meditation, Zumba and outdoor workout. The classes are \$6 pay-as-you-go and are led by qualified personal trainers and specialists in yoga, dancing and metabolic training. These trainers and specialists—most of whom have full-time jobs elsewhere—volunteer their services to help those in the community who want to get fit but can't afford to go to the gym.

Education about having a balanced

diet and providing advice on nutritional support is part of the program, and ELC's partnership with Herbalife Nutrition is what brings it all together. It is not a requirement for customers to use Herbalife, but ELC emphasises that staying healthy involves providing a proper source of fuel to the body.

One of the core values of the business is having a community focus. Support for others and team spirit are encouraged, creating a sense of belonging and accountability.

For more details about ELC contact Minh on 0432 453 923 or email [wellness.mt@outlook.com.au](mailto:wellness.mt@outlook.com.au)

## • Kilsyth Scottish Dance Club

Scottish Country Dancing (SCD) is the ballroom or social dancing of Scotland that has been popular in Scotland for centuries, and is now practised throughout the world by people of all races and nationalities.

SCD is suitable for men, women and children of all ages. It is usually done in teams—typically of three, four, or five couples arranged either in two lines (men facing ladies, or ladies substituting for men) or in a square, working together to dance a sequence of formations. The dance is repeated enough times to bring all couples back to their starting positions. Scottish Country Dancing is mainly danced socially, for pure pleasure, and is different from Highland dancing which involves solo dances being performed for competition or display.

The Kilsyth Scottish Country Dancing Group (KSCDG) has classes every Monday (except public holidays) from 8 pm to 10 pm, from the beginning of March to the end of November at St Margaret's Uniting Church in Hull Road, Mooroolbark. You don't need to bring a partner to enjoy dancing with us at our classes or social events

Mrs Bobbie Malone and her husband Alan began the group in 1976. When Bobbie moved to Bendigo in 1983, Rina Drennan took over the teaching of the class and she is still involved today.

Last September we celebrated 40 years of

dancing and friendship with a social held at the Ringwood Community Centre. Our special guest was Helen Mackay, now in her 90s, who was an original member of the Kilsyth Group. Helen was accompanied on the night by her daughter and her son and his wife. On the social program there were two dances devised by our current class teacher Margaret Johnstone. Bobbie Malone was honoured in *A Tribute to Bobbie Malone*, and there was also a reel named after Rina Drennan as a tribute to her many years of involvement with the Kilsyth group, as teacher and treasurer.

Class fees are \$5 per week for members (\$15 annual membership), \$6 for non-members. All that is needed to dance are soft-soled flat shoes, a desire for fun, a sense of humour and the ability to listen and follow instructions—and to know that sometimes it is 'the other left' that is intended, as we often muddle up left and right hands, legs or turns!

Scottish Country Dancing is great fun—a form of both mental and physical fitness

as well as being a very social activity. On Saturday 27 May the group held a ceilidh (a fun dance night) and we are looking forward to our 41st anniversary social on Saturday 2 September at St Margaret's Uniting Church.

If you are interested in giving Scottish Country Dancing a try, we will make you most welcome!

Joy Emmett

Enquiries: please contact Joy on 9725 9074, by email: [joyemmett@hotmail.com](mailto:joyemmett@hotmail.com), or simply come to St Margaret's on a Monday night. There is also more information available at the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society website: [rscdsmelbourne.org.au](http://rscdsmelbourne.org.au).



PHOTO: JOY EMMETT

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# A Yarra Ranges Winter



Mooroolbark's Hookey Park and Red Earth Community Park both offer something for all the family, with playgrounds, barbecue equipment, and lawn areas.

The Elizabeth Bridge Reserve in Durham Road, Kilsyth, is set on acres of beautiful native bushland, and several duck families have made their home near the small lakes throughout the reserve.

*Winter is not a season, it's a celebration— Anamika Mishra*

Exploring bushland reserves and nature trails in the crisp, invigorating wintertime air is one of the enduring joys of a Melbourne winter. Living in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, Yarra Ranges residents are surrounded by an abundance of playgrounds, national parks, and native gardens.

Yarra Ranges Shire is known for the beauty of its surrounds, from the famous 1000-step Kokoda Walk of One Tree Hill to the spectacular rainforests of Olinda and Sherbrooke. Beneath the towering mountain ash, locals and visitors take pleasure in exploring hiking tracks through the dense and ferny rainforest, or picnicking to the ringing echoes of lyrebirds and bellbirds.

At the base of the mountains, the suburbs boast scenic biking trails, abundant park gardens, and colourful adventure playgrounds with activities for the whole family.

For those who enjoy an active lifestyle, there are sports grounds,

skate parks, and recreation areas with netball courts, BMX facilities and tennis courts. Lillydale Lake opened its upgraded playspace in April, catering for those of all ages and abilities. The new space includes water play zones, a double flying fox, and a splash pad area. In Yarra Glen, the adventure playground is an award-winning fully landscaped playground with a range of activities to suit both adults and children. Nature lovers will enjoy Birdsland Reserve in Belgrave South, which is home to a community nursery and more than 130 types of native birds, including the wedge-tailed eagle and the powerful owl.

Winter is the perfect time to throw on a couple of extra layers and head outdoors to see all that our shire has to offer. To find out more about parks and playgrounds close to you, check out [yarraranges.vic.gov.au](http://yarraranges.vic.gov.au) or [visitvictoria.com](http://visitvictoria.com).

