

LIVING TODAY

IN MOOROOLBARK/YARRA RANGES

NO. 27 MARCH 2009



Celebrate MOOROOLBARK



Friday March 27th

- Talent Quest

Saturday March 28th 10am - 4pm

- Community Stalls
- Farmers Market & Food Stalls
- Street Parade
- Croydon Citizens Band
- Ringwood Pipe Band
- Stage Performances
- Rides & Activities for Kids
- Scout Bridge
- Native Animals Nursery

Ecumenical Church Service 9:15 am



11,500 Free Copies Distributed Throughout Mooroolbark & District



Our Member for Casey TONY SMITH, MP



"I vividly remember... I'd found my interest. I dropped the sciences subjects and took two history subjects, politics and legal studies."

Sometimes when we think of people in the news, we forget that they're ordinary people like ourselves. And yet, as we speak with them, we discover that they share similar life experiences as the rest of us. Tony Smith is no exception. Life isn't all 'peaches and cream' in politics as Tony's recent history shows. It mustn't have been all that easy when the Liberal Party lost the recent Federal Election or when Tony was moved from the Shadow Education portfolio – an area he loved – to the Shadow Assistant Treasurer portfolio. But, as for us all, life goes on. We adapt and get on with it.

Tony: "Everyone will have disappointments whatever they do. The most important thing is to maintain a grounding in your local community. And to nurture important friendships outside of politics. Fortunately in that regard I've always had a lot of friends who are very candid and honest... they've got nothing to do with politics and they're not interested in whether I've done something well or if I've mucked something up. They're just interested in being friends." No doubt, too, other interests help. Some time ago, Tony lovingly restored an old Monaro – having owned one during his university years.

Living in Box Hill, Tony's childhood and school years are similar to the memories of so many. He was born in 1967. His father was a chemistry teacher; employed first at Northcote High and later at Carey Grammar. Tony remembers that his father helped him with his studies but gave him space to work through his personal indifference towards the academic side of schooling. He had always enjoyed the social and sporting sides of school, but late in his secondary years he discovered a passion for history and politics.

Although interested in politics, neither Tony nor his family were involved in the machinery of political life. He remembers that his grandfather, like General MacArthur,¹ admired John Curtin and yet voted for Menzies in 1949, and that his parents voted Liberal. Mealtimes around the table were pretty informal accompanied by a lot of laughter. Politics was rarely a topic of conversation.

Tony reminisces about a pleasant childhood: *My father and grandfather... the three of us used to go to the football every week from about the age of five. That was something we did every weekend in the footy season and Dad and I still do now. And when Thomas² was born, when he was about six weeks old there was a Carlton/Collingwood match and I took him along. It was a great day for Dad and myself.*



The MCG is a place of significance in our family history. Here it forms a backdrop to a photo featuring three generations in Carlton jumpers. We were delighted when baby Thomas decided that he would follow the family tradition and barrack for the Blues. Actually, Thomas, aged six weeks, and at his first big match [Carlton v Collingwood of course], is wearing the jumper knitted for him by Tony's grandmother, Rene Bickford, and worn by him in an earlier picture. We had presented Thomas with his jumper when he was two hours old. He received his Carlton Junior Membership Card just one week after his birth and attended his first grand final at eleven weeks.

¹ General Douglas MacArthur said that Curtin was "one of the greatest of the wartime statesmen". http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Curtin

² The first of Tony and Pam's two children

I always wanted to, you know, like every kid who's about ten, to be a league footballer and play centre half-forward for Carlton, but I got as far as the Little League - played a few games for the Carlton Little League.

I grew up in Box Hill North. My parents picked a block of land in a new subdivision in the 1950s, and built a house. I grew up there and went to the local primary school and then ended up playing for Surrey Hills Football Club in the under 12s and the under 13s, I think. It was a typical childhood and I had a good mate who lived three doors down and we kicked the football in the street. And then when we were told we weren't allowed to kick the football in the street because we'd kicked it into too many front gardens... we worked out that we could actually kick it to each others house from each back yard. I'm still friends with him. He's my oldest friend. I remember I was five and he was three when we met and he is a fanatical Richmond supporter.

The other great memory of my childhood was going camping at Flowerdale, which had been my father's family camping spot for fifty, sixty, seventy years. As I was growing up, every Easter, everything would be packed up. I don't think you can camp now where we used to camp. We used to play cricket and football and go fishing and rabbit shooting and all of that...

In a foreword to the Smith family history³, Tony reflected about camping at Flowerdale: It was much more than camping, it was also about life in the bush. C.E.W. Bean writes in his history of Gallipoli that the Australian Diggers were more adaptable and capable because of their great bushcraft skills which imbued them with ingenuity... other forces did not possess. He makes the point that this was not confined solely to the Diggers whose home was country Australia, because every Australian child had experience with the bush.

