

# LIVING TODAY

IN MOOROOLBARK/YARRA RANGES

NO. 26 DECEMBER 2008

Official Opening of Oxley Stadium 10X10 Concert

Meet our New CEO

Local Boy Makes Good

Mooroolbark's

**ANNUAL COMMUNITY CAROLS**

Friday December 5th 2008, Hookey Park

## Local Boy Makes Good!



Rowan Alexander

I'm not sure that Rowan Alexander is a typical bank manager. Monty Python suggested that accountants and thus, by extension perhaps, bank managers were really frustrated would-be lion tamers!

But, in speaking with Rowan, you can't fail to notice that he loves his work and, importantly for us he enjoys people. And, having grown up here, he's committed to the Mooroolbark region.

He's an easy bloke to converse with, he laughs a lot and you sense a certain compassion for others.

**Rowan Alexander has managed our community bank, the Mooroolbark Bendigo Bank in Brice Avenue, since it opened in 2002.**

Born in Sandringham, Rowan's family settled in Mooroolbark in 1965, and Rowan attended the (former) Mooroolbark Primary School at Five Ways.

His dad, Dick, 'repped' for a wholesale grocery, often working a second job to help make ends meet. His mum, Barbara, chose to remain at home and care for her family.

Rowan remembers the high percentage of unsealed roads in Mooroolbark during his childhood, and the fun he and his mates shared as they would head off on their bikes to Croydon pool, or drive their billycarts down to the fabulous treed area around Brushy Creek, where they'd climb trees, engage in battles and look for opportunities to bump one another into the blackberry bushes. It was a great place to go and mess around! I remember one day there was a fire up there, and fire engines, it was the most exciting thing we'd seen for a fair while.

At that time, there was still plenty of farmland in Mooroolbark, and he and his father would walk around where Bimbadeen Heights and Rolling Hills schools are located today. *My dad used to get me up early in the morning and go mushrooming over there and walk from there to the railway line, it's probably why I hate mushrooms, getting up so early, and we'd come home and he'd boil up a big pot of mushrooms. It would smell the house out a fair bit.*

*My mum used to always catch the*

*train from Mooroolbark to Croydon to do her shopping because there wasn't enough shops in Mooroolbark. I remember each time a new shop would open, she'd come home and say: 'I can get that item in Mooroolbark now, I don't have to go to Croydon.'* Mooroolbark slowly became a self-sufficient suburb.

When Rowan arrived in Mooroolbark he remembers there were shops on the north-western side of the railway line in Manchester Road. The Brice Avenue shopping strip was still developing, although he remembers the newsagent on the corner of Brice Avenue and Manchester Road.

He and some mates liked to ride their bikes down to the fuel depot next to the railway line. They'd sometimes *help stack briquettes*<sup>1</sup>. *We were probably causing more trouble than it was worth to the poor bloke. It was good fun.*

Even then, the Mooroolbark area provided lots of opportunity for a growing boy. He joined the cubs and scouts<sup>2</sup>, Friday night church youth group, St Francis Sunday School, where his mum taught and later the St Francis youth group.

After an unsuccessful year of playing soccer with some of his English friends at Esther Park<sup>3</sup>, Rowan started playing Aussie Rules, first at Lilydale and later at Montrose with his mates from school.

During his final year of primary school, he became part of the first intake of students at Manchester Primary. And upon completion



football for Lilydale

of Grade 6 attended Mooroolbark Tech<sup>4</sup>.

Around this time, Rowan started an afternoon paper round for Oxley's newsagency. Weekly pay was \$3.25 and the round included Mount View Parade, and Newman and Lincoln Roads. *There was one*

<sup>1</sup> Moulded coal 'bricks' used by many Mooroolbark homes for fuel during Rowan's childhood

<sup>2</sup> 1st Mooroolbark 7th Lilydale Scout group, which moved from the Mooroolbark public hall to new premises in Marion Avenue during Rowan's scouting days

<sup>3</sup> Rowan recalls a riding school conducted from a house next to Esther Park

<sup>4</sup> Beginning 1971

*house along Lincoln Road that just seemed to be a hundred miles from the nearest house that I delivered to, the last one before I did a u-turn, and quite often I just got to the second last house and thought: 'I can't be bothered going to the next house' and I'd go back. The residents of the last house began to think their paper was being stolen, so they stood at their window waiting for the paper, and of course I didn't show! It was the first time a boss gave me a bit of a 'You'd better lift your game, son!'*

A pivotal moment in Rowan's sporting life came when a mate invited him to play cricket with Croydon North. Still playing at 50, cricket remains his favourite game and pastime.

Describing himself as a *struggling cricketer* who has simply enjoyed playing to his level of capability, Rowan's best cricket memory took place whilst working in



the permanent pitch in the family backyard

Gippsland. He played in a Grand Final in the same team as one of his sons.

Since returning to Mooroolbark, Rowan has continued to play at Croydon North, where he has also served in behind-the-scenes roles. At 18, he took on the Treasurer's role – and over the years has taken on a variety of positions – Secretary, Social Secretary, Club representative to the local Parks and Gardens. And, in 1991, as a 32 year old, he received a life membership with the Club. He still regards it as a special honour.

Rowan laughs and jokes about his on-going playing days, *I still get a bat and a bowl. It's probably my last year playing, but I'll still be involved with the Club.*

*I'm a big believer in 'giving back' – not only helping the younger players develop, but mentoring others in committee processes and responsibilities. It's helpful when former players stick around to guide the new comers.*

*I'd like everyone to understand the enjoyment and satisfaction of continuing to be involved. It's such a great way of making friendships. There's a lot of joy involved and*

it's not only about progress and winning.