Janet Van Dijk

## The Power of Positivity

If thinking positively were a cure for Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Mark Wilson of Mooroolbark would have been healed by now. Since being diagnosed with the debilitating disease in August 2014, Mark has continued to lead a full and active life. He goes to the gym every day and plays cricket at Norwood Cricket Club, where he is club president. He is also lead singer of local rock band The Sociables and works full time. In addition to that, Mark is now working with MS Victoria to raise awareness and provide support to others who suffer from the same illness by starting up his own support group.

Mark's support group for men meets in Ringwood at the Norwood Sporting Club. Mark was able to obtain the meeting venue at no cost, and it fitted the atmosphere that he wanted to achieve. As a rule, men don't easily talk about what they are feeling or experiencing in terms of health and life in general, so Ringwood MS Men's Peer Support Group is aiming to help change that. The group is for men who have MS, and also for those who would like to learn how to help their partners who have the disease.

When he was diagnosed with MS, Mark thought life as he knew it was over. He became despondent, but his family doctor was able to assure him that he would be fine.

"I am a person who likes to be challenged in everything I do. I just see this now as another challenge in life—but it is one challenge that won't defeat me," said Mark. It is this strength that he wants to instil in other sufferers. "I really want to help other men who are going through this and let them know that they're not alone. It's a great opportunity for them to talk about their medication and other things that may be on their mind. But there are others too who come along, sit back and observe without saying anything."

When asked how MS has affected him, Mark said, "I am lucky. I only have relapsing or remitting MS so I have had no more attacks after my initial two in August 2014. I do have a large issue with heat

down my left side, which feels like 35 degrees constantly, and fatigue is another problem that I deal with at times."

Mark has the support of his wife, who has had her own health issues since 2014. Together, they encourage one another and keep each other strong.

The Ringwood MS Men's Support Group meets on first Monday of each month from 7-9 pm at Norwood Sporting Club, Mullum Mullum Road, Ringwood. There is no charge to attend the meetings.

Barbara Austin

For more information or to register, call 1800 042 138 or visit [www.ms.org.au](http://www.ms.org.au)



Mark Wilson is lead singer for local band The Sociables



# Dollars and Sense

## Money Management for Teenagers

What is 'cool'? The answer to this question is highly subjective and most teenagers' definition of cool would be poles apart from that of their parents. When it comes to material possessions, for many teenagers the notion of what's cool is closely aligned with the label or brand of an item, along with the high price tag. Quality often seems less important than how well the brand is recognised or regarded by other people.

We live in a world that constantly thrusts all kinds of ideas about money at us. No matter what age we are, there are strong messages being peddled through the media about what we should buy, how much to spend and the difference this purchase will make to our lives. Product marketers are getting better at tuning in to what appeals to each generation and demographic. Even if we recognise these messages and try to tune out, we are still bombarded, and this can't help but influence how we purchase.

Teens are highly susceptible to these messages from the media. The persuasive quest for more, for bigger,

better, newer, shinier and faster, particularly affects young people, who are still developing their identity in the world and want to fit in with peers. While many parents don't want their kids looking unfashionable or missing out, they also balk at paying an additional \$50 for essentially the same pair of shorts—probably made in the same place as the cheaper ones, but with a different brand name stuck on the outside for all to see and judge accordingly.

The good news is that there are ways you can help your teens develop some financial skills without having to negotiate with them about every purchase.

Here's an idea: shift the responsibility for purchases to your teenagers. Firstly, work out what you are currently spending on your teen. Don't include school expenses or necessary core living costs (like Vegemite!) but do include items such as gifts for friends, party or casual clothes, entry fees, treats and anything else your teens regularly ask you to pay for. Try to



factor in that long list of stuff that seems extremely important to teenagers (but less important to you) and work out what is a reasonable and appropriate amount for each item.

Let's say you spend \$100 a month on your teen (the figure will vary from family to family; determine an amount that is realistic and workable for your teenager). Consider opening a bank account in each teenager's name and depositing that \$100 into the account at the start of each month. It's money that you were going to spend anyway—



perhaps begrudgingly because the purchase didn't feel warranted to you, or seemed poor value for money.

Explain to your teens that this money is for them to spend, and make it clear exactly what types of things are to be purchased from this amount. While you will continue to pay for the necessary items relating to school and daily living, they will now be responsible for all other items that are part of their discretionary world.

Of course, there are probably going to be some mistakes. They are going to misjudge and sometimes do something unexpected. That's OK. Work through it with them and determine what better choices could have been made. It's only one month at risk here, and the rewards can outpace the risk in no time. Hopefully, they will resist the desire to blow it all at once on some super cool shorts, a trendy top, or (dare I say it?) shoes!

Eventually, after a number of poor judgements, teenagers will begin to realise that a moment of exuberance means three hard weeks to follow, when there is no money left and they need to go without. They will learn to carefully consider what their money will be used for and how to get maximum value from their monthly amount. They will become more aware of cost and value for money. They may need to be creative so that their money will stretch. They will need to determine their priorities and ensure that their budget goes towards the things that are important.

I suggest you will be pleasantly surprised and maybe even admire the tactics your teenagers will employ to use their money wisely. It's their money now, not yours—their mistakes, rewards, temptations and choices. They can still buy brand-name clothes, but they may have to wait a bit and will perhaps enjoy (and look after) those special items all the more. They are learning to be responsible and understanding that time and money can work in their favour if they are sensible.

This method won't cost you more than you were previously spending, but you will be giving your teenagers the opportunity to learn some financial management skills that will last a lifetime. Learning to make a limited amount of money last will help teach



them how to save and even allow hopes and realistic dreams to come true for them.