These experiences sometimes translated into pranks. His sisters didn't

³ *An Illustrated Family History*, published privately in 2008 by Tony's father - Alan



Tony's grandmother, Rene Bickford, knitted this Carlton jumper for him to celebrate his first premiership in 1968.



More backyard footy.





A time for reflection for Christine, Tony and Heather as evening approaches at Flowerdale. We began our story of our family history with Flowerdale. So rewarding were those camping holidays over a remarkable span of fifty years that it is appropriate to end our story at the place where we began. More profound than simply recharging our batteries, the Flowerdale experience was soul-cleansing.

particularly enjoy camping. *My sister had been particularly irritable that day and we were having a tiff as you do, and I remember just before going to bed, it was starting to rain, I'd diverted the big trench towards her tent instead of away from it to ensure that she was flooded out and I remember her floating on her blow-up lilo around the tent.*

In summer, the family would rent a house in Sorrento. Tony's mum the children would holiday there for weeks, and his dad would go back and forth according to the demands of work.

Tony continued his education at Melbourne University, completing Arts and Commerce degrees. He remembers tutorials with Geoffrey Blainey as a *great privilege – tutorials were five or ten people where you had a proper discussion with a cup of tea or coffee. Now they're, I think, if they exist at all, they're 20 or 30 people and you lose that intimacy. Blainey would have them in his office and you'd enjoy his fascinating historical knowledge.*

Whilst at university, Tony became more interested in politics actively involved in the Liberal Club, but more importantly coming to the understanding that policies and political decisions actually matter. *Good decisions lead to good outcomes... but it's not like a football game where there's just a scoreboard. Bad decisions in Canberra effect people and you've got a choice – you can whinge about it or get involved. And if I hadn't worked at Denny's⁴ I wouldn't have decided to get involved, there's no doubt about that.*

I went (to Denny's) and asked for a job when I started university. The economy was a bit tight then and I remember the female

4 24-hour restaurant in Doncaster

manager, saying that they were looking for a night-shift cook. And I said 'Well, I'm prepared to give it a go'. I'd never cooked anything in my life.

I started on a Sunday night, I remember that because they said Sunday night's good, it's not that busy and you can be on for a couple of weeks with the head cook who'll teach you how to do everything. Eventually, it went to being a regular night-shift job. The hours suited me, I could go home and get a few hours sleep and my lectures were in the afternoon.

I'd had a normal school upbringing. Not particularly sheltered but not particularly exposed to the 'good the bad and the ugly' of the world. I got to see

all of society... you'd see happy families, you'd see successful businessman in there at nine and ten o'clock, you'd see people coming back from the movies having a snack, you'd see very lonely people in the middle of the night - a couple of older, lonely guys would come in every night at two or three in the morning, you'd see the police and you could tell by the look on their face when they walked through the door what sort of night they'd had... you'd see drug problems; someone tried to rob us one night. You saw a lot and then at six or seven o'clock in the morning the transformation would be complete. You'd then see people coming in for breakfast, starting their busy, busy days.

Tony worked for many years for Peter Costello as his media adviser (1990-98) and as Senior Political Advisor 1998-2001, before Tony himself stood for Parliament. He describes Costello as *very intelligent, quick, but always fun.*

I was interested in Tony's views on community and the role of government: Community is people working together to help each other bring out the best in our local area. To me a local community is as strong as it is involved. There's a huge role for Government, but Government's there to assist people in communities. Government will always be there, but unless communities are functioning well the area won't be the best it can be. Partnerships have got to be community led. I think it's a vital thing for us all to reinforce it because actually communities create governance, not the other way around. I think there's always a danger that we can forget that – 'well hang on, we've got a local, state and federal government so we don't have to do anything'.

Community has changed a bit, you sometimes see it at its strongest often now at the primary schools that have become community hubs in a way. A great example occurred recently down in Montrose where a Mum and a committee got together and said 'we want a playground'. They raised all the money, they raised all the volunteer labour and they organised all the material for a wonderful playground. Government merely helped fund things around the periphery.

In the next 20 years we'll face a challenge finding volunteers, with people leading busy lives and having less time for involvement in organisations. But I see lots of young people wanting to help with Landcare and to volunteer for all sorts of causes – I think there's a huge awareness of the issues on poverty and those sorts of things which is good because it creates a culture of thinking about other people and other communities.

I see some of the things that're happening in primary schools on water conservation and the importance of the local environment. I think they make it very relevant, and the children can see and touch and feel first hand the importance of these sorts of things. Growing up in a school community is a great investment in anchoring our children to a local community and working together. When I went to school you could volunteer for the school fete, whereas now there is ongoing volunteer work at schools, whether putting up the shade structures or helping with this or that. And the kids've got their vegie patch where they grow vegetables and they learn about the importance of water conservation by installing rainwater tanks and planting trees around the school - learning to protect our environment.