Rowan's commitment to helping out was formed throughout childhood, both by parental example, his mum was very involved at St Francis church and also the YWCA. His parents were very firm about respecting other people and *they'd always encourage and reinforce positive things you did. They'd give you a 'pat on the back' if you accomplished something good at school or in sport, or if a neighbour had something good to say about you... I don't think that people pat one another on the back nearly enough.*

On leaving school, Rowan started work with the National Bank<sup>5</sup> – and worked at several locations: Monbulk, Melbourne CBD, Healesville, Doncaster, Warburton, Mt Evelyn, before heading to Gippsland... Along the way, much happened of a personal nature.

In November 1979, Rowan married *the girl next door*, he and Lyn are still happily married and parents to Mark, Craig and Emily.

Rowan and Lyn first rented a flat in Mount View Parade for \$43 per week.

Rowan's life-long career in banking has been intensely satisfying, helping people buy homes, supporting growing businesses, and building trust through the relational nature of banking.

Since moving from the NAB (which, apart from regular re-locations), was a very positive time, he has thrived on the extra opportunities that community banking provide.

***He says, I love work, it helps people, and I love the type of work! I love living 10 minutes from my work.***

*Obviously with my job, I deal with so many walks of life that I never really knew were out there. Different interest groups; those with different goals or projects and desires of their own and whether its an emergency services organization, a church, cricket or football club the most important feature of any community group is the friendships and bonds people form with similar interests. One of the things I tell people, we've all got different personalities. You're not always going to get on with everyone that's next to you, but you've got to learn to respect and understand that we're all different... and work together for the common good and benefit.*

The Bendigo Bank is a franchise involving partnership with communities. The local board<sup>6</sup>, is not only charged with earning



outside Mooroolbark Community Bank

income for local shareholders, but equally importantly channelling some of the profits back into the community via financial grants and sponsorships.<sup>7</sup>

Following several bank closures in Mooroolbark, a steering committee that included names like Jean Mitchinson, Pam Knight, Peter Higgins and others, worked towards the eventual opening of our local branch.

Rowan recalls that the steering group had to raise capital by selling 630,000 \$1 shares, a massive effort for the local people.

Rowan admits that the 'tunnel vision' he had when starting his career has been transformed by the diverse opportunities presented by banking. He's learned to value the wide variety of personalities that make up a community, and this greater awareness has helped him learn to respect and understand that we're all different. He says, *Get that right, enjoy yourself and then there's the spin-off of great, lasting friendships.*

Earlier this year, the Bank was involved with the *Ban the Bulb* campaign that saw about 48,000 incandescent, low energy light bulbs installed in almost 3,000 homes.

The campaign involved a partnership between the Bank (responsible for marketing, publicity and collating) the CFA (responsible for training of CFA volunteers who then installed replacement low-energy globes) and Low Energy Supply Services (organised carbon credits and payment per unit to the CFA8).

Over the years the Bank has supported a rich diversity of activities in the community,

such as *Celebrate Mooroolbark*, National Blind Bowls Tournament, CFA, sporting teams and community groups.

Encouraging for all of us is Rowan's perspective on Mooroolbark:

*I don't think people fully understand what's out there. Someone said to me the other day that Mooroolbark's a pretty special sort of place to live. I totally agree! I suggested that one of the reasons why, is that we are predominantly a residential area. And there are so many different groups and activities in the area that we can become involved with.*

Rowan's best memories of Mooroolbark were formed during his happy childhood. Growing up, memories of school, sporting groups, friendships and along the way the opportunity to witness *the growth of what was such a small suburb, a stop on a railway line that was fairly negligible, to something that has grown into one of the best places in which you could possibly ask to live and you're no more than 45 minutes from the CBD, and 10 minutes from the Yarra Valley.*

*It's so well situated, and such a good environment, we're pretty fortunate; we have most of the services. You'll go to a Community Bank conference and hear of a country town raising money to put in a swimming pool, or a community centre or an aged care centre and Mooroolbark's got it, it's just at our fingertips. It's just a great township, and you can walk down the street and see faces that you've gone to school with. They're still here!*



Randall Bouchier

<sup>5</sup> Later became the NAB

<sup>6</sup> Local volunteers serve on the board, without financial remuneration

<sup>7</sup> *Living Today in Mooroolbark* thanks the Bendigo Bank for their partnership through annual financial assistance.

<sup>8</sup> Approx. \$120,000 for the local Country Fire Authority brigades (Mooroolbark CFA, \$26,000)

# A Unique Performance Event

Showcasing the performing talents of local artists with a disability

One of the very positive changes that has emerged in our society, in more recent times, can be seen in the significant steps taken to assist people with disabilities to enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities in life that most of us take for granted. At all levels, things have been done to help make our community a more friendly place for the disabled.

10 x 10 is just one very good example of the kinds of outcomes that have emerged as a result of this move within our communities.

On Sept 12th the Mooroolbark Community Centre hosted this year's concert consisting of ten items, each of ten minutes duration.

It was great to note the growing professionalism of this annual event. The whole evening was extremely well

presented with great acts which were much appreciated by the full-house audience of family, friends and well-wishers.



