

# LIVING TODAY

in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges NO. 68 SEPTEMBER 2019



- The Willis family's fast track to success
- Accessible water for Yarra Ranges town centres
- The surprising reality of homelessness

11,500 free copies distributed throughout Mooroolbark and district

# ON TRACK FOR SUCCESS

Mooroolbark mum Christine Willis describes her youngest son, Harlem, as a “track baby”. With three older siblings who are talented hurdlers, Harlem has spent a lot of time beside the athletic track watching them compete. “From two days old he has been at the track just about every day of his life,” said Christine. Now, at five years old, Harlem is also showing signs of promise in the field in which his brother and two sisters excel.

*Living Today* first met the Willis children five years ago, in September 2014. At that time the three oldest children were well on the way to achieving success in the sport of hurdling. Little Harlem was only nine months old then, and his athletic future was unclear. Five years later, it’s obvious that he is following in the footsteps of his siblings Lateisha, Tayleb, and Tiara. “We’re hoping Harlem will be a hurdler too,” said his mother. “We just started him hurdling. He’s got long legs so it’s easy for him to get over the hurdles. When he was four the physiotherapist said he had the legs of an eight-year-old boy—very athletic. He jumps all over the place, off the furniture and off high things. Under things, through things, over things!”

Athletic ability was evident in all the Willis children from an early age. “When they were little they all had strong legs,” Christine recalled. “Even as toddlers, they had muscles well beyond their age.” All four children began doing gymnastics when they were less than two years old. When Lateisha was ten and Tayleb was seven, they switched to Little Athletics, where their natural talent at hurdles and sprints was soon clear, and the flexibility and speed they had gained doing gymnastics was a bonus.

Lateisha—known to family and friends as Teish—is the oldest of the Willis siblings. At 19, she is in her second year at Deakin University, studying to be a dietician. Once she has achieved her bachelor degree, Teish is aiming for a master’s degree in the subject, which she thinks will be useful with her experience in athletics. “I’d like to have my own business and be a dietician for athletes,” she said.

When Lateisha was 14 she told us that her ultimate goal was to follow in the footsteps of her hero, Olympic gold medallist hurdler Sally Pearson. Now that she is 19 and in the open-



age category, Teish has had the chance to do just that, both figuratively and literally, recently competing in a heat against Sally Pearson. Moving into the senior athlete category comes with additional challenges, though. “There are a lot of top women hurdlers in Australia at the moment so it’s quite hard to make the senior teams,” said Teish.

Teish has her sights set on competing in the Olympic Games. “I want to represent Australia and get a medal,” she said. “That’s the goal. I really enjoy hurdling; I train hard and the results

are showing.” Teish has had a great deal of success over the course of her athletics career: having earned her first gold medal at 14, she is now a nine-time Australian junior champion in Australian track and field championships. She also has under her belt 34 Victorian championship titles, 13 Victorian records, and one national meet record which was not far off the record set by Sally Pearson.

Much of Teish’s on-track success has been achieved at international athletic meets. At the Commonwealth Youth Games in the Bahamas



Proud mum Christine with her four talented children

in July 2017, Teish won a silver medal in the 100 metre hurdles, placing her second in the world. When competing at the 2016 Oceania Area Championships in Athletics in Fiji when she was 16, Teish won two gold medals. She has also competed in Germany and Finland, and made the semi-finals at the 2018 World Under 20s in Finland.

Tayleb (Tay) is 16 years old and is currently training hard for the Oceania championships in July 2020. “Two years after that I’m aiming to go to the World Under 20 Championships—the competition for the best in the world for under 20,” he said. Tay won two gold medals, including his first national title, at the national championships in Cairns in December last year. “I backed it up in April to win my third national championship in 110 metre hurdles, and I came third in triple jump as well.” Tay has also broken three Victorian records and has won 29 Victorian championship titles.

Tay’s ultimate goal is to win an Olympic medal in hurdling. “I’m fully committed to it,” he said. “I know what I need to do to get there—a lot of hard work, sacrifice, and commitment.” Tay also competes in triple jump and is a competent footballer, earning a Best and Fairest award for the Kilsyth Cougars in 2017 and Best and Fairest for the Eastern Football League. Tay quit football at the end of last year’s season in order to concentrate on athletics. Christine confirmed Tayleb’s dedication to the hurdling: “Tay will never miss training, ever—you couldn’t pay him to miss it.”

Like her older brother and sister, 12-year-old Tiara has a growing collection of athletics medals. This year she won first place at both the Victorian Country Track and Field Championships and the ACT Track and Field Championships. While hurdling is what Tiara loves, she excels at other sports too. She currently trains in sprinting, and will soon begin triple jump training. Like her siblings, she too has aspirations to compete in the Olympics. During the athletics off-season, Tiara and Harlem both run cross country with Yarra Ranges Little Athletics. At a recent Championship Day Harlem won two silver medals and Tiara won both a gold and a silver medal.

The entire Willis clan is accumulating

medals in competitions locally, nationally and, in Lateisha’s case, internationally. Christine estimates that her three older children have about six hundred medals between them. Even Harlem, who hasn’t had much opportunity to compete so far, has seven medals.

The most recent success for the Willis family was at the 2019 Australian Track and Field Championships in April, where both Tay and Teish won gold, and Tiara came twelfth. “It was Tiara’s first nationals and to place twelfth-best in Australia was a really good result, especially as the girls she was competing against were very tall,” said her mother.

For single mum Christine, keeping her children on the track to athletic success is no easy task. The physical schedule is gruelling for all the kids, but also for Christine who ferries them from suburb to suburb for training six days a week. Tiara and Harlem belong to Yarra Ranges Little Athletics club, which is where their two older siblings got their start. Teish and Tay now belong to Ringwood Athletic Club, and the three oldest Willis kids train at the Ringwood Athletics track, where they are coached by Peter Benifer. There are also visits to physiotherapists as far away as Werribee, and once the athletic season begins in October, there will be travel to regional Victoria and interstate competitions. “We’ve been everywhere with nationals—Perth, Adelaide, Canberra, and Sydney,” said Christine.

Being part of the national hurdles scene is expensive as well as time consuming. In addition to the costs for travel and accommodation, there are levy fees and event fees. Local competitions charge a comparatively low \$10 to \$30 per event, but national competitions can charge as much as \$60 per race. With each of her three children often entering more than one event per competition, the costs can quickly escalate. However, the family is determined to raise the necessary funds. They have held various fundraising events over the years, and every donation is greatly appreciated. Last year, when Teish was selected to represent Australia in the 100 metre hurdles event at the World Under 20 championships in Finland, raising the money for travel and accommodation seemed out of reach for the Willis family. Lateisha established an online fundraising page, and



Tay, Tiara and Teish with their medals at the Victorian Country Championships

partway through the fundraising campaign, the family was surprised and delighted when an anonymous benefactor—known to them only as a businessman from Ringwood—donated the remaining money necessary for the trip. With that taken care of, Teish was able to close the fundraising campaign and focus on her fitness and training for the event.

While Christine would love to have been able to watch her daughter compete internationally, that dream is yet to be realised. With the costs of travelling and entering competitions, and three other children at home, Christine knows that achieving that goal won’t be within reach for some time.

Although athletic talent often runs in families, having three siblings competing at the same event isn’t a common occurrence. “At the recent nationals, they were the only triple siblings to go to the Australian championships, and Teish and Tay were the only double siblings to both win gold medals,” said Christine. “Very occasionally there might be three siblings at a competition, but they’re competing in different events—my three were all in hurdles.”

It’s moments like those that make this Mooroolbark mother proud, knowing that behind her children’s natural talent and on-track success is an entire family pulling together with hard work, persistence and sheer determination.