Towards the end of winter last year Tony and his wife Pam attended and helped at Mooroolbark's annual planting day. In the past, too, Tony has responded to the personal needs of others – one example being in privately raising money to send a young fellow to Canada for some life-saving surgery.⁵ We're grateful that he takes time out from political engagements to engage and help in practical ways.

In fact, the more he looks for ways to help with, and enhance the good things happening in our community, the more readily some of us might almost forgive him for being a Carlton supporter!

Randall Bouchier

5 Tony invited people to sponsor his kick of a football – at \$1 or \$2 per metre.

Tony played for Carlton in the Little League in 1977 and 1978. He (the snow-topped number 17) is part of the guard of honour as Robert Walls leads out the Blues after half-time.

Tony played for Surrey Hills Under 13 in 1979 and 1980. In 1979 his Reds team was premiers and (undefeated) champions.

He represented the Hawthorn District Association against Canberra at the Glenferrie oval, playing at full back.

Your Local Community Festival "Celebrate Mooroolbark"

Saturday, March 28th 2009
(Talent Quest Friday 27th)

Celebrate Mooroolbark at the Red Earth Reserve, is a family festival, gathering the communities of Mooroolbark and surrounding suburbs. The theme for 2009 is 'Australian Stories'.

Central to the festival is the street parade featuring local schools and community groups. The festival has a community marketplace, with many food stalls including the Lions Club BBQ and Devonshire Teas. Local groups will be showcasing their activities and the library will be reading Stories for the children of all ages. From the stage, a number of bands will perform including Blackberry Jam for the kids. There will be rides, children's activities, the scout bridge, native animals Nursery, puppets and a treasure hunt. Included this year is the Red Earth Farmer's Market offering produce and goodies from around the region. An Ecumenical Church Service commences proceedings at 9:15.

On the evening prior to the festival, Friday, March 27, the Mooroolbark Theatre Group will host the Mooroolbark Talent Quest in the Community Centre. Interested entrants should contact Arlene Myers, 9726 4282. With entry at only \$5, this promises to be a great night out with the opportunity to enjoy the best of the local performers. On the Sunday Afternoon, St Francis in the Fields will host the Red Earth Organ Recital with international performer – Thomas Heywood.

All in all Celebrate Mooroolbark.....has something for everyone!!!

Andrew Lang

Celebrate
MOOROOBARK 

The Mooroolbark

TALENT QUEST

A great night out for all the family, enjoying the talent of our local folk. Dance, song, comedy and More! Competing for trophies and cash prizes

Admission \$5
Includes
Refreshments

Friday 27th March 2009 at 7.30pm
Mooroolbark Community Centre, Brice Avenue
Bookings 9726 5488

*A great way to start our Festival – so be there and,
Celebrate Mooroolbark !!*



Mooroolbark
Theatre Group



Mooroolbark Social Golf Club

GOWF ??? From a dialect of eastern Scotland comes the word "gowf," which literally means "to strike." It is from this verb that the modern "Golf" is derived, a noun in our English language which for most people requires no additional explanation what-so-ever. Having a grasp on the words definition however, is one thing, but having a grasp on the finer mechanics of playing the game is quite another! We could legitimately quote here Thomas Mulligan, the much lauded golfing genius from the early 1800s, by way of offering fledgling golfers some useful and helpful advice, said "If you really want to get better at golf, go back and take it up at a much earlier age."

Mooroolbark Social Golf Club was formed, yes, to give its membership opportunities "to get better at golf", but mostly for members to fellowship and interact socially, a positive point made clear by President Mr Noel Danahay. Mr Danahay emphasised,

"We are serious about our golf, but not as serious as we are about having fun!"

The Club's home is Dorset Golf Course, in Croydon, but this is only one of the venues used for their competitions

Mixed games are played weekly and all members are informed by SMS three weeks in advance of games to be played and the planned venues. These could be any where in Victoria, from Mooroolbark to Mafra or Warrnambool to Warburton! Having 3 weeks clear notice, gives all members the freedom to RSVP by text message of their availability. But no one has to play if they do not wish to; such is the relaxed nature of the Club.

Weekly competition prizes are awarded and the Club holds an annual "Awards Night," continuing their on- course fun, off- course. Members are presented a range of "serious" and "novelty" Trophies. Everyone is given reason to celebrate and share their success on this special evening! Other social events include monthly barbecues at Dorset Golf Club and two (subsidised) trips away each year.

The club is very grateful for the generous sponsorship received from **Tony Mc Lean of Drummond Golf, 426 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading (Tel . 9873 8441)**



Old golfers, new golfers, amateurs and pros, ladies and gentlemen, singles and couples; all are welcome at MSGC! The handicapping system in any mixed group is a great leveller! For those in the Community who are interested in golfing casually, but do not want the rigid constraints of a larger, formalized Club, MSGC may well be your ideal club of choice.