Phil Driver

Phil Driver, who has spent a life-time working with people with disabilities, commented on the very encouraging attitude of community acceptance

that was evident throughout the whole process of preparing and presenting this concert. He also expressed deep appreciation for the support received from the many sponsors, the Shire of Yarra Ranges and the Community

# 10X10

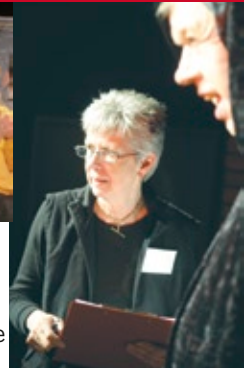


Centre staff.

Phil participated in the process of auditioning various individuals and groups prior to the concert. The committee dubbed him "Our 10X10 Ambassador"

Our sincere thanks to Phil and to everyone who gave their time and effort to make this evening the resounding success that it was,

**Well Done!**



**Mooroolbark's**  
**ANNUAL COMMUNITY CAROLS**  
Friday December 5th 2008, Hookey Park

Come along and enjoy a *twilight picnic* & community *Carols by Candlelight*

**Where:** Hookey Park Cnr. Station & Charles Streets

**What's on:**

**6.30pm** Picnic in the Park:  
Food and drinks will be available at family-friendly prices

**8.00pm** Carols Program begins:  
Featuring the Croydon Citizens' Band and performances by children from our local primary schools

**BYO** Chairs/rugs



**Sponsored by**  
**Lions Club of Mooroolbark**

**Supported by**  
**Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship**

**FREE FAMILY FILM NIGHT**  
Friday 23rd January 2009 @ 7.30pm

**THE FILMING OF**  
**WALL-E**

**ALL WELCOME!**

The usual free ice-cream and tea & coffee will be offered.

A snack-bar is open during the intermission with "goodies" at great prices. This school holidays program is a joint community service extended to young families in our neighbourhood by **Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship & Mooroolbark Community Centre.**

To reserve seats please contact Mooroolbark Community Centre in person or ring 9726 5488.

**SEE YA THERE!**

Please note: The Community Centre advises that due to the popularity of this program **bookings are essential.** If unable to attend, please advise the centre so that tickets can be released for others to use.

**Tickets not claimed by 7.15pm may be released for others.**



## Celebrating the life of

# Ken Makin

1930 – 2008



For the past decade and more, the name of Ken Makin has been synonymous with that of Mooroolbark Senior Citizens Club. Some years ago, when asked what the club meant to him, he replied "It is my Life." He said, "I am very proud to be able to call every one of the 220 members of our club my good friends."

Ken first joined the "Senior Cit's" in 1995. He immediately became active in many aspects of the club's life. In 1996 to 1997 he held the office of treasurer and was elected as president in 1998, a position he held until illness forced his retirement in 2008. His nine full years as president was a record in the 39 year history of the club and a time of significant growth and development. It was said of Ken that he was **a man who put his retirement years to very good use**. Many in Mooroolbark can attest to that and are truly appreciative of his valuable contribution to community life in our neighbourhood. Others speak of the great

family man that he was and all agree that he was **a good bloke**.

Ken was born in Sunderland, Northern England in 1930. Life was very hard in his formative years, in the midst of the great depression. It was during those early challenging times that he developed his life-long love of books, stories that enabled him to be magically transported to distant, warm and exotic places. As a boy of 14, the son of a coal-miner, Ken also soon found himself working in the colliery. However, a short time later, he was given the opportunity to commence work in a nearby ship-building yard. This led to further thoughts of exotic lands which in turn led him towards the recruitment office of the Royal Navy. The travel opportunities that followed changed his life forever, as did a posting to the south of England where he met Hilda Still, the love of his life, who would become his wife of 52 years. After his naval service and some years living in

Chatham, Kent, and now with three children in tow, the

family set out for Melbourne, Australia.

Once here, Ken joined his brother-in-law, Bill Tompsett in a career of painting and decorating. He continued to work at this trade until his retirement in 1995.

The house Ken and Hilda built in Sherlock Road became the social hub of many lives through numerous get-togethers, family times, and celebrations of various mile-stones.

In his moving eulogy, son David noted the theme that carried through Ken's entire life was one of service, dedication, hard work and sacrifice.

In Mooroolbark we too, were beneficiaries of that life of service. We celebrate Ken's life, along with his family, and extend our condolences to his loved ones.



## ONE MAN'S TRASH.....

Barbara Austin

The Salvation Army Mooroolbark Thrift shop, situated opposite the

Community Centre, in Brice Avenue is run by 30 dedicated volunteers and is overseen by a very capable, friendly lady named Sharon, who also runs the Salvos Administration Office across the road.

Sharon took over the administration of the shop about 5 years ago thinking it would only take a few minutes each day to catch up with the workers and answer queries. Little did she know that it would include anything from repairing tag guns to cleaning out drains to ringing around the list of volunteers to get a replacement, when someone cancels a shift or calls in sick.

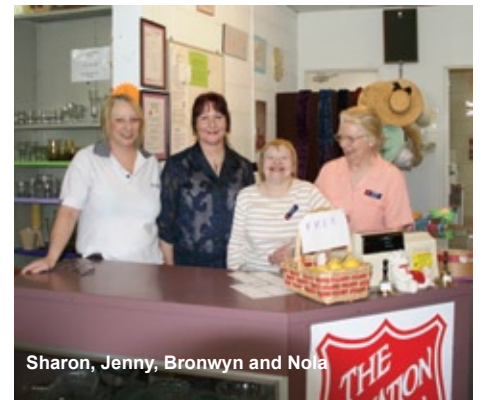
Most of the volunteers work one shift a week, some two, a shift being three hours long. Each person has brought her individual skills to the shop, depending where they have worked in the past or what their talents may be. One lady worked in a shoe shop and sees the shoes as her specialty. Another used to work in an antique shop and has an eye for bric-a-brac, whereas another is a whiz on the computer and makes posters and signs to give direction to new people starting. One keen enthusiast comes in over the weekend and has started lining the shelves with colourful paper to make the bric-a-brac more appealing to the buyer.