Janet Van Dijk

Our cover photo shows the Willis siblings at the 2019 Australian Athletics Championships. Picture courtesy of Sports in Focus.



PHOTOS: NICOLE SQUELCH

# Red Earth Awakened

## Forty Years On

Barbara Austin  
Chair, Celebrate Mooroolbark Committee



Forty years ago, on Saturday 22 March 1980, the Mooroolbark Community Centre was officially opened with a festival called the Red Earth Festival. This festival went on to be a resounding success for twenty-one years, and people today still have fond memories of the parade, the rides and the fireworks.

Because of financial constraints, high insurance costs and a lack of volunteer involvement, REF folded up, and from small beginnings Celebrate Mooroolbark took its place in 2002. "It was a new event devised by Belinda Gillam, the first Cultural Development Officer for the Yarra Ranges Shire, and it was not created to replace the REF but to celebrate the Mooroolbark Community".<sup>1</sup> The festival was backed by 30 groups, services and businesses in the town, beginning with a combined church service in the morning.

In 2003, Celebrate Mooroolbark became the responsibility of a new committee with assistance from the community centre. The committee promised a new theme each year, with the first being "Wings and Wheels", and was determined to keep activities free or low cost for festival-goers—and we have maintained those values. Next year's theme is "Red Earth Awakened – 40 Years On" in honour of the community centre and forty years of festivals in Mooroolbark.

Celebrate Mooroolbark has gone ahead in leaps and bounds, and on a good day we have been known to have 10,000 people attending. We

now have two stages, the community stage and a youth stage, with plans to have a children's stage and a children's free entertainment area supervised by a suitably qualified person. We are also planning to have more entertainment for older teenagers.

We take this opportunity to thank Yarra Ranges Council, *Living Today*, Bendigo Bank, the Professionals, the Lions Club and all our generous sponsors who support our festival each year. And, of course, our volunteers and the Celebrate Mooroolbark committee who all work so hard to put it together. Unfortunately, our treasurer, Craig Ingham, has recently resigned after being with us for four years. Craig has put in many hours of hard work for Celebrate Mooroolbark, meticulously checking the figures to make sure the books balance. He has been responsible for keeping our incorporation matters up to date and helping the older people on the committee with their computer literacy. Thank you, Craig, for all your efforts.

Our next festival will be held on 20-21 March 2020. We need volunteers to join the committee, so if you are interested please contact Barbara on 0417 381 542, through our Facebook page or by email at [barbara@celebratemooroolbark.com](mailto:barbara@celebratemooroolbark.com).

*Information for this article has been taken from the 2012 book "Celebrating Mooroolbark – Mooroolbark Community Centre and Festivals" compiled by the Mooroolbark History Group Inc*

<sup>1</sup> Celebrating Mooroolbark – Mooroolbark Community Centre and Festivals, 2012



Dozens of community-minded locals armed with gardening tools met on Sunday 28 July to plant trees at Mooroolbark's Selina Avenue Reserve. People of all ages, from toddlers to senior citizens, worked together to plant hundreds of seedlings supplied by the Yarra Ranges Council. After the planting was done, tools were put down and the volunteers stopped to admire their handiwork and relax with scones and a hot drink.

# When Connection Seems out of Reach

We all feel lonely from time to time. For many, this will be an unpleasant but temporary experience linked to a current life situation: starting a new job, being at home with a young baby, moving to a new community or losing a close friend—all experiences that can trigger feelings of loneliness. If unchecked, however, loneliness can become a debilitating and distressing condition.

Loneliness has been defined by psychologists as an individual's personal experience of social isolation. It is a perception of being disconnected from others that causes feelings of suffering and insecurity. Loneliness also increases risk for a range of negative health outcomes—higher mortality rates, decreased immunity, high blood pressure, and faster progression of Alzheimer's disease. People who feel lonely are also more susceptible to mental health difficulties such as depression and anxiety.

Loneliness is on the rise. It has been identified as the next public health epidemic of the 21st century. In 2018, the British government went so far as to appoint a "Minister of Loneliness" in order to combat the social and health implications of social isolation. Researchers are trying to better understand the experience of loneliness in order to reduce social isolation and improve community health.

However, feelings of loneliness do not always lead to negative outcomes. Like hunger or thirst, the unpleasant feelings associated with unmet social needs can spur us to action. To avoid being alone, we might make the effort to approach someone new, join a group, or even re-evaluate and improve our social skills. A period of loneliness can also help us to empathise with and reach out to others. Having experienced a sense of isolation ourselves, we may be quicker to notice and include someone who seems on the periphery. In these respects, loneliness can lead to individual growth and compassion for others.

People who are isolated or on their own aren't necessarily lonely. We may, for example, assume that people living in remote rural locations will be unhappy about their secluded state, but that

may not be the case. People vary in terms of the amount of social contact they need, with some requiring more than others. Often, it is the quality of the relationships we have, rather than the quantity, that makes the difference. For some, a couple of close relationships is all they need to meet their social needs. Others can be surrounded by friends and family but still feel disconnected and alone.

Those who experience ongoing loneliness are of particular concern. Chronically lonely people often face multiple barriers that make connecting to others a complex ordeal. Unemployment, disability, family breakdown and financial hardship, for example, are

vulnerable to loneliness. The prevalence of loneliness in younger adults may seem surprising, since adolescents and young people are more connected than ever due to social media. However, these connections can shift quickly. Relationships can be superficial and prone to change. Adolescents and young adults strongly rely on their friends for support, so when they feel that this support has dropped off, they may feel ostracised and rejected, which can be devastating for them.

If we have ever felt lonely ourselves, we know how painful it can be. Even though we are more digitally connected than ever, there are increasing numbers of people who feel isolated and long for meaningful relationships. Through our daily encounters with others, we can help to draw in those who may be on the periphery and reduce loneliness in our local community.

## What can we do?

**Reach out:** Don't underestimate the value of warm and genuine personal interactions. Regular, friendly exchanges through work, sports, church, school and the community can go a long way towards keeping people connected, even in a small way.

**Be persistent:** Recognise that those who have been lonely for a long time may find it difficult to trust. It might take time before they feel confident enough to respond to your overtures of kindness. Try not to get discouraged by this. You may need to persist with

small but consistent gestures such as a smile and a few kind words on a regular basis before you receive any acknowledgment.

**Be inclusive:** We need to think about the way that we respond to those who seem different to us. The language we use, as well as our facial expressions and body language, can transmit an underlying message of inclusion or exclusion. We must be vigilant about the way we speak of and respond to others so that we continue to be accepting, tolerant and kind.

Kate Chivers



PHOTO: ANEMONE 123 / PEXABAY

circumstances that can easily compound, reducing opportunities available to connect with others. For these individuals, the idea of developing new relationships may seem daunting and unreachable.

Chronic loneliness can also be cyclical. People who have been disconnected for a long time can be difficult to relate to. They may be hypervigilant to rejection and, therefore, seek to protect themselves by being overly careful or even hostile when interacting with others. This in turn makes it more difficult for others to approach or maintain a relationship with them, and meaningful and satisfying connections therefore become increasingly unlikely.

Research suggests that young adults (18-29) and older adults (65-79) are the most

## References:

Lim, M (2018). Loneliness: Is this Australia's next public health epidemic? *InPsych, The Bulletin of the Australian Psychological Society Limited (August)*.

Café owner Jie Fu loves living and working in Mooroolbark. The slower pace of life here is a big change from his previous life in southwestern China, where his home city of Chongqing has a population larger than that of all Australia.

Jie and his family moved to Australia last year, and in July—shortly after their arrival—took over ownership of the Three Beans Café and Deli in Brice Avenue.