Those wanting to know more or interested in becoming involved should forward their enquiries to the President Mr Noel Danahay on 9842 2283 or Club Secretary Justin Ross on 0409017693. Alternatively, check details on the web at **Mooroolbark Social Golf Club Inc.**

Membership joining fees are a very reasonable \$60.00
Worth some thought?

Rod Keeble



Some club members, on a recent trip to Numurkah

Mooroolbark Lawn Bowls Club - Going Great!

Mooroolbark Lawn Bowls Club has a proud history of on-going growth and development over the years. In 1980, the club began with 43 members. Current membership now exceeds 320.

In 1980, with the help of the Shire, the current location was leased and construction of facilities commenced. Those facilities now include three bowling greens, large and very comfortable club-rooms and a bistro & bar.

The club's silver anniversary celebration, on Oct 25th 2005, was a very special moment as the final loan payment

was made, giving the club full ownership of their now well-developed facilities. At that time, plans for the next stage of development were commenced. This latest stage included the provision of an independent water supply to meet the club's future needs and lighting for the greens to enable night events to begin to be scheduled. On Thursday January 15th 2009 many of the members participated in the club's first local competition "under lights". There was a great atmosphere of celebration throughout the evening.

It was also a time to celebrate the completion of the newly developed water supply facilities. Club C.E.O, Trevor Gardoll, explained that the club's total water needs are now gained by collecting and filtering run-off from their buildings and greens and adding to this from a newly installed bore and on-site desalination plant. Three large tanks hold a total of 137,000 litres and the bore and desalination plant is capable of adding 22,000 litres per day to that storage. This capacity is required in order to provide for every need. Trevor pointed out that they



Bev Drummond and Trevor Gardoll explain the workings of the desalination plant

had used 65,000 litres in just two days in a recent hot spell in early January.

The cost of these two projects is in excess of \$190,000 but is considered well worth the outlay as an investment in the club's future. Trevor points out that the costs would have been much greater if it were not for the many hours of voluntary labour provided by many club members. He thanks the members for their significant commitment.

Like to know more about the club? Visitors are most welcome – no experience needed. Why not call in and give it a go? Current bowlers range in age from teens to the eighties. Beginners are loaned equipment and given personal coaching. A variety of social activities, including bingo, trivia nights, dances etc are available throughout the year. Good fun and companionship are assured.

Certainly worth a look!



First night under lights- Jan. 15th 2009

Mooroolbark Lions Club Celebrates 40 years

This Month, the Lions Club of Mooroolbark will host a function celebrating 40 years of service to Mooroolbark and surrounding communities. The Club's inauguration took place on November 14th, 1968 when 23 prominent citizens and local businessmen were inducted as charter members of the International Association of Lions Clubs. Charter President, Mr. Ken Murray was proprietor of the Mooroolbark "Toyworld" shop, and set about establishing the club as a permanent entity in Mooroolbark.

The first major project undertaken by the club was the provision of a community caravan at a cost of nine hundred dollars. The caravan, after many years of service by numerous community groups throughout the Shire is thought to be still in use as a First Aid Centre at Lake Mountain.

In the 1970's, Mooroolbark Lions club was a major sponsor of the 'Lilydale Gift' and other sporting events, raising significant funds for the establishment of the Melba Day Training Centre including the Yarra-me Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Centres, Croydon. Hands-on support was the order of the day with club members constructing an extensive system of wheelchair walkways throughout the Yarra-me centre. Such was the recognition of community support for the project that Premier Sir Rupert Hamer opened the centre in October 1977.

Around this time, the club again demonstrated their 'hands-on' approach to community projects in providing adventure playgrounds for a number of Mooroolbark Schools.

Following the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983, the club provided a replacement home for the Georges family at Upper Beaconsfield involving many thousands of voluntary labour-hours, and Mr, Georges still lives in that home today.

By the time, the club's twenty-fifth anniversary came around in 1993; the club had raised and distributed \$419,000.00 to various projects and

support initiatives. To celebrate that milestone, Mooroolbark Lions in conjunction with the Shire, erected a Rotunda in Hookey Park, which to this day takes pride of place during celebrations such as Carols by Candlelight.

The provision of a hydrotherapy pool at the Rosine Nursing home in Mt Evelyn

as well the 'Jim Fuller' group home in Wynyard Drive are examples of two outstanding facilities continuing to meet pressing needs in our community. One of the club's most successful fund-raising projects was the 'Bone Marrow Donor Registry Raffle', which raised in excess of \$100,000.00, resulting in approximately 4000 bone marrow donors being tissue type tested and placed on the register.