Maybe you can't do this with your teens right now, but you could work towards a time when you think they might be more ready for the responsibility. One way to ease into it is to start with a smaller amount and an equivalent number of choices, for example an allowance for buying friends' birthday presents. As your kids demonstrate wisdom, you can increase their allowance according to how wisely they use the money. You could even add an extra amount and suggest they send some of their money to a charity of their choice.

As the parent, you are entitled to set some limitations about the choices that are made. You could require that every receipt is kept and that a notebook or spreadsheet is maintained, listing the money in and out with a running balance and itemised purchases. You might have some clothing items that are 'no go' or some brands that you would particularly like them to avoid for ethical reasons. Whatever parameters you put in place, discuss them clearly with your teen and outline what will happen if these guidelines are breached—what will

the consequence be? Make sure that you follow through with set consequences so that rules are clear. Parameters may need to be adjusted now and then as new situations arise.

I wish you good fortune in helping your teens learn wise money habits, as they begin to understand the true value of money and its place within their lives and relationships.



Steve Steel



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## Finishing the Race



PHOTO: PARLIAMENT SPEAKERS LIMITED, CC BY-SA 3.0

Derek Redmond in 2007

One of the great moments in Olympic history belongs to a British sprinter named Derek Redmond. Despite smashing national records and winning gold medals in the World Championships and Commonwealth Games, Derek faced setback after setback due to injury. In the 1988 Olympics, he was even forced to withdraw just ten minutes before his race with an injured Achilles tendon.

So when he stepped onto the track for the 400 metres in Barcelona in 1992, he did so with just one goal: he had to win a medal. At first, it seemed like that's exactly what was going to happen. But halfway to the finish line, the unthinkable happened. His hamstring snapped, and Derek fell to the ground in pain.

As he watched the other runners flash past him, he realised his dream was shattered. But still, he was determined to finish his race. So, he waved away the doctors and officials and began to hobble toward the finish line alone. It was then his father, Jim Redmond, joined him and gave him the support he needed to finish the race.

The Apostle Paul knew a thing or two about finishing races. As he neared the end of his life, he told his beloved friend Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith". Through incredible setbacks—shipwrecks, imprisonment, public beatings—Paul persevered in his God-given life mission.

But like Derek Redmond, he didn't finish his race alone. Later in the same chapter, Paul tells Timothy: "But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed...."

When we face setbacks in our own race of life, we should never forget that we do not run alone. Christ runs *with* us, toward a finish line that carries a victory far greater than any we could ever dream of achieving on our own: the perfect, eternal completion of God's work in us, and in the world.

And just like Jim Redmond, all along the way he supports, encourages, and cheers us on with the pride and love of a father, as we fight on to finish well.

**Joseph Tkach**  
Speaking of Life

## A Time for Food and Friendship

If you pass by the Gifford Village Community Centre in Croydon North at lunchtime on a Tuesday, you are likely to find it filled with delicious food and good conversation. The 'Food and Friendship' program, run by Uniting Care Harrison, has been offering free weekly meals to the local community for the past two years.

"We had our first meal as a Christmas lunch in 2014," said Jane Davoren, Community Engagement Officer at Uniting Care Harrison. "We've offered our free meal every Tuesday since then, other than public holidays. We've just served our 1500th meal!"

Harrison Uniting Care staff and volunteers work as a team to provide a hot, healthy meal and friendly company every Tuesday. The lunch is open to all—anyone is welcome to attend. The doors open at 11:30 am for a "pre-lunch cuppa and conversation", followed by a two-course meal. Once a month, a family-friendly movie is also screened after lunch.

When the Gifford Village Community Centre was completed in 2014, the Uniting Care Harrison team hoped to utilise the space in a way that served the community and brought people together. They soon found a gap in daytime meal services. "At the time, there weren't really any free meal services offered during the day in the Croydon area," explained Jane Davoren. "We thought it might suit people who would like a meal and conversation to break up their day, and also people who may not want to catch public transport at night to access free dinner services."

"People come from all around and some pop in every week. We have people who are socially isolated and come along for the company; people who might need a healthy meal; we have families, mums with kids—all are welcome," said Jane. The staff and volunteers also enjoy the conversation and connection with



Val, Barbara and Marlene help out at the Gifford Village meal service

those who attend. "We like to find out what's happening in their lives and catch up with them each week."

Jane would like to see more people come to the weekly meal. "This is a free service and we offer great meals and a sense of community for anyone who would like to come along. We're heading towards our 2000th meal by the end of this year."

Of course, they'll be celebrating the occasion with cake and a meal together!

**Carissa Sianidis**

*The 'Food & Friendship' program invites you to attend the free weekly meal provided every Tuesday, except public holidays. Lunch is served at noon, at the Gifford Village Community Centre at 387-389 Maroondah Highway, Croydon North. Enquiries: Jane Davoren, UnitingCare Harrison. Phone: 9871 8700.*

## From Mooroolbark to Broome

When Baptist pastor Darrell McKerlie and his wife Pam were invited to pastor a church in one of the most remote areas of Australia, they had no idea that their experiences in the far north of Western Australia would lead to Darrell writing a book about their adventures!

In 2010 Reverend Darrell McKerlie concluded 18 years as senior pastor of Mooroolbark Baptist Church. Retirement was looming after almost forty years of pastoral ministry, so when Darrell and Pam received a call to pastor the Broome Baptist church, they decided to go for two years—but ended up staying five.

Acts 8 tells how God called Philip out of his comfort zone to a lonely place so he could meet the Ethiopian eunuch, with amazing results. In reflecting on their move to Broome, Darrell says he can see some similarities between their call to Broome and Philip's call.