Others see the shop as a chance to display their creative skills by re-arranging sections of the shop or decorating the window. There is always an air of anticipation when entering the shop after being away for a few days, to see what's new around the shop and to catch up with fellow work mates.

On occasions there are students from Luther College, Lilydale High School and Billanook College who do work experience or community service for their school curriculum and it is always refreshing to see their smiling faces and hear their youthful laughter.

The Salvos are well-known for their community spirit and when working on the cash register it is not unusual to be asked where the grocery vouchers are handed out, and for those people to be directed across the road to the Salvos Administration Office. One day, a man came in with a voucher and was given blankets and pillows, the first pillow he had slept on for over a fortnight. He was sleeping in a car.

The back room, as we call it, is where all the donations of clothing are sorted and anything that is not in excellent condition, is tossed into a big white bag which is sent away to be re-used somewhere else, either overseas or to the homeless. Very little is wasted. Old towels or blankets are thrown into a doggie box to be sold as doggie blankets. One lady comes in and buys them



Sharon, Jenny, Bronwyn and Nola

for World Vision. I am often reminded of the saying "One man's trash is another man's treasure".

Sharon is always looking for volunteers so come and join us. It involves filling out a form and a painless interview and then you too will be part of a happy team, who only want to be of help to the community.

# Responsibility....

## not what you might think

Steve Steel



It's about 5am. My sub-conscious has woken me from a deep sleep. I'm barely awake, but enough to be able to make out the groaning and rumblings of the garbage truck as it makes its way up our street. As it gets closer, I become more awake with a hopeful anticipation that it will stop outside our house, and make its comforting sounds with *our* bin.

If it does, then I can rest, knowing that my son has done his job of putting the bin out. If it doesn't, then I will go through the mental exercise of wondering if the truck has done the other side yet, ('it's so warm in bed') and if I should bother to put our bin over the road for a later pickup ('suppose I'd better put some clothes on'). If I choose *that* option, I need to be very quiet...trying to avoid letting anyone know that our house has mucked up bin night ...again!

And that's only one bin, then there's the recycling or garden waste...you know the routine...but they're not near as mission critical to life functioning normally, as having your bin emptied on garbage night.



### A national disease

A school newsletter caught my eye with a short article on responsibility... one line really made me think. 'Lack of responsibility is becoming a national disease.' Sound a bit over the top...maybe. Maybe not. We know how a disease can spread, often in ways that are unnoticed, unintended, or just plain mysterious. It's so easy to get what's going around, the latest cold, sore throat or headache and a myriad of new and exotic ailments, just by being with others!

Could 'social habits' also be transferred

so easily and innocently? Is it possible that, as parents, we may be advocating a lack of responsibility, specifically to our kids? Has responsibility, a regular part of life a generation or two ago, become an optional extra now, or a victim of some new social epidemic?

### Responsibility is...

If we ponder some elements of responsibility, we may begin to see what's missing from the mix of our social and moral foundation... an integral part of how the society we love actually functions at all and of how our families should function. Families after all, are what society is made of. Just like a house is made of bricks, strong bricks help make a strong house.

We could go back to the war years... tragic and bitter episodes in our nations history that have certainly been fundamental to the values and principles that we proudly include in what we call Australia. The responsibility young men shouldered as they enlisted, went off to war, fought and even died for our country, echo the very essence of 'mateship'...being responsible for each other. Looking after each other and working together for a common cause. It embodies the essence of responsibility...sacrifice, putting others needs ahead of oneself.

Moving on a few years...kids only a few decades ago had many jobs around the home or farm. Not five minute jobs like emptying the dishwasher, but lasting an hour or longer. Like cleaning the chook shed, or chopping firewood, or mowing the lawn etc. It was a long list...do you remember? I'll bet you remember that you weren't going anywhere, or having friends over until jobs were done, maybe your friends even helped get them done faster!

There's more support for the 'national disease' idea in the TV ads our government has been making for many years...you know, the ones like, "Do the right thing!" Something was obviously wrong when people had to be reminded to put their rubbish in the bin! So I think we've established a trend here, but now, what to do about it?

### A different focus

Our responsibilities range from the mundane to 'mission critical'. Some we even get paid to do, but most are (or used to be)

just part of living life each day. Unfortunately, we can very easily transmit to our children a sense that a responsibility is a burden, something we 'have' to do. But we can learn to see it differently. We *could* see our responsibilities as a privilege.

"What," I hear you say, "is a privilege about taking out the garbage bins, or being on time for something?" We *could* learn to value them as contributions to the lives of others! To our family or anyone really that happens to cross our path and we value as a human being like us.

When we fulfill our responsibilities, we are demonstrating a regard for those who we are able to help out in some way. Don't we love it when things just happen the way they are supposed to...because someone has done their bit, in an appropriate and timely manner? Responsibility is so essential to daily life running smoothly, that its absence only really becomes apparent when someone has slipped up, and the day's wheels begin to wobble and fall off. People get angry, upset, or just carry on doing what someone else has just 'not' done. It's easy to see how contagious this can be. Have you ever noticed how easy it is to make a mess when there is a mess already there? And following on from that...how easy it is to complain about it.