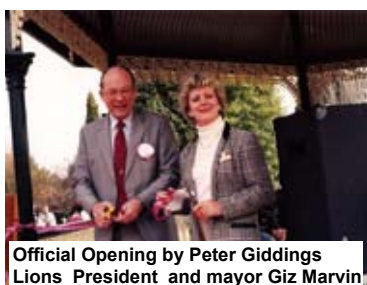
The Lions Op-Shop on Manchester Road, staffed by willing volunteers has been a constant and significant source of funds, helping the club to contribute funds to schools, emergency services, hospitals and community organisations, families and individuals.

It is a testament to the commitment of a club that is small in numbers, but big in community spirit that in the fifteen years since the twenty-fifth anniversary, Mooroolbark Lions has contributed over \$500,000.00 to local, national and international projects and relief funds, and is expected to reach one million dollars in its fortieth year.

The number of community based organisations and individuals that have been assisted by the Mooroolbark Lions are too numerous to mention in this article, but if you would like to know more, you can contact Lion Bob Gatherum on 9726 7494.



Hookey Park Rotunda Opening day



Official Opening by Peter Giddings Lions President and mayor Giz Marvin



Chris Gough

The Lass With The *Twinkle* In Her Eye...

Who do you know in Mooroolbark who's handled a platypus, dived successfully from the Pinnacles at Mount Martha, worked with Albanian refugees from Kosovo and currently spends many hours each week at our Community Centre?

Let me introduce **Lisa Whitehouse** who I first met during a *Celebrate Mooroolbark* committee meeting late last year. The Shire of Yarra Ranges has appointed Lisa as a Regional Arts Coordinator. She's based at Mooroolbark, but has responsibility for both the Mooroolbark and Montrose Community Centres.

For some years now, Lisa has been associated with Mooroolbark, so she knows more about us than you might think. After she and her son Hamish moved here from the Mornington Peninsula some years ago, Hamish attended Pembroke Primary school prior to Billanook College - where he's about to tackle Year 12.



Lisa's childhood was spent first at Rosebud and later in Mount Martha back in the days when it still had dirt tracks. Her Dad worked at Southern Peninsula Hospital as a gardener, and her mum taught Phys Ed at the High School. Throughout childhood and her teen years, Lisa actively enjoyed the beach culture of the Peninsula - swimming, bike riding, sometimes fishing all night from the rocks with her dad, long walks on the beach with the dog - and later, as a teenage rite of

passage, diving off the Pinnacles and climbing back onto the rocks through the seaweed.

She enjoyed many sports at school - including hockey at a high level - and after completing her secondary schooling at Mornington High School, Lisa commenced tertiary studies at the Philip Institute of Technology which later became RMIT Bundoora.

After one term, Lisa spent a year working. Her parents had retired, and Lisa recalls she needed to work to *put myself through uni. And because I had to live away from home, I had to squirrel away quite a bit of money.* After returning to RMIT, Lisa completed a Bachelor of Arts in Recreation. As the course demanded a high component of work experience, she had her first experience of working within Local Government. She says that she enjoyed the opportunity so much that it *sparked my interest in working in local government and my first job after graduation was working as the Children's Service Officer for the Shire of Mornington, which was kind of cool. I really enjoyed that.*

Why do I enjoy local government? It's working at the grass roots level, being involved with the community and with people... I just really enjoy getting to know people and trying to support them in what they do...

I worked for all the Peninsula councils before amalgamation... and I became the first Municipal Recreation Officer employed by the Shire of Flinders. I had to work through attitudes of 'what's this young girlie know?' By that time I was married and we built a mud-brick house on Arthur's Seat.

When I was 29 my marriage ended and I moved down to a little fibro shack in Rye. As a single mother with a 3 year old, I enrolled for a graduate diploma in Urban Policy and Planning at RMIT in the city. It took me three years - juggling full-time work, caring for my son and the pressures of lectures and study. I'm really glad I did it. Studying is a very different experience as a mature age student.

After amalgamation, I became the first Manager for Recreation and Cultural facilities for the Mornington Peninsula. It became a huge job - there were festivals, swimming pools, events, halls, foreshore camping reserves, the regional gallery, tourism services and responsibility for bushland reserves over a very big geographic area, not dissimilar to Yarra Ranges.

A new CEO appointed Lisa as Manager for Corporate Planning and Special Projects...



writing business plans and reporting back to State Government. During her years in that position, the Federal Government established a safe haven for Albanian refugees from Kosovo at the old Portsea Army Base. Lisa represented Council on the Board of Management comprising representatives from various organisations and agencies including the Army, Red Cross, Salvation Army and Adult Migrant Education.

The Council had undertaken to provide the entertainment and recreation services...