Broome is the furthest distance you can travel in Australia by bitumen from Melbourne. It is also one of most remote places in Australia, with the closest two towns being 600 kilometres one way and 220 kilometres the other way. The other two defining features are the Indian Ocean to the west and the Great Sandy Desert to the east. The permanent population of nearly 15,000 people expands during the winter months of the southern

states as around 50,000 people follow the sun, making Broome a mecca for tourists. All this makes for a very different and exciting life as a pastor in Broome.

Broome is a very outdoors kind of place, so it is not surprising Darrell officiated at weddings, funerals and baptisms in unusual locations. One wedding was conducted on a pearling lugger cruising up and down Cable Beach, while others happened on beaches and at various resorts. Baptisms took place in the ocean, on boat ramps and in various backyard pools; even funerals were conducted on the beach and in front yards. Not one of these significant life events was held indoors.

In addition to pastoring the Broome Baptist Church, Darrell was given the unexpected opportunity to help many asylum seekers. Darrell discovered that many of the 'boat people' who have reached our shores in recent times were so keen to learn about Christianity that they wanted a regular Bible study. Many of these refugees are now attending churches scattered throughout Australia.

Darrell says his time in Broome was "like the icing on the cake" after forty-five years of pastoral ministry. It has given



Darrell and Pam McKerlie enjoying the outdoor lifestyle at Cable Beach

him the inspiration to compile a pictorial autobiography. Many of the special moments from his life, especially from the time he and Pam spent in Broome, are captured in photos throughout the book, *Walking on Water: Following Jesus Through Fear and Faith*, which retails for \$27. Copies can also be obtained directly from Darrell for \$20 (plus \$6 postage, if required) by phoning 0409 969 845.

Darrell and Pam McKerlie have returned to Melbourne, but have not yet settled into the relaxed retirement lifestyle that might have been expected. Instead, Darrell has accepted a call to pastor the Wandin Baptist Church. Like Broome, the rural area of Wandin in the foothills of the Dandenongs is rich in history and beauty, and will no doubt provide the McKerlies with many more memories and pictorial souvenirs.

## Anzac Day Service

On Tuesday 25 April, despite extremely cold and wet weather, a crowd estimated to be close to 500 people braved the challenging conditions to participate in the annual Anzac Day memorial service at Hookey Park.

The service was led by Chris Clifton, Honorary Chaplain to the Lilydale RSL, with students from local secondary colleges contributing to various parts of the program. Liela Peterson, Yarra Hills Secondary College school captain, presented a very moving *Anzac Day Perspective* on behalf of the younger people in our community. This was followed by a heart-felt Anzac Day address presented by Kiersten Cooper, who has had a long service history with the Australian Army.

The laying of wreaths by many individuals and representatives of a wide range of local groups was followed by the reading of *The Ode to the Fallen* by Sergeant Lee Nichols of the Mooroolbark Police. The Melbourne Male Choir under the leadership of musical director Lucas de Jong and the Croydon Brass bands provided the excellent musical accompaniment that was a strong feature of the service.

The local community is indebted to the Lions Club of Mooroolbark for their ongoing facilitation of this important and meaningful community event.

Doug Lewis



PHOTOS: DOUG LEWIS

## FREE FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

This is a joint community service extended to families by Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship & Mooroolbark Community Centre

**5 July 2017**

**7:30 pm, Mooroolbark Community Centre**

Free ice-cream, tea & coffee available

**To reserve your tickets phone 1300 368 333**

**or book online at [www.culturetracks.info](http://www.culturetracks.info)**

**Bookings commence from 21 June 2017 \***

\* If you have not made a booking, please come anyway, as uncollected tickets may be reissued at 7:15 pm.



An adventurous teenager sails out on a daring mission to save her people. During her journey, Moana meets the once-mighty demigod Maui, who guides her in her quest to become a master way-finder. Together they sail across the open ocean on an action-packed voyage, encountering enormous monsters and impossible odds. Along the way, Moana fulfills the ancient quest of her ancestors and discovers the one thing she always sought: her own identity.

113 minutes – Rated PG

# Candlebark



## Helping People Help the Environment

■ Randall Bouchier

You may have noticed the Candlebark Community Nursery as you've driven past its gate in Hull Road. Perhaps you've vaguely thought about popping in for a look. I'd encourage you to do so! It's worth a visit—you'll be encouraged by this thriving community enterprise.

Established in 1994, Candlebark is a not-for-profit organisation which is self-supporting and aims to help local people improve the natural environment.

What I enjoyed most about my visit was discovering that Candlebark is much more than a nursery. Yes, the nursery is committed to the sorts of things nurseries do. Plants are sold—but with a difference. Part-time managers Carolyn (administration) and Claire (propagation) explained, "We believe that the service we offer here is really valuable. The indigenous plants we grow not only provide beautiful plants for our gardens, but because they are indigenous they support and help maintain our environment and biodiversity."

Why local indigenous plants? For starters, they're adapted to our local environment and are therefore easy to establish and maintain in local conditions. They're important, too, in providing food and shelter for indigenous birds and insects, some of which would not survive otherwise. I can vouch for this—having developed a largely native garden a decade or so ago, I have been delighted by the number of native birds such as honeyeaters, wattle birds, silver eyes and parrots that visit. In addition, we decided years ago not to water our native plants and we found that they survive (with occasional exceptions) even through extended weeks of dryness and heat. There's always something flowering, too, providing beauty for the eye!