In China, Jie had his own construction company and also managed a coffee shop—however, owning Three Beans Café has been very different to what he experienced in China. Jie said that the demand for coffee is quite new to China, with most of the older residents preferring tea and yum cha. However, coffee is becoming increasingly popular. “In China, many young people love coffee,” explained Jie. “They know about coffee beans and coffee history because of the internet.”

When Jie took business trips from his home in Chongqing to places like Peking, Shanghai and Hong Kong, he noticed the coffee culture and became interested in owning his own café in a place that appreciated coffee. On a visit to Sydney to compete in a marathon, he was struck by the beauty of Australia and dreamed of raising his children in a place where they could have a great future.

Jie and his wife began the process of applying to live in Australia and before long

their application had been approved. They chose to settle in Melbourne because they have many friends nearby and also because, as Jie said, “Everybody knows Melbourne’s coffee is the best in the world.”

Jie enjoys cooking for the café and making menu items that suit the Australian palate. The café serves award-winning coffee along with a mouth-watering selection of fresh sandwiches, homemade soups, quiches, cakes, and pastries.

“I really love Mooroolbark because it’s so local and people are very friendly,” said Jie. Many of the café’s regular customers are elderly, and Jie described them as very happy and welcoming. Jie enjoys building and maintaining relationships with those customers, especially since that wasn’t a focus of coffee shops in China. The population of Chongqing was so large that there was always a steady stream of new customers, so it wasn’t easy or necessary to establish relationships with regular customers.

Jie’s wife Wei Wei and children Joshua, aged ten, and Anna, aged seven, have happily settled in to life in Australia. Sometimes Jie jokingly asks his children if they would like to return to China. “I ask them if they want to go back to China with me and they say ‘no, no!’” he said. “They love it here.”

Mooroolbark’s relaxed atmosphere gives Jie confidence that he has made the right



decision to raise his children here. He feels that China’s education system places too much emphasis on achieving excellence in many different areas, instead of focusing on each child’s special talents. “I love Australia,” said Jie. “I know my kids will have a great future and enjoy their lives here.”

Janet Van Dijk

*Three Beans Café and Deli is located at 7/61 Brice Avenue and is open from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Saturday. For more information or to see photos of the delicious menu items, check out the café’s Facebook page.*



## Stories of Mooroolbark

An exciting mixed-media art exhibition will soon be on display at Mooroolbark Community Centre’s Red Earth Gallery. The three-part “Stories of Mooroolbark” exhibition will feature works by professional and practising artists, artwork by community artists of all ages and abilities, and—with support from Yarra Ranges Regional Museum—a selection of artefacts related to Mooroolbark. The exhibition will be presented by The Yarra Art Rangers Network, and is a result of a collaboration with the Mooroolbark Street Art Project and Mooroolbark Traders and Community Group. The collaboration aims to “bring together an eclectic and diverse collection of shared stories and community aspirations; factual accounts of days gone by, reflections and impressions of our past and present, and aspirations for the town’s future.”



Mooroolbark, by Paul Sonsie, 2019

The exhibition is part of the Yarra Ranges Council Regional Exhibitions Program and will run from 11 September to 28 October, with the opening night being held between 6 and 8 pm on Thursday 12 September.

The original artworks will demonstrate the theme of life in Mooroolbark and surrounding areas: “...our public and shared places and events, the spaces where we connect and create community together, the places where we work, play and dream together.”

Yarra Art Rangers is a branch of the Art Rangers Network. Its goal is to enrich the cultural life of our community and support independent artists in the region while producing and presenting work for local events. The group focuses on the development of sustainable, environmental and economical practices in art and has encouraged participants in the exhibition to use environmentally sustainable and regenerative techniques and biodegradable, repurposed and recycled materials in their artwork.

The exhibition is connected to the Mooroolbark Street Art and Mooroolbark Artist in Residence projects. The aim of both projects is to “bring together an eclectic and diverse collection of shared stories and community aspirations; factual accounts of days gone by, reflections and impressions of our past and present, and aspirations for the town’s future.”

For more information about the exhibition and other upcoming events at Mooroolbark Community Centre, visit the Mooroolbark Community Centre website.

# Encouraging Youth in the Community



One complaint that we often hear about young people is that they do very little—that they are always on their phones or are too busy watching Netflix to make a positive contribution to the community.

Paris Hindby, a young Mooroolbark resident who is passionate about supporting local youth, defies the stereotype. Paris' work with youth has led her to involvement with Bridge Builders Youth Organisation in Lilydale, volunteering with FReeZA at the local council, and supporting Celebrate Mooroolbark at both the Red Earth UnEarthed talent quest, and the Youth Zone music stage. "I've got my feet in lots of different puddles," laughed Paris.

Paris is currently a leadership intern at Bridge Builders Youth Organisation in Lilydale. "We are a charity that changes the lives of young people," said Paris. "We reach about 2,000 young people annually." Bridge Builders holds weekly Monday night youth activities as well as various fundraising events throughout the year. "We take anyone, if they're in distress or if they just want to make new friends," Paris explained. "It's a fun thing for young people to do, to get

involved in. We get people coming in after school wanting to use our space for homework, or wanting to come into the office and volunteer, which is how I started out." Beginning as an office volunteer while she was at high school, Paris worked her way through the ranks. She is now a leadership intern, which she described as "the baby-steps of leadership."

Initially, music was Paris' passion. "In high school you could not get me off the stage," she said. "The music room was my home; it was my safe space." After finishing Year 12, Paris intended to pursue her studies in music—but her plans were derailed when one of her close friends tragically took his own life. This led to a very difficult time for Paris. "We were music buddies," she reflected. "I quit music school two weeks after that. I thought music was my calling, but it wasn't. It became more of a chore than a hobby."

But now, Paris said, "I feel like I've found my calling working with young people in the community." Her extra-curricular involvement with youth services while still at high school was an important factor in her decision. "I think that was the beginning of me wanting to work with young people," Paris said. She explained that she loves working with those who may be struggling with their mental health or who may be feeling left out because "I relate to them a bit more."

Paris enjoys her involvement in the youth

activities at Celebrate Mooroolbark, along with managing the Red Earth UnEarthed talent quest. Paris said that her favourite part of working with Celebrate Mooroolbark is that most of it involves working with young people. "People look at me and say, 'You're one person taking on a lot of things', but it keeps me busy, and I enjoy it. It's funny, I actually got into Celebrate Mooroolbark on a fluke!" she laughed. "I was asked [to help] by the council while I was volunteering with FReeZA, doing youth services with them for a while during high school. I found out about the youth stage they run and the talent quest." As a result of that 'fluke', Paris has now been involved with Celebrate Mooroolbark for almost five years.

Paris is currently studying community services with the aim of becoming a qualified youth worker. Through her tertiary studies she has realised the vast numbers of young people suffering from issues like mental health and homelessness. "It's really intriguing to see the statistics in the Yarra Ranges, and they're really high statistics too." Her community services studies have put some of those figures into perspective. "You get invisibility of homelessness such as couch surfing—you don't see people out on the streets."

Paris finds it inspiring to hear other people's stories. For her, the most rewarding thing about working with young people in the community is "seeing young people smile, and young people having fun doing what they're doing."

Iris Kennedy



Paris, front right, at a Bridge Builders trip to the snow.

PHOTOS SUPPLIED

## Community Resources:

Bridge Builders Youth Organisation:  
6/9 Clark St Lilydale.

[bridgebuilders.com.au](http://bridgebuilders.com.au)  
[facebook.com/bridgebuildersyouthorganisation](https://facebook.com/bridgebuildersyouthorganisation)

Shire of Yarra Ranges Youth Services:  
[yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Community/Youth](http://yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Community/Youth)  
[facebook.com/yarrarangesyouth](https://facebook.com/yarrarangesyouth)



28 Manchester Road Mooroolbark

proudly supporting  
Living Today in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges



Lions Club

proudly supporting  
Living Today in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges

Proudly supporting  
Living Today in Mooroolbark

P 9726 8888

Professionals  
Methven.com.au

# Pocket Money

## Little Money, Big Lessons



PHOTO: GERRIT ALTMANN/PIKSA

### The disaster

When I was about 12 years old, I'd saved up my pocket money to buy my first LP—yes, it was a long time ago! For those who are too young to be familiar with the term, an LP was a Long Playing vinyl sound recording.