(Really, it is OK to carry our rubbish from the footy or the theatre and put it in a bin! And yes, I know...should be more bins.)

There needs to be an ownership



and sharing of family responsibilities. For example, if we have a focus on being tidy around the home, chances are, that value will transfer outside the home into society in general.

### We can see the effects

You can't see responsibility... we have to describe it with words and actions. Responsibility has to be taught; it won't come any other way. From an early age we can reward good practice with encouragement. Rather than using actual monetary or physical rewards, which can send a signal of 'what can I get' for doing the right thing. Looking after their stuff, knowing where it is, keeping it clean are the basics of responsibility.

Literally talking about responsibility will contribute to socially healthy families, and including money in that conversation is crucial to having it respected and valued appropriately.

Teaching the value of saving, and buying what we can afford, is fast becoming 'old fashioned' these days. We can model saving principles with wise use of family funds, and include our kids in the managing of the family budget. Even if it is simply, 'No we can't afford that this month, as we have a few extra bills, we'll look at that again next month'. Saving a set portion of any money they receive is a great way to set them up for a financially responsible lifestyle.

Having a pet (not a digital one) and looking after them, is a terrific opportunity for learning responsibility and caring. Every day, they have to 'do the right thing' and feed, clean, play with their pet. Even a simple plant can foster a regular daily approach to managing their responsibilities. It becomes part of their life, which is really what responsibilities are, they are not something we add on when, or if, we think about them, or when someone tells us we ought to.

Ideally, we all need to do these things because we care, not because we have to.

### Ouch! That feels great!

If we include natural consequences in the whole deal, then kids will understand the big picture better. "If I don't do my 'jobs', and do them properly, I will have to do them again. Or even pay for a replacement for something I've lost, or worse, let die!"

Managing time can be a problem area too, especially with homework. What with family matters, jobs, friends, money, time and possessions, life is one giant responsibility! But if it is not recognised that way, all of the above get out of control, they cause us more trouble and stress than pleasure.

### A generational impact

Which life do we want for our kids? Can we check our projected image of responsibilities? Can we be more positive about the things we need to do, you know, the everyday things, the things that can get pretty boring, pretty quick, unless we keep the focus on why they need to be done. Because we care for those around us, just like we want others to care for us.

It really does sound *old fashioned*, doesn't it? But if you remember what life used to be like when people were responsible most of the time, simply because that's how they were, then you'd probably want that to be a part of who your children are too. Even their mates can get a clear message on that, by having some *positive peer pressure*... from *our* kids. The message then rolls on to *their* children. Grandparents are great with this stuff!

### A real climate change

Thankfully the dependable garbage men still have an aura of responsibility, if your bin is out there (and not tipped over) they WILL empty it, no question. It's a part of the bedrock of our society! Hey, they do it 365 days a year! Thanks guys!

Talk about responsibility and its core value in the lives we share. Encourage our kids when they respond with actions that contribute to the family life, and explore the results when someone has 'dropped the ball'...not with accusations, but calmly and patiently. Let's help get 'lack of responsibility' off the national disease register.

PS. Yes, thanks for that thought. I know I need to consider getting my son up to fix the bin if he missed it the first time...after all...it's his *responsibility*!



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# Parenting "Do Over" for Grandparents

By Jeb Egbert

Life doesn't give us the opportunity for "do overs." I certainly wish it did. Perhaps you feel the same way. I've sometimes whispered to myself, "If I only had known then what I know now, I might have handled that situation better." But I didn't know then what I know now.

I have the privilege of leading workshops on parenting, and inevitably quite a few grandparents attend. One of the recurring questions I ask during these workshops is "If you had a 'do-over,' how would you change your approach to parenting?"

Perhaps the most consistent answer I hear is, "I would focus more on the love I have for my children and less on rules and discipline." Variations of this response include "I would tell my children I love them more frequently than I did."

That's an interesting response because, while some may know they are loved by hearing the words "I love you," to others those words might seem hollow and lifeless. They might prefer spending a day at the beach with their mom or dad, or perhaps receiving a gift.

I always follow up by asking the question, "Does this mean you wouldn't have any rules?" The response is typically, "Oh no. It's just that my recollection of my parenting style was an overemphasis on rules and discipline."

Many grandparents say they wished they had spent more time with their kids. They reflect on years gone by and the relationships that weren't cemented by an investment of time. Some say they would have shown more spiritual leadership within the family.

I thoroughly enjoy listening to these "grand" parents. They have much to share.

Most parents do not make wilful mistakes. The vast majority love their children and wanted to be "the perfect parent".

We don't have a chance for a do-over. But we can share the lessons of experience with one another. Regardless of all we did or did not do as parents, the best for them is yet to come!

*Dr Jeb Egbert has focused on youth ministry and education for 30 years. He is currently the Vice President of Academic Affairs for Argosy University in Southern California.*



## Magazine Offer

The above article, *Parenting "Do Over" for Grandparents* is a condensed version of the original which appeared in the Oct-Nov issue of *Christian Odyssey* magazine.

*Living Today in Mooroolbark* has obtained a number of copies of this issue and is happy to make them available to interested readers. *Christian Odyssey* is an easy reading magazine exploring matters of life and faith.