Carolyn described an extension of Candlebark's concern for our regional environment: "Whilst a lot of the plants we have here are plentiful and easy to grow, one of the important things we do is to locate and propagate endangered species such as the dwarf geebung and several other species of banksia, pomaderris and grasses. One of our propagation managers, Jamin, has this as his main focus."

If you're interested in the nursery's commitment to collecting, notating and storing locally sourced

seeds, you might like to join one of the regular seed-cleaning evenings. Seed cleaning is essential, as some seeds need to have coverings of various kinds removed to help prevent degradation. In addition, the nursery is careful to catalogue provenance details such as the area seeds are collected from, and the date of collection. Such detail is important because plants grown from seed collected from Mt Evelyn, for instance, are particularly suited to replanting in the Mt Evelyn environment. Frequently, too, the same species grown in Mt Evelyn—as compared with Mullum Mullum, for instance—will exhibit slight differences of appearance.

The first 2017 seed-cleaning night was attended by twelve volunteers, and was described as "a big success" on the Candlebark Nursery website. "There was lots of cleaning, chatting and eating over the three hours that people were at Candlebark Nursery. A big thank you for all the help given to us." Anyone able to devote two or three hours to assist at future seed-processing nights is invited to contact Candlebark by phone or email.

A large project that the nursery is currently involved in is significant replanting at the site of the former Aboriginal resettlement at Coranderrk in Healesville. Wikipedia records that a group of dispossessed Indigenous people including Simon Wonga and William Barak "squatted on a traditional camping site on Badger Creek near Healesville and requested ownership of the site. They were anxious to have the land officially approved so that they could move down and establish themselves. An area of 9.6 km<sup>2</sup> was gazetted on 30 June 1863 and called 'Coranderrk', at the Aboriginal people's suggestion. This was the name they used for the Christmas Bush... a white flowering summer plant which is indigenous to the area."<sup>1</sup>

In September last year, the nursery posted:

"On Tuesday a group of people (and some curious cattle!) gathered at 'Coranderrk', a property in Healesville owned by the Wandoo Estate Aboriginal Corporation, to discuss plans for a major revegetation project.

A whopping 26ha of the 81ha property has been earmarked for planting out with native vegetation over the next two years. This will create a network of 20m+ wide shelter belts, increasing connectivity across the property and between the adjoining Yarra River, Badger Creek and Coranderrk Bushland Reserve (next to Healesville Sanctuary).

The revegetation is being carried out in conjunction with over 5km of stock-exclusion fencing and over 19ha of weed control which will protect over 18ha of large old paddock trees and remnant vegetation along the Yarra River.

Together these works will help protect and connect habitat for the critically endangered Helmeted Honeyeater and Leadbeater's Possum in a very high priority location.

The project is being supported through Yarra4Life, with funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme".<sup>2</sup>



The nursery locates and propagates endangered species such as the Dwarf Geebung

<sup>1</sup> [wikipedia.org/wiki/Coranderrk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coranderrk)

<sup>2</sup> [facebook.com/CandlebarkCommunityNursery](https://www.facebook.com/CandlebarkCommunityNursery)



Enthusiastic volunteers are crucial to the success of Candlebark



President Gretta Fuller with her Citizen of the Year award

For some time the nursery has provided indigenous plants for various local shire-organised revegetation projects as well as individual Habitat for Wildlife<sup>3</sup> and implementation of the aims of green ribbon areas.<sup>4</sup>

Candlebark President Gretta Fuller, who was one of the founding members of the nursery, was honoured as the City of Maroondah's Citizen of the Year in 2015. Gretta and two friends began the enterprise in 1994 in a home kitchen.

Another Candlebark volunteer, Tristan Shaw, regards his 25-year involvement with the nursery as "like my life". Tristan was involved with Gretta and his mother Debbie since those early "kitchen years". When I asked him whether he'd held the same role as pot manager for all 25 years, he quickly corrected me: "I'm actually the Second-hand Plant Tube Washer."

Tristan loves his two or three days each week at the nursery, and has established an efficient system of cleaning and disinfecting the tubes to kill any plant disease that may have been present in the recycled tubes. When I asked what he enjoyed most about Candlebark, his voice rose several decibels as he exclaimed, "The people!"

I was very impressed by the enthusiasm of the volunteers and the three part-time managers who form the Candlebark community. On the day I visited there was a happy buzz about the place as people with a diversity of skills and life experiences, and across a wide range of ages, came together to contribute to helping Candlebark achieve its goals.

I spoke with Michael, who'd volunteered with the nursery six years ago when he wanted something "entirely different" from his successful corporate involvement. "When I came here I was purely plants," Michael said. "And over the years I've moved more into maintenance stuff—watering systems have been a big project with mains water coming in and waste water going out, and all of the sprinkler systems, the controls and the solenoids to keep all of the water systems running automatically. And then there are the heat beds and spray systems for propagation..."

Michael reflected on the importance and enjoyment derived from the community and social side of his involvement with Candlebark. An unexpected outcome of his voluntary work has been the opportunity to take some Candlebark-grown plants that fit the indigenous plant template of Westernport to plant in a reclamation area close to the weekend block he and his wife own.

Michael and Tristan were but two of many volunteers. In many respects my insight into the inclusive and diverse community that is Candlebark was perhaps the highlight of my visit.

The nursery increasingly sources workers from Eastern Volunteers, with many volunteers looking to gain more diverse skills in their attempts to find new employment. In addition, there are other partnerships such as Candlebark's involvement in replanting an area of Pembroke Primary School, its presence at the recent Celebrate Mooroolbark festival and a partnership with Billanook College, where a group of students regularly pursue their education with learning and helping at the nursery.