I was shopping with my parents on their usual weekly shopping trip, where we all spent two or three hours getting the things we needed. It was a long process, doing things like waiting in the bootmaker's for someone's heels to be repaired, the grocer's for the honey to be filled into the jar we'd brought back, and of course the general chat with at least half a dozen people we met along the way. I had plans to buy an Airfix model plane kit, but before doing that I'd bought the record. It was our family's custom to do our own thing, then go back to the car when it suited us and wait for dad, who was the driver. So I went back to the unlocked car and placed the record on the parcel shelf—I didn't want anyone sitting on it!—before taking off again to buy the model plane kit.

It took me a while to buy the plane kit—so many to choose from!—and when I got back to the car the second time it was very hot inside. The back of the car, including the parcel shelf, was now in the sun, along with my brand new record. Imagine my panic when I took the LP out of its now rather oddly shaped cardboard sleeve to see that the record was the shape of a potato chip—the really curly kind! Needless to say, there were tears. I was still on my own, and I decided to go back to the record store. I'm not really sure why, or what I intended to do or say, but that's where I went—to show them what had happened to my prized first LP.

It had taken me a while to save enough pocket money to buy the record and the plane. After getting my daily jobs and homework done, I could do whatever I wanted with my time, so there was never a time constraint, only a financial one. We were an average family: dad worked, mum looked after the house, we kids walked or rode to school. The only thing that made us a little different from the other neighbourhood families was that we had no TV, so I had plenty of time to pursue hobbies, or muck around with the tools and other items in dad's shed, as he was a carpenter and cabinet maker. There were pets to play with too, and feeding and cleaning up after them was my responsibility. I wonder now how all those years influenced my spending habits, and my saving habits. I don't remember being paid to do my jobs; they were just my part of the family's chores. Everyone had things to do, and when they were done—and done correctly—our time was our own.



## Good habits

What principles or values are our children learning through pocket money? Do we pay children pocket money just because they are part of the family, or do we pay them for doing specific jobs that we have given them to do? Experts differ in their opinions as to whether children should *earn* their pocket money, or simply be given it. Some parenting experts believe that children should help around the house without being paid, as part of learning to be responsible members of the family. Others believe that connecting pocket money to chores can teach the value of labour, and associates effort with reward.

While there are different ways to do it, most families share the goal of helping their children establish good money habits. Regardless of whether the allowance is tied to doing household tasks or not, giving children a set amount of money at regular intervals is a practical way to help children get used to allocating their income, setting aside certain amounts for different purposes.

Through the proper handling of an income, children can learn

- to budget and save for the things they'd like
- to wait patiently for a good buying opportunity
- to discern between wants and needs
- that not all expensive items are good quality
- the difference between something that is good value and something that is simply cheap.

It's better for children to learn how to be financially responsible early in life, with small amounts of money, rather than learning with much larger amounts later, when serious harm can result from the careless use of money.

## Learning to save

When parents encourage their kids to save some of their pocket money, children learn the difference between important, long-term goals and daily spending. We can let our children spend a portion of their money on snacks, but if it *all* goes that way, then we might also be paying the dentist's pocket money! With their parents' guidance, children can learn that the short-term 'gain' from a packet of lollies is really... a very short-term gain. They can get to see the benefits of 'assets' that last much longer than a few minutes—things that they may even be able to sell later on to fund a bigger dream.



## Watching it grow

Children as young as six should be able to grasp some basic rules about money and saving, including the concept of interest—that the bank rewards people for saving money. Parents can open bank accounts for young children, and encourage them to make regular deposits from their pocket money. Some parents reward good saving practices by matching the child's savings, or topping up the account if the child reaches a certain target by a specified time. If children start learning financial responsibility while young, their appreciation for proper money management is likely to grow and remain strong. Most children get a lot of fun and satisfaction from watching their money grow, then choosing to spend some of it thoughtfully and carefully.

## A matter of values

One of the difficulties of teaching the value of money these days is that so much of our world is seemingly free! In this digital age, people can often get free music, free movies, free stuff on their phone, free internet, free entertainment, and so on. It's always nice to get a freebie, but when it almost becomes a lifestyle, our kids can be easily misled. Sometimes the 'free' item involves a catch that they are unaware of. At other times, the item may be genuinely free, but lose its perceived value because of its easy accessibility. Even schoolwork can be a matter of copying and pasting from the endless material on the web. No more trips to the library, no more books to buy or borrow, not much thinking about how to solve a problem—just Google it!

It's important to remember that money is a vital part of the 'system', and that the money values we impart to our children will influence their spending and saving styles. As parents, we might consider that we get 'pocket money' too, and how we spend it can send very loud messages to the children who are watching us and learning. It's often what we do, more than what we say, that can have the biggest effect on their developing money habits.

## Little money: big lessons

When I got back to the store, I showed my horribly buckled LP to the man who had initially served me. Perhaps he thought I would be a lifelong customer, because he gave me another brand new record to replace the one I'd ruined. I don't remember what he said to me, but I do remember learning to look after my belongings. This turned a brief but very sad experience into a very pleasant long-term one. As parents, we can also make good the 'sad' stories of our kids' experiences with money. We need to weigh up when to show them a kind, tender heart, and when to have a firm approach to teaching values that will help them to use money wisely and appropriately for a whole lifetime.

There are many ways our kids will learn about money. Giving children regular pocket money when they are young and teaching them to deal with it effectively is one method that has stood the test of time. If we continue teaching them sound financial concepts throughout the years, our kids might just be able to look after us one day!

Steve Steel



# Holy Fools

## Tackling Homelessness In The Yarra Ranges

“Most people don’t realise it, but many people are only about 90 days away from being homeless. It’s scary. A lot of people that we meet are really surprised to find themselves homeless.”

Neal Taylor, CEO of Holy Fools, is on a mission to educate people about the prevalence of homelessness in the Yarra Ranges. “We meet a lot of couples and families who are shocked to find themselves homeless. Last week they had a house or were renting somewhere, and then suddenly they are now looking for a place to live.”

Holy Fools is a small charity that works with homeless people, and people at risk of homelessness, in Lilydale and the Yarra Ranges. The volunteer-run organisation provides support, material aid and food parcels. They also run the ‘Street Angels’ outreach, a weekly lunch on Wednesdays in Melba Park, Lilydale.

organisations have noticed a dramatic increase in the number of people seeking help.”

“People assume that the folks on the street in the city are what the homeless look like. But rough sleepers like that only account for about seven percent of people nationally who are considered homeless.”

Homelessness is a broader issue than rough sleeping, and it often defies stereotypes. It includes situations where people are sleeping in their cars, families staying in friends’ or relatives’ basements or garages, and overcrowded boarding houses or rental properties. Homelessness is often unexpected, and may arise from situations of family violence, poverty, housing affordability, or even just a sequence of unlucky and unforeseen events.

“Out here in the Yarra Ranges, the primary group of people who are homeless is youth.

improving services locally. “The Yarra Ranges has no crisis accommodation and no emergency accommodation at all,” said Neal. “The other issue is that there’s a shortage of affordable housing in this area.”

The entirely volunteer-run organisation relies on community donations and the occasional grant to fund their work. Neal described the four pillars on which Holy Fools bases its work: outreach, advocacy, education and research.