I got quite heavily involved in that... it was quite a challenging time. There was a sense in the general community of wanting to help, without realising that many of the people coming were really damaged and some of the behaviours displayed as a result of the experiences they'd had were quite confronting... so we had to have several meetings with the community to try to address issues like theft and shop-lifting... the refugees had been living in a war zone... it had been a matter of survival. I can remember we had riots in the food hall at the base. We couldn't work out what was going on until we looked at the milk cartons, which had pink money pigs printed on them as part of some marketing campaign... but the refugees thought we were giving them pig milk... and they don't eat pork. So there were riots until we could find interpreters and explain... Some of the people there had seen terrible things... people killed before their eyes. It was also very challenging working amongst them as a woman - their society was very much a patriarchal society. It took the leaders quite a bit of time to accept women in leadership roles on base - and there were also language and cultural barriers.

It took many of the refugees quite some time to understand that they couldn't smoke in buildings and that there were social norms in our country that affected things like family management.

The big learning for us on base was working through our initial desire to help - and then rationalising the sorts of behaviours we were confronted with... realising that what we were doing was really good, but that people were not necessarily going to fawn all over you and say 'gee, thanks'.

Following her move to Mooroolbark, Lisa worked for the City of Whitehorse for 4 years... But found that when you work in management in local government, no matter how hard

you try, you get disconnected from the community based things and you become more tangled up in the bureaucracy.

It came to the point where Lisa felt the need to move on – and for a brief time took on project work in recreation, until an opportunity arose for her to work at the Melbourne Zoo – as the Visitor Experience manager. This diverse and interesting job combined Lisa's passion for animals and her enjoyment of people. And, yes, you guessed it - she handled a platypus, as part of her work in revamping some of the zoo visitor programmes. After four years with the Zoo, the demands of daily commuting

and weekend work made life very difficult for Lisa as a single parent. She realised that she needed to work closer to home.

She took advantage of some career counselling and was advised to take up a position in the arts – and noticed her current position advertised in the Age.

I see my work here as working in with people. It's not up to me to tell people how to live their lives, but if there are ways that I can help facilitate what they're doing, that's how I like to work. It's about understanding people. I like investing time in people - it's about relationships and I quite enjoy getting to know them and



I enjoy Lisa's down-to-earth, personable approach. There's often a laugh bubbling away close to the surface. We're looking forward to the ideas and skills that she will bring to shared opportunities for enhancing our community.

Her fondest memories of community are similar to the things we all appreciate: *It can be when you walk down the street, knowing people and stopping to have a bit of a chinwag... that sort of sense of belonging somewhere.*

I can remember as a kid going to Carols by Candlelight at Mount Martha. It used to be at the Community Centre which overlooks the beach... it was this most amazing setting of dusk and you've got your candles and you could hear the waves lapping and there's all these people just sitting around in a very quiet way enjoying the 'togetherness' you get from it... And some of the rallies I've been involved with – that sense of people power to change things... it's pretty inspiring... there's that feeling that people have an amazing ability to drive change...

And what might Lisa bring to her role at our Community Centre?

There's a range of things. Ensuring that the two Centres are hives of community use... making sure that the spaces are used, and that the facilities are maintained suitably. I've had the big crusade here to fix the toilets. I'd like to expand the workshop programmes and strengthen the partnerships with schools – particularly here in Mooroolbark where we're so well placed to do that.

Partnerships are one thing that I'd like to work on... partnerships with the key groups here in the Centre – such as your church and the theatre group – and actually leveraging off all the things that happen and growing them... helping the community reach its goals. I'm involved in Celebrate Mooroolbark and the Train Station Project. There are opportunities there for artistic projects.

It's about making these places and spaces feel owned and shared and valued by the community. Its often simple things like the Christmas tree – it's not the most beautiful tree – it's the Centre's tree that people in the community have been able to decorate... it's about creating warmth and connection!

Community should foster a sense of belonging, a sense that you can be who you are... Its about people being respected. It's not a homogenous thing... but there are people who will support you – who will be there when you need them, people who you can, in turn, also help when they need support.

Randall Bouchier



have a few laughs along the way... I'm not an overly serious person. Although, as a manager I was very competent, that's what was missing for me... the people stuff gets compromised.

Lisa's quiet passion for community and her love of wilderness and Australian animals led her to establish the Mornington branch of the Wilderness Society – and more recently, to spend several years volunteering as a guide at Healesville Sanctuary. She believes that most of us don't realise the amazing diversity of plants and animals in this country.



**PUBLICATION
PERSPECTIVES**

General Printing
Technical Documentation
Desktop Publishing & Design

Quality and reliable service
Call us on 9561 1800

The Power of *Imagination*

Some time ago I was speaking to a group of 40 or so people of whom I only knew a few. From the moment I began I noticed a fellow in the middle of the group who had a very concentrated look on his face. His gaze never shifted, nor did his expression change for the whole time I spoke – about 30 mins. What became quite unnerving was that his expression seemed to be a scowl. It was a scowl when I started, and was a scowl when I finished – as if it was a permanent feature!