Carolyn and Claire take great pride in the careful management and the efficiency of Candlebark, which receives little financial assistance. There are occasional grants that have helped with projects like the development of the sales area or the specialised seed-growing enclosure, but this not-for-profit depends upon the sale of plants—either in bulk orders for local organisations or through plant sales to customers visiting the nursery. That they "break even" each year is something they celebrate!

Well done, Candlebark! And if you have a spare hour or two and would like to volunteer, or if you'd like to pop in and purchase some local plants, please do!

Candlebark Community Nursery is located at the corner of Hull and Taylor Roads in Mooroolbark, with entry from Hull Road.

Phone: 9727 0594 or 0499 021 315.

Email [info@candlebark.org.au](mailto:info@candlebark.org.au)

Website: [candlebark.org.au](http://candlebark.org.au)

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<sup>3</sup> [cen.org.au/projects/habitat-for-wildlife](http://cen.org.au/projects/habitat-for-wildlife)

<sup>4</sup> [greensmps.org.au/sites/default/files/green-ribbons-plan.pdf](http://greensmps.org.au/sites/default/files/green-ribbons-plan.pdf)



# International Women's Day

## A Call for Change

For Year 10 student Brooke Thompson, being a part of Billanook College's first International Women's Day Breakfast was an opportunity to focus on democracy and human rights, especially as those rights apply to women.

Brooke was one of a committee of five Year 10 students who, with the guidance of Billanook College staff, initiated and organised a breakfast marking the importance of International Women's Day (IWD). IWD is celebrated across the globe every year to acknowledge the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women throughout the world.

International Women's Day has been observed since the early 1900s and is celebrated on 8 March each year. The day recognises the successes of women and raises awareness of areas where further change needs to be achieved: for example, worldwide education of girls, gender pay parity, and eradication of domestic violence. The theme for this year's IWD was "Be Bold for Change." The campaign challenged men and women alike to take "groundbreaking action" and asked, "What if the world truly stepped up to take bold action?" The IWD organisers believe that "Through purposeful collaboration, we can help women advance and unleash the limitless potential offered to economies the world over."

For Billanook's Year 10 girls, having the IWD celebration was not only an opportunity to enjoy a delicious buffet breakfast, but allowed each student to invite a guest and spend quality time with a significant woman in her life such as her mother, grandmother, or sister.

Four prominent former Billanook students were also invited to attend the breakfast. Alumni Ashley Argoon (class of 2006), Kerryn Boyle (class of 2004), Elise Anderson (née Vogt, class of 1998), and Deanne McKenzie (class of 1986) have all gone on to successful careers in their chosen fields. Together, they participated in a special panel at the breakfast to discuss

the topic "How can women be better role models for each other?" The group offered their thoughts on the pressures of schooling and VCE, and spoke about the various challenges they had faced after leaving school. The panel spoke about influential women in each of their lives, and also discussed important issues affecting young women across the world.

About 100 women attended the breakfast, and almost \$900 dollars was raised in support of UN Women, a United Nations entity which promotes women's empowerment and gender equality throughout the world.

Brooke described the organisation of the buffet breakfast as "fun and challenging". The student committee chose the centrepieces for each table, planned the seating arrangement, and had input into formulating questions for the panel.

The four alumni were asked questions such as "Who are female role models who inspired you?" and "What would you tell your Year 10 self?" The panel encouraged the Year 10 girls to take responsibility for change, both locally and globally. Students were challenged to lead and support other women in their lives—in their own families, their social circles, at school and in the

workplace—and to help fulfil the potential of all women.

Billanook College's Marketing and Events Officer, Kristine Niven, said that the diversity of the panel kept the audience engaged. "We wanted a variety—that's what made the morning interesting," said Kristine. "They were so diverse, so different from one another. You could have heard a pin drop—everyone was really engaged and listening." Staff member Georgie Bennett described the breakfast as "a truly inspirational event."

Brooke invited her mother Karin to be her special guest at the breakfast. As a mother, Karin was very moved by the event. "I found it quite an emotional morning," she said. "I didn't expect it to be. I was talking to some of the other mothers and we all got a bit teary. One of the reasons was that in Year 10 the girls are coming into senior school and are growing into women."

It seems that this inaugural event may be the first of many for Billanook College. "It would be a great idea to hold it again," Brooke commented. Kristine Niven agreed that the morning was invaluable: "I think the students took away lots of important things that they could use in future years to become our next generation of leaders."

Janet Van Dijk



Former Billanook student Kerryn Boyle (centre) talks to the group



## Culture Tracks— Extraordinary Variety

Those of us living in the Yarra Valley are not only fortunate to experience firsthand its extraordinary food and wine, but are constantly surrounded by astonishing and varied nature.

We also live with a calendar punctuated with terrific community events. One of the secrets of the region lies within its venues and halls. With the flick of a page or the turn of a corner off your well-trodden path, you too can discover the arts in your own backyard. Culture Tracks is built for all of us.

The Yarra Ranges Council's Culture Tracks program covers performance, music, exhibitions, workshops and movies at venues throughout the Yarra Ranges. Enjoy stunning original art, nationally and internationally toured work, and the enthusiasm that comes from a connected artistic community, some of whom you may even know. Our shows include everything from the Queensland Theatre Company and Melbourne Ballet to local works funded by local community. Support them while they develop and grow into fully realised pieces of theatre. The results of our collaborations with artists and producers are always immensely satisfying for both audience and local supporters.

Weekends such as the 'Open Studios' in both the Dandenong Ranges and the Yarra Valley have become permanent fixtures in the diaries of loyal return visitors. Performance pieces inspired by our own very particular environment and stories fill our halls and museum spaces. It's a dynamic space we share in the valley and the hills.