The Street Angels outreach connects with people directly impacted by homelessness, providing food, resources and assistance.

“We also do a lot of advocacy with people one-on-one, and as part of groups like the Yarra Ranges Housing Action Group, and the Lilydale Lounge Group, where we are advocating with politicians at local, state and federal levels to see changes around the homelessness situation,”



“It’s not so much about food as it’s a place that we can draw people together who may be experiencing homelessness or are at risk of it. Then we can form a bit of a community around that, and we’re able to help people because we see them on an ongoing basis,” explained Neal.

Homelessness is more common in the Yarra Ranges than it appears. “In fact, there are a greater number of people who are homeless in the Yarra Ranges than there are in the city of Melbourne,” said Neal. According to Neal, over the ten years that Holy Fools has been operating, the challenge of homelessness in the area has worsened. “It’s definitely gotten worse, and there are more and more people needing support and housing services in the area. We and other

Which is alarming. There are a lot of kids who go couch surfing to escape problems at home. They don’t think of this as homelessness, but it’s actually a form of homelessness,” said Neal.

The team at Holy Fools is taking on a social issue that is growing in its impact. Over 24,000 Victorians and 116,000 Australians are homeless on any given night, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Figures from the 2016 census show that the rate of homelessness in Australia increased 13.7% over the previous five years.

Twenty percent of Australia’s homeless population lives in Victoria, and Holy Fools is one of the organisations striving to shine a light on the issue, provide help, and advocate for

said Neal. Hand in hand with this advocacy is their community education work. “We really believe that by educating people about homelessness, and particularly the situation out here in the Yarra Ranges, that people will be able to help make a change.”

To underpin their outreach, advocacy and education, Holy Fools is currently undertaking research with Anchor<sup>1</sup> and the Salvation Army<sup>2</sup>. This research is focused on identifying the ‘hotspots’ and key areas of homelessness in the Yarra Ranges, in order to better coordinate resources and responses. Knowing where the

<sup>1</sup> [anchor.org.au/housing-and-support-services](http://anchor.org.au/housing-and-support-services)

<sup>2</sup> [salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/housing-and-homelessness-support](http://salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/housing-and-homelessness-support)

major centres of homelessness are helps with planning for extreme weather and fire seasons.

“The name ‘Holy Fools’ comes from a term to describe some of the early church fathers who were a little bit eccentric. St Francis of Assisi considered a holy fool due to the fact that he was a rich guy who gave away his wealth and spent his life ministering to the poor,” explained Neal. The team at Holy Fools embraces this philosophy, happy to be “doing the thing that’s a little bit odd in order to do good in the community and look after the poor.”

The organisation’s immediate goal is to replace the devastating loss of their trailer,

barbeque and outreach stock—all of which was stolen earlier this year. “We had received a Feed Melbourne grant late last year to buy a brand-new trailer and a new barbeque, and both of those had just gone into operation with all of our outreach gear. All of that was stolen on Anzac Day,” said Neal.

The longer-term vision is to improve homelessness services in the local community. “We’re working very hard to create a day refuge or a drop-in centre in Lilydale, along with a great team of other agencies and people,” said Neal. “We’d also like to see the establishment of some crisis accommodation.”

Above this, said Neal, the ultimate dream at Holy Fools is “to not be needed”!

“Solving homelessness is not just the government’s problem: I think it takes the community to make a difference. It takes a community to say, ‘we don’t want this’ and that homelessness is unacceptable in a country like Australia with so much land and so many resources.”

**Carissa Sianidis**

*For more information about Holy Fools, including how you can volunteer or donate to support the organisation’s work, visit the group’s website and Facebook page.*

## You Had to Be There

Have you ever experienced something so amazing or seen something so beautiful you struggled to put it into words?

While visiting the US state of Montana, which straddles the Rocky Mountains, my wife and I took a scenic drive through the heart of Glacier National Park. It was *stunning*. I’ll never forget one moment as we stood overlooking a valley surrounded by majestic mountains. The grandeur was overwhelming. I turned to my wife and saw that she had tears rolling down her cheeks. We both agreed that the views were more than our eyes could take in. I’ve shared hundreds of pictures and described the experience as best I can countless times. But my photos and descriptions don’t move anyone to tears. I finally have to say, “Well, I guess you had to be there.”

Have you ever used that expression? No matter how well you express yourself, mere words will never enable someone to enter your experience or see what you saw. All you can say is, “You had to be there!”

It reminds me of when Jesus told his disciples, “I still have many things to tell you, but you can’t handle them now.” In other words, I could try to lay it all out for you, but you wouldn’t get it

anyway. The disciples were not in a place to receive all that Jesus had to share with them. So, he tells them:

“But when the Friend comes, the Spirit of the Truth, He will take you by the hand and guide you into all the truth there is. He won’t draw attention to Himself, but will make sense out of what is about to happen and, indeed, out of all that I have done and said.”<sup>1</sup>

Jesus doesn’t shrug His shoulders and say, “You had to be there.” His Spirit leads us there. Though in many ways our future with God is surrounded by mystery, God is not a cold mathematical, three-in-one conundrum beyond knowing. God is an extravagant relationship of love, who is known in face-to-face togetherness.

<sup>1</sup> John 16:12-14 The Message



PHOTO: CORINNA CHEN/PIXAWAY

Instead of us missing out by “not being there,” the Father with the hand of the Spirit brings us into a rich and joy-filled life of eternal and boundless fellowship.

And just as I wish you had been there with us to see and experience the majestic Glacier National Park, I desire that you too will see and experience the stunning and overwhelming love God shares with us.

**Anthony Mullins**  
*Speaking of Life*



## Free Family Movie Night

A brilliant, science-minded girl named June discovers an old rollercoaster car in the woods and climbs inside. She suddenly finds herself in Wonderland, a magnificent amusement park she had created in her mind and put aside. The park is full of incredible rides and talking animals—but it is in disarray. June and the animals join forces to save this magical place and put the wonder back into Wonderland before it is lost forever.

85 minutes; rated PG

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

**25 September 2019**

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

Free ice-cream, tea and coffee available

**To reserve your tickets phone 1300 368 333  
or book online at [www.culturetracks.info](http://www.culturetracks.info)**

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

# A Question of Priorities

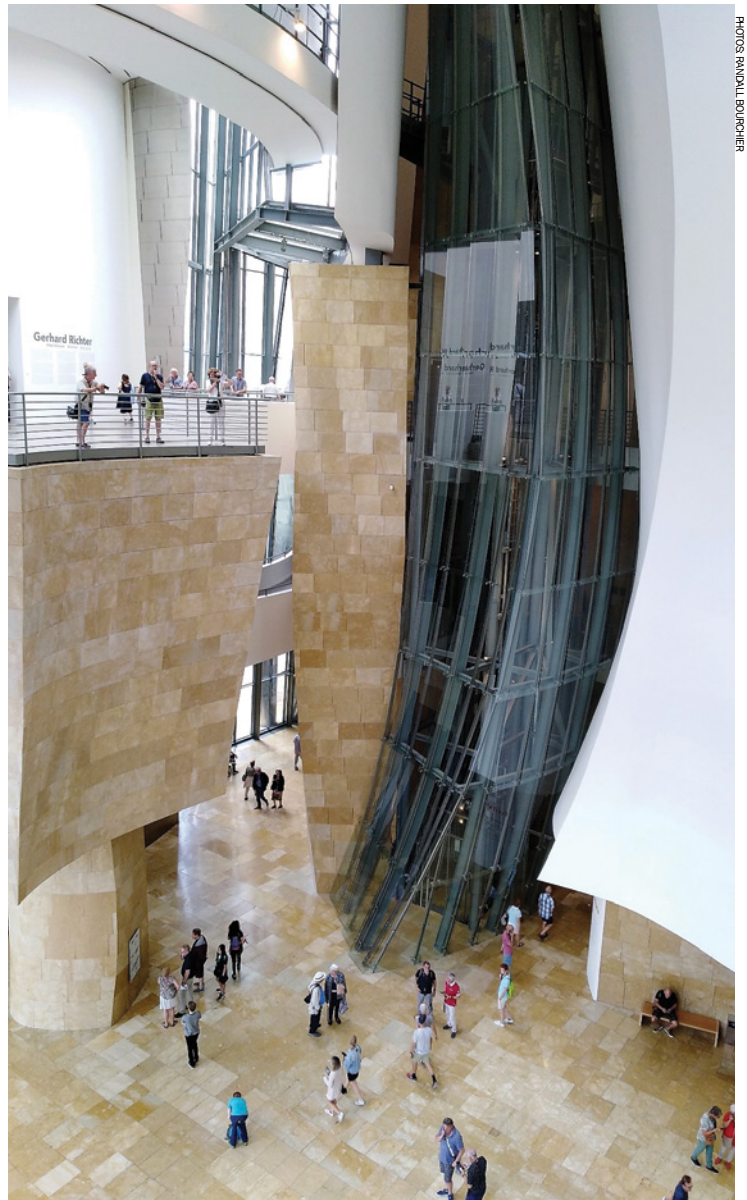
During a recent visit with our European family, I realised a long-held dream when my wife Mary and I visited the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, Spain. Years ago, I'd been tremendously excited by a friend's photos of the museum and hoped to visit one day. I wasn't disappointed—the reality exceeded my expectations.