Several thoughts occurred to me as I spoke... did I do or say something wrong? Is he bored? Or does he just not like me? And then this progressed to; what's his problem? Is he having a bad day? Perhaps he's in pain? So many questions...so few answers.

I caught his eye several times – if only to check if he had relaxed his focus on me, but even though I could catch the eyes of others and feel that I was speaking effectively to them, I was bothered and a little bit annoyed not knowing what to make of this discomfort. I even purposely used some expressions like raising the eyebrows, a little smile...just to give him a few new ideas that he might be able to try – anything apart from the 'scowl'!

Even though I was a bit put off by this, others were quite positive and responsive. There was an occasional question or comment from the audience as I spoke. The mood was upbeat and pleasant as we shared a few laughs and smiles. But not this fellow – the scowl remained.

I had allowed my imagination, to make up for things that I didn't know

I was made a little uncomfortable by his expression. I was not sure of the reason for his look, or even if it was on purpose. In making several

basic observations I had formed an opinion of the situation, of him. I had allowed my imagination – somewhat subconsciously, to make up for things I didn't know. I imagined him to have some kind of problem or issue that was affecting me. He was someone I wouldn't go out of my way to meet – all because of how he looked!

Really, doesn't this happen to all of us – or is it just me? When we find ourselves in situations where we are affected by what someone does or doesn't do, we can draw some strange conclusions. Our imagination takes charge and we develop perceptions that could be quite untrue – and unfair.

A bit of this, and a bit of that...

Imagination makes up a regular part of our mental activities and is a very powerful and quiet achiever – we don't even need to be awake! In fact, most of what we do is assisted, and even made possible by some form of imagination – both on purpose, and even when we're not paying attention.

Having not met this person previously, I made up some things to fill the gaps and form an opinion of him. We routinely form opinions and perceptions of others – those we

...most of what we do is made possible by some form of imagination.

hear about and have not met, and even those we do know. Our perceptions of people are a mix of reality – things we see, hear, feel, and experience - with imagination used to fill in the blanks, the proportion of each depending on how well (we think) we know them. We make up for what we *don't yet know* with imagination, which fuels our perceptions, and this in turn affects the relationship we have, or could have, with them.

Reality check – is our imagination tricking us?

How do we deal with these perceptions? They may turn out to be entirely false, or at best, not *fully* true. When we interact with others we anticipate their responses and feelings based on any previous experience, coupled with imagination.

Until proven otherwise, our perceptions are the best we have to go on. What we see, hear and feel are all vital components to a reality check we should do to ensure we have the most accurate understanding of a situation or person. Even other people's perceptions can affect our own collection of thoughts about a person or event. We live in a world that thrives on the latest internet tale, gossip column and a myriad of (some way more reputable than others) news sources.

Could our perceptions be wrong?!

Don't hang on 'too' tight

One of three things can happen to our perceptions as we receive more information or experience over time:

- . We are able to reinforce and retain our perceptions.
- . We can adjust our perceptions.
- . We can abandon our initial perceptions – replacing them with genuine understanding and rational details.

Having random unhelpful thoughts about people from the other side of the world or our own street is a not really a productive exercise. And then, every person is unique, so we should be careful to not 'paint everyone with the same perception brush'. Holding perceptions *loosely* is a good place to start – always willing to adjust based on new and more accurate information.

Imagine... an open mind

What if we were able to treat people without having developed a predetermined perception of what we think they are like? We could have a more open attitude and wait till we meet people to get a sense of who they are, and let the reality and personal experience form our understanding – this would be helpful in avoiding relationships based on fear, mistrust, or scepticism.

Every day is a new opportunity to explore an amazing and complex world – our world, *built* largely on imaginations and perceptions. A world of many and varied peoples and cultures – of which we are but one. We can use our imagination *with our heart and mind fully engaged*, actively managing our perceptions to





*Imagination...but with
our heart and mind fully
engaged*

to meet John (not his real name). He seemed pleasant enough and thanked me for my talk. We chatted for a while yet the 'scowl' was still there. Even when he smiled, it seemed strained and forced. John just looked that way. That's the way he was! There was no 'scowl'

ensure we have the most accurate understanding of a situation or person.

After my talk, during some refreshments, I was able

really – it was just my imagination that turned a 'look' into a scowl. And all the nonsense that followed formed a rather extravagant and faulty perception - one I was glad to be rid of and replace with the recognition of a genuine and sincere person who turned out to be a pleasure to converse with. Better the John I got to know, than the one I concocted in my perceptions. Way better!



Steve Steel

Professionals – Supporting the community since 1964



You may have noticed our marquee at various community events; supporting charity fund raisers, sporting events, school fetes and even at local RSL's. Methven Professionals is proud to be associated with local community offering our versatile 11X 7.3 metre marquee, FREE of charge for your community event – delivered and erected by our expert team!

Call Kylie Todd at our Mooroolbark office on 9726 888 today and book the FREE marquee for your next community event



One Team. Four Locations.