Youth access is a large part of our focus with this year's Classical Tracks program, and is most clearly illustrated by our youth ticket offer. Tickets to Classical Tracks performances are free for those under 26 years old. Bring your kids or your grandchildren and take yourselves on a wonderful local journey. However you can, enjoy this gift. It's one that will resonate for years to come.

Close to home at the Mooroolbark Community Centre, you can enjoy *Shirley Valentine* with the girls in May, the Australian Youth Band with dad in June and in July the choices abound with Lux Radio Theatre, Roald Dahl's *The Witches*, Opera Australia's *The Magic Flute*—and that's just the beginning! Workshops, exhibitions and classes are running constantly. Join in a class or simply go along to enjoy the different stories told in various ways. You never know, you might just discover the hidden artist within—or maybe you'll feed the critic! Either way, it's extraordinary to have access to such a diverse selection of work and artists, and with Montrose Town Centre opening again soon, you'll be able to do all this without having to head into the city.

**Brook Powell**  
Chester Communications

For further information about what's on in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges, see our back-page calendar or take a look at:  
[ach.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Whats\\_On](http://ach.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Whats_On)  
[ach.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Venues/Mooroolbark\\_Community\\_Centre](http://ach.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Venues/Mooroolbark_Community_Centre)



Cheryl, Debbie and Sandra show that the new playspace is not just for kids.

## Space for Everyone

Imagine a playspace for children which tells a story about the creeks, wetlands, marshes, reed beds and animals in their natural habitat.

At Lillydale Lake Playspace, which opened in April 2017, children can immerse themselves in the natural environment and learn about how water impacts the landscape.

Yarra Ranges Council Manager of Built and Active Spaces Robyn Mansfield said the space has been designed for all ages and all abilities. Ms Mansfield said it was particularly exciting that grandparents would be able to spend time with their grandchildren in the new space. "Connecting with nature is important for children's physical and mental development and it's also good for adults," Ms Mansfield said.

Yarra Ranges Council has been trialling an inter-generational approach when designing playspaces. Local government minister Natalie Hutchins said everyone should have the opportunity to play in the park and playspaces, regardless of their age. "Everyone loves to play at the park," she said. If the approach is successful, council will incorporate this inter-generational approach when designing all future playspaces.

Anne Nicholson, 87, of Hoddles Creek, said the reeds in sand and wooden balancing board were useful to practice balancing. "We did push ups on the climbing structure and used the space for some light exercise," Ms Nicholson said. "I often go to the gym at the Yarra Centre and do tai chi. I would like to walk around Lillydale Lake with my four wheeler with my daughter."

Debbie Andrew, who walks regularly with the Yarra Junction Heart Foundation walking group, said she found the balance and core strength focused spaces challenging. "I'm very impressed with the playspace," she said. "It's great to see you can make your own workout. I enjoyed walking around the lake and will work the balancing board on springs into my workout."

People of all ages will enjoy exploring the playspace features, which include:

- A dry creek bed with small water play pumps
- Reed clumps
- Giant basket swing
- Sand pit with stone bug stepping stones
- Large and small climbing structures resembling a bird's nest
- Platypus seat rocker
- Music bells
- Timber climbing posts
- A six-seat swing set, including an Expression Swing that allows a parent and child to swing together while facing each other
- Water-play mushrooms
- Glow-in-the-dark walking paths
- Platypus-shaped climbing frame

The playspace also includes elements ideal for people living with a disability, including a double flying fox with an accessible seat, a spinner/carousel, a wheelchair-accessible Liberty Swing, and an accessible water-play area.