Whether viewed from the outside or from within, the Guggenheim is an excitingly unusual, imposing and constantly surprising structure. It testifies to human ingenuity, imaginative creativity and craftsmanship.

The world-class museum, designed by North American architect Frank Gehry, has been a highlight of Bilbao since its construction in 1997. The museum's presence has transformed what was once a run-down docklands area of Bilbao and it now attracts thousands of tourists to the city every year. The building, shaped like an abstract ship, has been described as “an extraordinary combination of interconnecting shapes. Impressive limestone blocks contrast with curved architectural forms covered in titanium. Glass curtain walling provides the building with the light and transparency it needs.”<sup>1</sup>

A museum brochure describes Gehry's design as creating “a spectacular, eminently visible structure that has the presence of a huge sculpture set against the background of the Puente de La Salve, the river, the buildings in the city centre and the slopes of Mount Artxanda.”<sup>2</sup>

We came away from our few days in Bilbao energised, excited and mentally stimulated and refreshed.



PHOTOS RANDALL BOURCHIER

<sup>1</sup> [engineering.com/Library/ArticlesPage/tabid/85/ArticleID/88/Guggenheim-Museum.aspx](http://engineering.com/Library/ArticlesPage/tabid/85/ArticleID/88/Guggenheim-Museum.aspx)

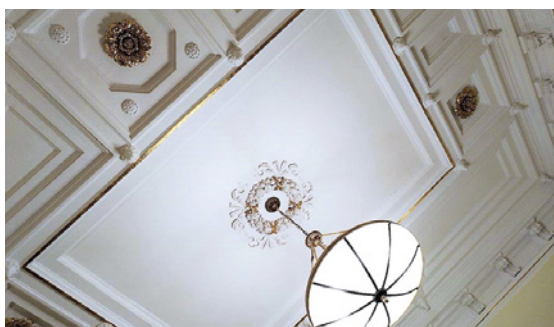
<sup>2</sup> *Architecture*. “Puente de la Salve” – “Bridge of La Salve”.



Several days later, we visited Marienbad, a world-renowned health spa and resort. In its heyday it was a favoured destination of the rich and famous. Edward VII regularly spent his summers in the town. As the ruler of what was then the world's most powerful empire, his presence made the town an important political centre where the king conducted talks with international statesmen such as Austrian Emperor Franz Josef I and French Prime Minister Clemenceau. In addition, statues have been erected in Marienbad to acknowledge the multiple visits of prominent artistic figures: composer Frederick Chopin and author Johann van Goethe.

Wikipedia records that most of Marienbad's buildings "come from the town's Golden Era in the second half of the 19th century, when many celebrities and top European rulers came to enjoy the curative carbon dioxide springs."<sup>3</sup>

In recent years, many of the buildings have been beautifully restored following their heartbreaking neglect during the grim years of communist rule. The accompanying pictures reveal something of the wonderful artistry that is on display in these feats of imaginative, functional engineering and craftsmanship.



The beautifully restored buildings of Marienbad are testament to the human capacity for exquisite feats of engineering and craftsmanship.

Both visits—Bilboa and Marienbad—inspired and energised us. Each reminded us of what is possible when some of the best of human creativity is exercised. One friend responded to some views of the Guggenheim I'd emailed: "Dark green with jealousy! I looked up the Guggenheim to see photos of building and some art. What is wrong with Melbourne??? Why do we not have some fabulous building on our skyline?"

Another friend responded to photos from Marienbad: "Those pictures are beautiful—stunning architecture! It makes me wonder why

some designers prefer a plain boxy style when such beauty is possible."

The observations of my two friends raise important questions. They're questions that should have implications not just for architecture but for the whole of life.

Perhaps one of the roles of beautiful architecture—or landscape, music, sculpture, craft, literature, or cinema—is to make us think more deeply about human potential.

What should be our purpose in living?

I believe that human beings have been given the responsibility of living well—not in the sense of a life dedicated to a selfish focus on personal accumulation, experiences or personal consumption, but in enjoying a life dedicated to contributing to our mutual wellbeing. A life dedicated to benefiting others and this beautiful earth as each person has opportunity. In so doing, far greater personal fulfillment is possible than can be achieved through selfish egocentricity.

Mary and I had commenced our travels walking through some beautiful landscapes along the northern Camino in Spain. As we walked, although we were frequently

or for worse!

We have the potential for superb and inspirational craftsmanship, for creating breathtaking beauty. Yet equally—when driven by greed or a purely functional focus—we tend to create in ways that may produce objects that, although functional, may exhibit a mediocrity or dull, drab homogeneity, which fails to reflect the best of human possibility. And, sadly, such approaches sometimes lead to corners being cut to the detriment of our health, safety and wellbeing.

Similarly, when it comes to the environment, we have the capacity to work alongside and with nature in ways that bring mutual human and environmental benefit, or, we can exploit the earth for our own ends in ways that are not environmentally or humanly sustainable in the long term.

You'd think that we'd readily understand that living in ways that contribute to the wellbeing of the earth would be of great mutual benefit. Wouldn't you agree that if this were to be our primary human motivation, people and earth would share in a much greater sense of wellbeing?

And so, a concluding question for you and for me: To whom are we committed to bring benefit and wellbeing? Is it self? Or is it the common good? Or, given humanity's potential for ingenuity and creativity, could it possibly be both?

Randall Bouchier

**Mooroolbark**  
Denture Clinic

9726 7284

Making Smiles Come to Life

proudly supporting

Living Today in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges

**PUBLICATION PERSPECTIVES**

- Design
- General Printing
- Technical Documentation
- Multimedia
- Web Design

**PUBLICATION PERSPECTIVES PTY LTD**  
29B Glenvale Crescent, Mulgrave VIC 3170  
Phone + 61 3 9561 1800 Fax + 61 3 9561 1855  
Email reception@publicationperspectives.com.au  
publicationperspectives.com.au

surrounded by springtime displays of abundant, colourful wildflowers, we were surprised by the unexpected absence of insects and bees.

During conversations along the way, several locals told us they remembered earlier decades when their cars required the regular cleaning of windscreens and radiators to remove dead insects at the conclusion of a relatively short car journey. They lamented that these days, there's no such need due to the diminished insect populations, which scientists warn may be catastrophic to human long-term survival.