If you would like one of these copies, simply send your name and address to the Editor at lewisdm@bigpond.net.au, or P.O. Box 228, Mooroolbark 3138, or by phone 03 9726 8898.

## Sports Stadium goes High Tech

***Oxley Stadium uses the latest technology in power and water savings to save costs and do its part for the environment***

On Friday 12th of October 2008, Oxley College held the official opening of their new state of the art sports stadium – Oxley Stadium. The stadium was opened by Mr Tony Smith, Federal Member for Casey and Shadow Minister for Education.

"Featuring 5 competition sized basketball courts, a fully equipped fitness centre, a 300 seat function room, change rooms to accommodate 120, class rooms and a sports café, Oxley stadium is a fantastic new facility for the school and also the wider community," said school Principal, Mrs Sally Broadley. "This is a great, great example of a school and a school community taking hold of its own destiny," said Tony Smith. The stadium was built without any funding from external sources.

During the design and construction of this new facility a lot of thought was given to environmental impact and cost savings through recycling, reduced power consumption and water savings. The exterior shell of the stadium, a recycled factory building, purchased from Arlec on the opposite side of Maroondah Highway, not only saved the school money on design and engineering but also minimized the need for expensive new building materials. The lighting system, designed especially for the stadium provides 50% power savings through intelligent daylight harvesting and carefully calculated skylight paneling that provides the maximum amount of natural light while reducing the maximum amount heat from sunlight. Oxley Stadium is the first fully commissioned facility of its kind in Australia. General lighting throughout the stadium is automatic, with sensors turning lights on and off. Oxley appreciates the need to

capture and reuse it's valuable water resources. The water from the large catchment area of the stadium roof is distributed to a newly built retarding basin, which provides year round watering for the Colleges vast grounds and sports ovals.

Amongst these environment friendly measures is other technology that makes this stadium state of the art. The flooring used for the court floors is the same used by the Australian Institute of Sport. The floor provides anti shock resistance, providing players with 41% shock reduction.

The stadium is now used as a training base for the Saints and Hawks basketball teams and hosts Monday and Wednesday night and Saturday competition as part of the Kilsyth Basketball Association network.



**Pastor Graham Nelson, Principal Mrs Sally Broadley and Mr Tony Smith, MP cutting the ribbon to officially open Oxley Stadium.**

COMBINED CHURCHES CHRISTMAS

*carols*

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## Pickanini Design

Nicole McLaren's work background is quite varied. Her first 10 years were spent in mother-craft nursing and childcare. She has also worked as a chef for a number of years.

She first became involved in retail sales through conducting stalls at various festivals – both city and country. She still conducts a weekly stall at the Ceries Market in North Fitzroy. In March 2008 she took the significant step of opening her own shop at **101 Cardigan Road, Mooroolbark**. The name for the shop stems from Nicole's memories of her Dad always calling her his "little pickanini"

Her main focus is on supplying high quality, modern-design, recycled clothing for children from newborn to size 10 at a "nothing over \$10" price range.

The shop also carries a variety of gift items. These include a unique range of natural and organic jewellery created from hand-made glass beads, natural stone, shells and leather. Also hand made, imported, money-belts "with a difference". A range of locally made fairy costumes for kids always creates a lot of interest. Locally produced arts and craft works are on display – and are sold on consignment.



Nicole grew up in Upwey but got to know this area well and formed many friendships through playing Basketball for Ringwood Hawks at Kilsyth. She participated in the Australian "Opals" squad for 2 years before being forced to retire through a knee injury. Her basketball connections with the area influenced her decision to open her shop in Mooroolbark.

A single mum, with three children aged 8-5years, Nicole is determined to "make a go" of this venture in order to meet her family needs. We wish her every success for the future.



Eight years ago after 3 years at Western University, Bendigo, photographer Johl Dunn came down from Shepparton to the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne and started up his first studio in Boronia. And four months ago Johl opened up a new boutique style studio "JD Digital Photography" in Winyard Drive, Mooroolbark. Letters and emails were sent to local schools, charities and churches to see if he could be of help in fund raising events by supplying vouchers and the response proved that Mooroolbark was very good place to be.

Weddings and portraits are Johl's specialised skills but his emphasis is on portraits, all shot on location. His comment was that he enjoyed the "wow" look on his clients' faces at the end of the day when they first saw their new portraits.



The Boutique Studio,  
Winyard Drive, Mooroolbark

Johl's main purpose is to establish himself as a premier portrait photographer and helping out in the local community is a way of getting recognised and known in the community.

One of Johl's special interest groups is a bus soup kitchen run by a client for the homeless in the Knox area and "JD Digital" helps out with cash donations.

**Barry Austin**



Johl can be contacted at:  
**JD Digital Photography "Young, Fresh, Innovative"**  
Tel: 9733 4854  
[www.jddigitalphotog.com](http://www.jddigitalphotog.com)

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# Meet the CEO!

There's a new CEO at the Shire of Yarra Ranges. He's faced with an enormous job ahead of him; getting to know people in the communities and coming to understand some of the intricacies and diversity of this sprawling Shire.

Glenn Patterson is an articulate man who was happy to share some of his life-story with me and was also candid in talking about some of the challenges facing the Shire.