**Anna Chisholm**  
Senior Media & Strategic Communications Officer  
Yarra Ranges Council

# Community Events Calendar

First Sunday of each month	<b>Farmers Market:</b> Bellbird Park, Swansea Road, next to Lillydale Lake. Combined Rotary Clubs. All proceeds to local and overseas projects. Contact Bill Sutherland: 9727 0037.
Friday nights during school term	<b>Fridays@Kids Domain:</b> Activities for primary school age kids. 4-6 pm. Oxley College stadium. Details: phone 9726 8111 or <a href="http://www.lmc.org.au">www.lmc.org.au</a>
Monday evenings each week	<b>Scottish Country Dancing:</b> Mondays 8 pm (except public holidays). Beginners and experienced. Minimal charges. St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. Enquiries: 9725 9074.
Second Monday of each month	<b>Mooroolbark Country Women's Association:</b> 1 pm at St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. New members always welcome. Contact Coral Cunningham: 9728 4479.
Thursdays during school term	<b>Music Together Program:</b> 0-5 years. Run by trained music therapist. St Margaret's Uniting Church 9:45 am. Morning tea & playtime included. \$10 per session. Call Yvonne: 9726 9347.
Thursday evenings each week	<b>Maroondah TOWN Club:</b> (Take Off Weight Naturally). Weekly, starting at 6:30 pm. St Margaret's Uniting Church. Hull Road. For more information call Kaye: 0414 984 062.
Wednesdays during term time	<b>Kilsyth Primary School Playgroup:</b> Painting, story time, activities and games for children birth - 3½ years. 9:15 am. More info: 9725 4320 or <a href="http://www.kilsythps.vic.edu.au">www.kilsythps.vic.edu.au</a> .
Tuesdays & Thursdays	<b>Mooroolbark Men's Shed:</b> 9 am-3 pm. Now meeting at 91 Swansea Road, Montrose. More information: Acting Chair/Secretary John Lowry on 9726 9970 or 0419 366 939.
Tues, Wed & Thurs during school term	<b>GymbaROO:</b> "Fun and Learning TOO." A formative, sensory-perception program for babies, toddlers and preschoolers. Contact Marion on 9726 8740.
Wednesday 5 July	<b>Free Family Movie:</b> <i>Moana</i> , rated PG. Starts 7:30 pm. Come early to pick up your free ice-cream, tea and coffee. Tickets available from 21 June. Phone 1300 368 333 or book online: <a href="http://www.culturetracks.info">www.culturetracks.info</a> .
Sunday 30 July	<b>Community Tree Planting Day:</b> 1 pm, Selina Avenue Reserve, Mooroolbark (between Struan and Balcombe Avenues). Please bring gardening tools if possible; afternoon tea will be provided.
June 15-25	<b>Mooroolbark Theatre Group</b> presents <i>Ski Whizz</i> . Mooroolbark Community Red Earth Theatre. Thursday, Friday & Saturday evenings plus Sunday matinees. Tickets \$20/\$18 concession. To book: Arline 9726 4282.
June, July, August	<b>Yarra Ranges Council Immunisation Sessions:</b> 9:30-11:00 am. 6 June, 4 July, 1 August. Mooroolbark Community Centre.
June, July, August	<b>Yarra Ranges Council Immunisation Sessions:</b> 1:30-2:30 pm. 27 June, 25 July, 22 August. Mooroolbark Community Centre.
June, July, August	<b>Yarra Ranges Council Immunisation Sessions:</b> 5:30-7 pm. 14 June, 12 July, 9 August. Mooroolbark Community Centre.
10 June 8 July, 12 August	<b>Urban Harvest:</b> Backyard fruit and vegetable growers—swap your excess produce. Red Earth Community Park, second Saturday each month, 10-11:30 am. Enquiries: Claire Coutts, 0425 700 280
Saturday 5 August	<b>Mooroolbark History Group</b> presents the story of <i>The Lone Pine Conundrum</i> . 10 am, Mooroolbark Library, Station Street. Enquiries: Marion 9726 8740.
8 December	<b>Community Carols:</b> Picnic dinner from 6:30 pm, carols start 8 pm. 7:45 pm Croydon Citizen's Brass Band. 8:00 pm carols begin. BYO rug or chair; food & battery-operated candles for sale.

## Mooroolbark Community Centre and Montrose Town Centre

The following special events will be held at Mooroolbark Community Centre (MCC) or Montrose Town Centre (MTC). Unless otherwise indicated, bookings can be made by phoning 1300 368 333 or online: [www.culturetracks.info](http://www.culturetracks.info)

June-August	<b>Free Red Earth Gallery Exhibitions:</b> <i>Interpreting Yarra Ranges - Places, Events, Patterns:</i> Ian Whitford 9 May-17 June. <i>Clayscape:</i> Valley Potters Inc. 20 June-14 August. <i>The Road:</i> Michelle Fountain 16 August-23 September. MCC.
4 June	<b>Australian Youth Band:</b> Sunday 4 June 2 pm. Full \$12, Concession \$6. Mooroolbark Community Centre.
2 July	<b>Lux Theatre</b> presents <i>The Mystery of a Hansom Cab</i> Sunday 2 July 2pm. Full \$22, Concession \$18, group of three or more \$12 each. Mooroolbark Community Centre.
July	<b>School Holiday Performances:</b> Roald Dahl's <i>Witches</i> - Thursday 6 July 2 pm. <i>How to Train your Dragon</i> - Whitehorse Orchestra - Sunday 9 July 1 pm & 3pm. <i>The Magic Flute</i> - Opera Australia - Thursday 13 July 11a m & 2 pm. \$12 Full / \$6 Online/Library Member. MCC.
17 July-23 September	<b>Term 3 Workshops Commence:</b> Pottery, Oil Painting, Tribal Bellydance, Craft, & Pottery 4 Kids. Mooroolbark Community Centre & Montrose Town Centre.
13 August	<b>Ziggy &amp; Miles:</b> Sunday 13 August 2 pm. \$26 Full/under 26 years Free: A Minor Tix. Montrose Town Centre

**Our Community Events Calendar offers a free service to local clubs and organisations.**

**To include entries for your group's community events in future issues please contact Doug Lewis on 9761 1121 or email [calendar@livingtoday.org.au](mailto:calendar@livingtoday.org.au)**

Note: *Living Today* is distributed quarterly—in the first week of March, June, September and December. Calendar entries need to be submitted one month prior to the distribution date.

# LIVING TODAY in Mooroolbark

## Production

*Living Today in Mooroolbark* is produced by Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship, with the help of local volunteers



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## Like to contribute?

If you have great local photos—current or historical—or a good news story about people or groups who are an inspiration to the community, please get in touch with the editor (contact information above)

PDFs of this issue and all past issues of *Living Today* can be accessed at: [livingtoday.org.au](http://livingtoday.org.au)

To join the email distribution list please send a request to [editor@livingtoday.org.au](mailto:editor@livingtoday.org.au)

## MISSION STATEMENT

To contribute towards and to help to foster a **growing community spirit** within our neighbourhood.

We seek to achieve this by:

- highlighting the many positives within our community
- encouraging partnership in community initiatives
- contributing to the process of identifying and addressing community needs and concerns

## OUR SPONSORS

*Living Today* greatly appreciates the valuable contributions made by several businesses which partner with us in serving our local community through this magazine. Their financial sponsorship makes the magazine possible, and we gratefully acknowledge those partners in each issue.

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