I hope we'll take time to consider carefully the impact that human activity can have for better

<sup>3</sup> wikipedia.org/wiki/Mariánské\_Lázně. Marienbad is the German translation of the Czech Mariánské Lázně



## Students Unite East and West

Mooroolbark's Bimbadeen Heights Primary School prides itself on making a difference in the lives of its students. Along with a strong academic curriculum in core subjects, Bimbadeen offers specialist and extra-curricular programs that aim to instil a lifelong love of learning in students.

One of the specialist subjects offered for all students is Language Other Than English (LOTE) lessons. LOTE classes give students the opportunity to immerse themselves in Chinese language and culture. The classes emphasise speaking, listening, reading and writing Mandarin, while teaching the origins of the character-writing system and allowing children to develop a strong foundation in the language. This familiarity with Chinese customs and language has the potential to give students a head start, not just in future travels to China but also in the workforce.

The school's Mandarin teacher, Sarah Cherry, traces her love of Chinese culture back to her own primary school days when she was fascinated by the colourful silks of China. As an adult she lived in China for many years, teaching English, before returning home to teach Mandarin to Australian students.

As well as language lessons, Bimbadeen teaches students about China's geography, food, customs, and festivals. Students also participate in a variety of interesting activities that strengthen their language skills and underpin their knowledge of the Chinese way of life. One of the activities the children enjoy as part of their connection to Chinese culture is operating the gold and red Bimbadeen Dragon. Each year, several Bimbadeen

students manoeuvre the Chinese dragon in the Celebrate Mooroolbark street parade, entertaining onlookers with the dragon's colourful whirling, twisting movements.

School principal Leigh Johansen explained why Bimbadeen Heights chose to begin teaching Mandarin after the school's German teacher retired: "We realised that we needed to prepare our children for the future. The reality is that our children will have Asian friends at high school, university and in the workforce. If we haven't given them an understanding of Asian culture and Asian language, we are disadvantaging them."

Year 6 students also have the chance to increase their familiarity with China and its language by taking part in an annual trip to Bimbadeen's sister school in China. Accompanied by a group of Bimbadeen teachers, students are able to live with a Chinese family and attend school with local children. On 5 August, students and teachers from the Chinese sister school visited Australia for a week, staying in the homes of local families. Staying in each other's homes during these reciprocal visits strengthens friendships between students from the two countries. While in Australia, the Chinese students and teachers were treated to a range of lessons, activities and excursions to help them gain a valuable and authentic taste of our Australian lifestyle and culture.

The Chinese language program at Bimbadeen Heights Primary School is just one of the many tools the school's teachers use as they seek to provide all students with the opportunity to reach their unique academic and social potential.

Janet Van Dijk

## Inspiring Discovery and Seizing Opportunity



Mooroolbark College is proud to be 'a place to inspire discovery, to value and to seize opportunity'. One of the ways the college achieves this is with an annual trip to Treak Village in Cambodia.

Each year, Year 12 students raise funds to travel to Cambodia for two weeks in December. John Nichol, the school's student welfare coordinator, wanted something worthwhile for the Year 12 students to finish up their schooling with, rather than just a big party. He wanted something special and productive, something that would give the young people a sense of responsibility. He chose a visit to Cambodia so that the students would experience what it is like in a third world country.

Parents of students liked this idea too, because their children had an opportunity not only to travel but to be involved in a community-focused activity. The parents also contributed financially to both the trip and the village's needs through the fundraising activities organised by the students.

Since 2015, Year 12 students from Mooroolbark College have visited Treak Community Centre<sup>1</sup> in Cambodia each year. The village includes a school which in the past was run by volunteers in the UK, but since 2014 has been managed and run entirely by its Cambodian staff. Last year, through the efforts of the students' fundraising, Mooroolbark College was able to fund three teachers from Treak Community Centre to travel to Mooroolbark to visit the college and primary schools. They have also been able to support a teacher in Treak and hope to be able to have the funds to

do this every year.

School captain Jordan Daniels sees the school's volunteering opportunities as a chance for students "to develop as individuals, going beyond the role of just speaking at school assemblies but mixing with the community". He will be going to Cambodia in December and says that after 13 years of schooling it will be a "finishing off for us, introducing us to the world and helping us appreciate what we have in Australia."

Matthew Donald, a teacher at the college for the past 11 years, says visiting Cambodia will have a sobering effect on the students but will also help make them well-rounded human beings. Mooroolbark College has a tradition of supporting worthwhile community events, and one of the college's biggest contributions is its volunteer assistance every year at the Celebrate Mooroolbark festival. Matthew Donald sees the volunteering experiences of the school as an opportunity to give students praise for their efforts for a larger cause which brings the community together.

Mooroolbark College is certainly achieving its aim of being a place to inspire discovery, to value and to seize opportunity!

Barbara Austin



Teachers Michelle Collette and Matthew Donald with school captain Jordan Daniels (centre).

<sup>1</sup> [treakcommunitycentre.org/about](http://treakcommunitycentre.org/about)

# Children are Stinky!

We all know that *Children are Stinky*, don't we? The Circus Trick Tease team knows this better than anyone, and is determined to prove it! Bring your little stinkers to this laugh-out-loud circus show (Wednesday 2 October), set to a rocking soundtrack. Expect daredevil stunts, incredible acrobatics, lightning-fast hula hoops, and loads of laughs! This is the perfect show for the school holidays—you and your little stinkers are in for a day of fun.

The hit West End show, *My Brilliant Divorce* is visiting Mooroolbark on Friday 13 September! The Geraldine Aron play is a smash hit around the world, and now you can enjoy this hilarious and relatable story at your local community centre. *My Brilliant Divorce* is about Angela, recently dumped by her husband for a younger woman, who is on a mission of self-discovery. Follow as she tries to rebuild her life and start anew, looking for the real love of her life along the way. This play is about triumphs, failures and the unconquerable female spirit.

Fancy a lovely afternoon full of beautiful music? The **Dandenong Ranges Orchestra** concert on Sunday 20 October might be the perfect thing for you. This popular group of local musicians has been performing since 1984, playing stunning music throughout the Yarra Ranges. This year's performance will include an original composition about Bunjil the eagle, from Indigenous creation stories. The writing of this piece was funded by a Yarra Ranges Council grant, and we are incredibly pleased to stage the

first performance at one of our cultural venues. Come on down to listen to a group of dedicated, passionate musicians.

"Out of the gate and off for a walk went Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy"—these iconic words were written by Dame Lynley Dodd, children's author and illustrator extraordinaire. The **Lynley Dodd Story** (Saturday 7 September to Sunday 26 January) is a free exhibition of original illustrations from the beloved writer, and it's coming to the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum, just a stone's throw from Mooroolbark! Come and visit Hairy Maclary and his friends, including Slinky Malinki and Schnitzel von Krumm. Step inside the mind of one of the most cherished children's authors of our time.

Are you new to Mooroolbark, or simply keen to engage further with your local community? At Mooroolbark Community Centre we have a noticeboard full of pamphlets and flyers that our wonderful community members have posted—drop by to see what groups or classes you might want to join! Participate in our regular oil painting and pottery workshops or join in on the crafting fun with the Sandwiches group.

Did you know that Mooroolbark Community Centre is just one of five cultural centres around our shire? Culture Tracks is Yarra Ranges Council's year-round program of arts and cultural performances, shows, exhibitions, music and comedy. Be sure to jump on to culturetracks.info for inspiration on other great performances around the traps.



The Circus Trick Tease team are out to prove that children really are stinky!

## Water just a tap away with new accessible fountains

Residents and visitors living with disability now have access to fully accessible water fountains, thanks to a new council project. Eleven water fountains, which feature all-ability handles for drinking or water bottle refill, along with a dog bowl, will be installed throughout Yarra Ranges this year as part of the Drinking Fountain Program.