When Glenn talks about his childhood, he does so with enthusiasm and gratitude. Born and bred in the then, 'new suburb' of Beaumaris, he enjoyed growing up in an environment that encouraged an outdoor lifestyle. The beach was close by and most nights after school, Glenn and his mates engaged in a familiar ritual for many growing up during the sixties and early seventies. They'd enjoy home made biscuits and cake at one of their homes and then disappear on their bikes either to the beach and foreshore for swimming, exploring and tree climbing, or to the nearby Royal Melbourne Golf Links where they'd search for golf balls. Unusually for the time, Glenn's family frequently enjoyed outdoor barbeques surrounded by the garden that his father developed and treasured.



Glenn says of his childhood *"It was a very healthy, active caring environment. I couldn't have asked for more"*.

His parents encouraged and celebrated his achievements and provided him with opportunities – sometimes at considerable sacrifice to themselves. They couldn't really afford to send him to Mentone Boys Grammar, following his years at Beaumaris North Primary but they did anyway. And they derived real pleasure in watching Glenn's accomplishments along the way. Glenn recalls that their support helped foster his confident approach to life. They were especially thrilled as he took on various school leadership roles – 2nd Lieutenant in the Cadet Corps, Prefect and Deputy Head Boy.

During his school years, Glenn enjoyed

his sport. He progressed to State level in short distance sprint events and recalls competing at Olympic Park. He represented Mentone Grammar in swimming, athletics and football. Whilst in Grade 6, he remembers being awarded the best and fairest award at a school assembly by the St. Kilda Football Club president.

Growing up as an only child, Glenn's parents created an open sort of home and encouraged plenty of visitors and regular sleepovers. *"I remember having birthday parties of 10 or 15 boisterous boys running around the backyard. My dad had access to quite affordable soft drinks through his work, and mum would have a bake-up, and grandma would come down – we'd do our thing and tear around and end up going bowling, play golf or go to the movies..."*

Glenn's parents believed in the importance of an annual holiday together, the usefulness of seeing new places and having a 'break'. They'd head off in the EH Station wagon for holidays in mainly coastal locations – Wilson's Promontory, Merimbula, northern NSW and Queensland. Central Australia and the Grampians were non-coastal destinations. And there was a glorious road trip when Glenn was in Grade 5 and his father took 3 months long service leave. In the early days, the family camped in a 12x12 canvas tent but over time graduated to hiring a caravan and later still rented units.



Sundays saw a regular family ritual. There'd be church attendance at St Martin's Uniting Church, followed by the Sunday roast and then the Sunday afternoon drive – often to the Dandenongs.

Glenn's parents, especially his mother, are still very active at St Martins and as Glenn grew up, he remembers them volunteering their time to help out both at the church (with rostered activities and involvement in fellowship and social events), and at school, where they'd attend working bees and his mum would help in the tuck shop. *"When mum was on duty, I think I got a free lunch. I think that's how it worked. You used to have the brown paper bag and you'd write out your order... and when I had a tuck shop lunch I could have a white bread roll (instead of the wholemeal we ate at home) and a white buttered bun with the pink icing on top and a 'Glug' or a 'Razz' or a 'Sunny Boy' – one of those tetra packs"*.

Glenn spoke about the pets and hobbies he enjoyed as a child. There were collections of stamps, coins and shells encouraged by aunts or his grandmother, and the long-term interest in breeding fish in properly equipped tanks – and keeping guinea pigs, rabbits, and lizards.

Life at home was good! Glenn didn't leave until he was 23. And he appreciates the values instilled by his parents during his childhood and teens: *"I often see myself doing things, hear myself saying things, see myself behaving in a certain way and often reflect on how much that goes back to the environment where I was brought up. The principles weren't elaborate but they were fairly fundamental and I think quite sound: doing an honest day's work – a strong work ethic; treating others as you'd expect to be treated yourself; taking a very honest approach to things – no nonsense and not 'gilding the lily' – not trying to pretend things are something they aren't but being very straightforward about things. Honesty and integrity, 'what you see is what you get'. These were the sorts of things my parents instilled in me. Leadership roles – opportunities for greater influence were things that they implicitly encouraged."*

Glenn Patterson

Following secondary school, Glenn completed a business degree, majoring in local government and in the early 90s completed a Masters of Business from RMIT. This degree involved much more self-directed learning than the more traditional MBA – looking at the holistic development of self-awareness and one's impact upon others.

Employment began at the former Shire of Sherbrooke for a few months in 1985-6, until a job closer to home opened up at the Shire of Moorabbin.

At 23, Glenn was appointed as the Deputy Shire Secretary at Leongatha for the Shire of Woorayl, which was incorporated into the newly created South Gippsland Shire in 1994. Glenn worked there for 11 years – becoming a Director in 1994, before his next appointment in 1998 as CEO at the Colac-Otway Shire. 2005 saw him appointed as CEO at Baw Baw Shire. During his time at Leongatha, he found himself enjoying the company of Vicci - the HR coordinator at the Shire of Woorayl. They married in 1993 and have two sons, Thomas (13) and James (11).

During his working life, Glenn has also taken on leadership roles with Apex and been involved with several Progress Associations, and an Environmental group. He's currently involved with a group hoping to establish a branch of the Bendigo Bank at Mt Eliza, where Glenn and his family now live.

Glenn's best memories of community spring from his formative years. He recalls that Beaumaris was a new suburb and that everybody pulled together in facing common challenges. There were strong relationships and interaction, great friendships, an enormous amount of sharing, with an exceptionally strong sense of belonging. His more recent experiences – as pleasant as they've been, haven't been able to duplicate that same sense of belonging.

Perhaps because of these boyhood experiences, Glenn describes healthy



Glenn Patterson SYR Cultural policy launch

community in terms of *connectedness, inclusion, involvement, levels of participation, growth and learning* coupled with support from local councils - *good access to services and facilities and programmes that nurture development and sustainability.*

We talked about the difficulties faced by a huge Shire organization serving diverse townships and communities, and how the Kennett reforms during the nineties didn't always help. Some changes encouraged greater employee mobility, which, when added to similar community trends, created difficulties for Shire organisations anxious to retain local knowledge and experience. Consequently, Glenn admits that it's difficult to achieve a workable balance where employees don't stay too long (and become stale) or stay too briefly. He hopes that his focus on staff development and training will help to build greater employee work satisfaction and lead to employees serving our communities more capably. He commented that all Shires face pressures to make the working environment uniquely attractive in order to attract and retain the best people.

Along with many of us, Glenn is anxious to avoid the 'engagement fatigue' which communities experience from time to time when several different sections of the Shire organisation consult at similar times with one community. He believes that improvements need to be made in the effectiveness of engagement, with the greater improvement

(80%) coming from strengthening relationships and the lesser contribution (20%) coming through process improvement.

I asked how the Shire could best help communities without stifling healthy grass-root initiatives already taking place?

*We need to ask, what's the most effective role in any given situation that this Council can play? Sometimes, at one extreme it will be getting out of the way, simply allowing a community to get on with it. If there's any support or encouragement or facilitation that we can provide – great!*

*Sometimes it doesn't even need that because some communities have a vision of achieving something and its progressing well – and there's probably no role for us to play. ...through to the other extreme, communities who might be struggling, who might have some sense of wanting to improve themselves or do some good work but are not sure how to go about it – that's where community engagement comes in ...we're happy to partner with you, and get the other governmental agencies involved and work out how best to work together to get a better outcome.*

*It's not about the Council dictating how things are to be done. It should be very much about communities being self-directed and determining their own futures... the vision, the outcomes and aspirations the community has, should be set by the community. Our role is to capture that and make sure our programmes, our services, our works are consistent with that and can work in a complementary way to achieve those things.*

Thanks for your time, Glenn – especially for sharing some of your life with us. We wish you well and we'll watch, intrigued, to see how your envisaged changes progress over the next few years.

**Randall Bourchier**

# Celebrate Mooroolbark 2009

Celebrate Mooroolbark 2009 is scheduled for Saturday March 28th and is an opportunity for the people of Mooroolbark and surrounding districts get together for a fun day. This will be bigger than ever and will incorporate the Red Earth farmer's market with produce and many other items available. Fun activities for all ages are to be provided and our central theme is "Australian Stories".

Already the line up is being prepared for the central stage with a wide variety of musical treats and there is an opportunity for the winners of the **Celebrate Mooroolbark Talent Quest** to perform on stage. Don't miss this exciting opportunity to perform *your* talent. Can you dance? Sing? Play a musical instrument? Tell a story? Perhaps you are Mooroolbark's answer to Australian Idol?

**Don't miss out !! Application forms for free entry to the contest and further information are available now from Arline Myers on (9726 4282)**





*The experienced, the newcomer and the simply curious are all most welcome.*



At last, the Yarra Valley Region and surrounds has a local bonsai society.

Bonsais are miniature trees and are shaped to suit shallow pots. You can grow bonsai in any size, large or small, so the art is well suited to the smaller back yard.

The joy of this art is to see and work with the forever changing colours and shapes of your projects as the seasons change. Interested?... Come along and enjoy an evening of conversation, bonsai action, fun and good friendship with other lovers of this magnificent art-form. The experienced, the newcomer and the simply curious are all most welcome.

The Yarra Valley Bonsai Society meets at Japara House in the centre of Montrose every 2nd Tuesday of the month. *For more information please visit [www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au](http://www.yarravalleybonsai.org.au) or call Peter Raymakers on Tel. 0431 817 470*

## Pembroke Primary School: Making a "World of Difference"

Pembroke Primary School has embraced the notion of "making a difference" As active citizens within the community the school is forging ahead with projects designed to tap into the needs of local residents. To assist in this area, the school has recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Bendigo Bank's Community Enterprise scheme to construct a Woodwork and Technology shed. This building will be used by the students to produce a range of items including wooden toys which will be donated to local charities for distribution to other children at Christmas time. The school also has a number of bicycles which will given a new lease of life by the students and then also distributed via local agencies. Carolyn Elliot (the School's Principal) says, "This is an exciting initiative that will provide

students with valuable technical skills, share knowledge and expertise, reinforce the notion of citizenship and embrace the hands on learning that occurs at the school". PembrokePrimary is also exploring opportunities to construct possum boxes for the local area in order to cater for the local fauna that reside in the Mooroolbark area.

The school is keen to hear from anyone who may be able to assist with materials, help working with students, links to local agencies or any other initiatives. **Please contact Carolyn Elliot @ Pembroke PS on 9725 6689 or [pembroke.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:pembroke.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au) for further information**

### News-Flash

As we go to print with this issue we have been advised that Carolyn Elliot has been successful in her application for the permanent position of principal at Pembroke. We congratulate Carolyn and wish her every success and happiness in her new appointment.



# LIVINGTODAY in Mooroolbark

### Production

LIVINGTODAY in Mooroolbark is produced by a group of local volunteers



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Doug Lewis

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### Like to Contribute?

If you have a good news story about people or groups who you believe are a good example to the community, please contact the editor through our church office number or by email (as above)

## MISSIONSTATEMENT

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