Councillor Richard Higgins said the fountains were designed to be accessible to people of any ability, following feedback from council's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC). "When it

came time to upgrade some of our older water fountains, our Recreation and Active Living Team spoke to our DAC, and committee members told us that button-operated fountains were impossible for people with a disability to use easily," Cr Higgins said. "The manufacturers of our fountains came up with this design, which has an easy-to-reach lever action, so rather than pushing a button, you just have to apply pressure to a lever. The taps are now easily accessible for people in wheelchairs and those with limited use of their hands."

"These are the first fountains of their kind in the area—and the first in Australia using this design. We've already had great feedback about these, and we look forward to rolling more out across Yarra Ranges in coming years."

Lilydale resident Michelle McDonald said the fountains meant it would be easier for people of all abilities and their dogs to access drinking water. "This is very important. When you're out, particularly with the dog, you need to know you've got water," Ms McDonald said. "When I'm caught with my drink bottle empty, I've had to go into shops and ask them to fill it. There are also a lot of people who might not have the strength in their arms or dexterity in their hands to turn or push taps, so this is a good idea."

Accessible drinking fountains have so far been installed at:

- Healesville's main street near the crossing
- Belgrave's main street near Hayes car park
- Upwey's main street near the playspace
- Lilydale's main street near Olinda Creek
- Lillydale Lake, on the far side from the car park
- PJ Mould Reserve in Wandin
- McKenzie King playspace in Millgrove
- Kilsyth near the town hall

Three more will be installed soon at:

- Norman Reserve in Mount Dandenong
- Near the crossing in Melba Highway, Yarra Glen
- Near the public toilets in Monbulk's main street

A major initiative in council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2021 is to make water the drink of choice for everyone in the community. This includes installing water bubblers and refill stations in activity centres, recreation facilities and on major walking and cycling trails, and promoting water over sugary drinks, among other measures.

To find drinking fountains near you, download Yarra Valley Water's Choose Tap app or visit [choosetap.com.au](http://choosetap.com.au)

Jesse Graham  
Yarra Ranges Council



Michelle McDonald with her dog at the new Lilydale water fountain

## Community Events Calendar

First Sunday of each month	<b>Craft and Produce Market:</b> Bellbird Park, Swansea Road, next to Lillydale Lake. Rotary Club of Lilydale. All proceeds to local and overseas projects. Contact Rotary Club Lilydale: 0423 558 833.
Mondays except public holidays	<b>Gifford Arts:</b> Painting & creativity afternoon, 1–4 pm. Gifford Village Community Centre, 389 Maroondah Highway, Croydon North. All ages welcome. Further information: 9051 3000.
Monday evenings March to November	<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 Helen Linnie: 9726 0477.
Every Tuesday	<b>Food and Friendship Lunch:</b> 12 noon. Gifford Village Community Centre, 389 Maroondah Highway, Croydon North. All ages welcome. Further information: Uniting Harrison 9051 3000.
Tuesdays & Thursdays	<b>Mooroolbark Men's Shed:</b> 9 am–3 pm. 91 Swansea Road, Montrose. For more information please contact President John Lowry on 9726 9970 or 0419 366 939, or via Facebook.
Tuesdays - Thursdays during school term	<b>GymbarOO:</b> Formative Sensory Perceptual Motor Program for babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers. Mooroolbark Community Centre. Ph: 9726 8740 mooroolbark@gymbaroo.com.au.
Wednesdays during school term	<b>Kilsyth Primary School Playgroup:</b> Painting, story time, activities and games for children 0 - 3½ years. 9:15 am. More info: 9725 4320 or kilsythps.vic.edu.au
Every Wednesday	<b>Disabled People's Company:</b> 10 am – noon, Mooroolbark Community Centre for morning tea and a chat with other people who have a disability. More information: ring Elsie 9726 4004.
Thursdays during school term	<b>Music Together Program:</b> 0-5 years. St Margaret's Uniting Church hall. 9:45 am. Morning tea & playtime included. \$10 per session per family. Call Yvonne 9726 9347 or Nancy 9726 4475.
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.
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 www.lmc.org.au
Every second Friday	<b>People's Pantry:</b> 6-7 pm. Three course home-cooked meal for the homeless and lonely. St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Rd. Enquiries Barbara: 0417 381 542.
7 September – 26 January	<b>The Lynley Dodd Story:</b> 10 am – 4 pm, 7 days a week, except public holidays. Yarra Ranges Regional Museum. Free exhibition. For more information phone 1300 368 333 or online: culturetracks.info.
8 September 13 October 10 November	<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.
13 September	<b>My Brilliant Divorce:</b> 2 pm, Mooroolbark Community Centre. Tickets \$18-\$28. Bookings phone 1300 368 333 or online: culturetracks.info.
2 October	<b>Children are Stinky:</b> 11 am and 2pm, Mooroolbark Community Centre. Tickets \$12 full. Ages 4+. Bookings phone 1300 368 333 or online: culturetracks.info.
20 October	<b>Dandenong Ranges Orchestra:</b> 2 pm, Mooroolbark Community Centre. Tickets \$12-\$18. Bookings phone 1300 368 333 or online: culturetracks.info.
9 November	<b>St Margaret's Uniting Church annual fete.</b> 9 am to 1 pm. Lots of stalls including handicrafts, homemade cakes, jams and preserves. BBQ, live music, and café. 207-219 Hull Rd, Mooroolbark.
10 November	<b>Remembrance Day service:</b> 10:45 am Mooroolbark War Memorial, Hookey Park. The final plaque for 'peace' will be unveiled. Community concert. To contribute: mooroolbarkhistorygroup@gmail.com
6 December	<b>Community Carols:</b> Hookey Park Rotunda, Mooroolbark. Picnic dinner from 6:30 pm, carols start 8 pm. 7:50 pm Croydon Citizen's Brass Band. 8:00 pm carols begin. BYO rug or chair; food & battery-operated candles for sale.

**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 Janet Van Dijk on 0407 110 051 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.

Proudly supporting Living Today  
in Mooroolbark.

Mooroolbark **Community Bank**® Branch  
Shop 19, 66-74 Brice Avenue, Mooroolbark  
Phone 9726 5388

 **Bendigo Bank**

# LIVING TODAY in Mooroolbark

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



**Editor**

Janet Van Dijk

**Associate Editor**

Doug Lewis

**Sub-Editor**

Kate Chivers

**Proofreader**

Terry Villiers

**Publication**

Published quarterly  
as a service to our community  
by Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship

**Contact**

Phone 03 9726 8898

Mail PO Box 228 Mooroolbark VIC 3138

Email [editor@livingtoday.org.au](mailto:editor@livingtoday.org.au)

**Distribution**

11,500 copies distributed throughout Mooroolbark  
in March and September and 2,500 copies  
distributed in June and December. Also  
available online at [livingtoday.org.au](http://livingtoday.org.au)

**Contributing Writers for This Issue**

Barbara Austin, R. Bourchier, K. Chivers, I. Kennedy  
C. Sianidis, S. Steel, A. Mullins  
J. Graham, J. Van Dijk

**Photographs**

G. Altmann, Barbara Austin, Barry Austin, Bigstock  
R. Bourchier, C. Chen, J. Graham, Sports in Focus  
N. Squelch, J. Van Dijk, C. Willis

**Cover Photograph**

Sports in Focus

**Graphic Design**

Carolyn Glennie, Publication Perspectives

**Printing**

Publication Perspectives  
Mulgrave, Victoria

**Like to contribute?**

If you have a good news story about people or groups  
who are an inspiration to the community, please contact  
the editor on our church-office phone number or by  
email (details 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.