CHURCH PAGE



Two Peas, Same Pod?

by Jeb Egbert

Humans have a natural proclivity for creating a routine.

This applies to parenting. Regardless of how many children are in the family, it is easier to adopt a one-size-fits-all strategy. We may think, "This approach worked with my first, so now I'll try that with the rest."

The trouble is our children are different. Often completely different. My wife and I have three children. We aren't sure how much more different they could be. We've also wondered how much we contributed to those differences.

When our children have made mistakes, we've reflected on what we've done that may have led to those mistakes. And when our children have been responsive, we naturally think that our parenting has been responsible.

I've known parents who could have won an award for bringing up a precious, responsive child. But in the same family, another child is quite unresponsive and rebellious.

The fact is, God is the creator of our children. And, as in everything else that God has created, he has chosen diversity.

I think a lot can be learned about this by reading about the first two children born. We don't know a great deal about them, but in Genesis 4:2, we learn that "Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil." These boys were remarkably different, yet they grew up with virtually no outside influences. No television. No schools. No peer pressure. It was just them and their parents. But one became a shepherd and the other a farmer. How could these differences occur?

Two boys. Same parents. Great differences.

The point is, our children are created by God and made in his image. We are simply the stewards of our children. They are free to make choices. They have their own personalities. Our profound responsibility is to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of



the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

We might try to force them to make career choices, but our children may resent whatever pressure we apply. And we cannot make them have a relationship with God. That's all God's work. What we can and should do is love them, provide guidance and direction, and lead them into a community where others are seeking God's will.

But whether they choose to respond is not something we have control over. One may be responsive and another may not. How that happens is a mystery to me, but not to God.

What we can consistently do is thank God for the gift of stewardship of his children, and pray for wisdom and courage as we engage in the incredible adventure called parenting.

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.

[This is a condensed version of the original article which appears in the current edition of Christian Odyssey magazine which can be viewed at www.ChristianOdyssey.org. Alternatively a copy of this edition of Christian Odyssey may be obtained by contacting Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship on Tel 9726 8898]



FREE FAMILY FILM NIGHT

ALL WELCOME

Come along to Mooroolbark Community Centre

Wednesday April 15th "Madagascar 2"

Commences at **7.30 p.m**

The usual free ice-cream, tea & coffee will be available.

This school holidays program is a joint community service extended to young families in our neighbourhood by...

Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship & Mooroolbark Community Centre

Please visit or contact Mooroolbark Community Centre to reserve your seats **phone 9726 5488**

Tickets may be reissued if not collected by 7.15, and there is a wait list.

Quotable Quotes

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring..... All have the potential to turn a life around."

Dr. Leonardo Buscaglia (1924-1998), professor, author.



Nabil and Hanan Rezkalla

The Friendly “7-11” Service Station in Mooroolbark

The 7-11 Service Station in Manchester Road, Mooroolbark is run by Nabil and Hanan Rezkalla a very friendly, community conscious husband and wife team.

They arrived in Australia with their one year old son, Youssef (now 18), in 1992 from Egypt. They also have a 16 year old daughter Marina, born in Australia. Nabil qualified in Mining Engineering and Hanan in Petroleum Engineering and their knowledge of computers and computer systems in today's hi-tech world make them ideally suited to run a service station. Nabil spent several years in mineral processing working on rigs where he maintained the drilling equipment, especially keeping the drill bit cooled to the correct temperature during the drilling.

Supporting the community is of particular concern to both Nabil and Hanan. Giving generous donations to local events like; “Celebrate Mooroolbark”, the “Yarra Ranges Art Show”, “The Good Friday Appeal” and petrol vouchers for deserving locals. One special organisation they support is the “State Emergency Services”. Nabil has a special interest... he loves to “Be with, talk to and deal with people, any time, any place, anywhere, people in need, family and friends and business acquaintances”. He also considers Australia “home”.

Comment by Nabil, “I would like more young people to be reliable with regard to working, that's what I try to teach to my children. To give their power and energy to build the country we are living in as this will affect the future in a positive way and their children as well. Not just to have fun, which is good but give something back to Australia because of what Australia has given to them.”

Barry Austin

“YOU CAN BAKE IT”

Classic and Traditional Bread Mixes



Ray and Lyn Gordon

Ray and Lyn Gordon are suppliers of **Classic and Traditional Bread Mixes**. Their new shop is situated in the Terrace – Shop 2/ 66-74 Brice Avenue.

The Gordons' business involvement began over two years ago, in Churinga Village- Kilsyth, before moving to Mooroolbark in November 2008. Ray and Lyn both expressed enjoyment in becoming a part of the Mooroolbark community which they said has been most welcoming to them. They particularly enjoy the community spirit they see as very evident in our neighbourhood. They have been warmly welcomed by many of their regular clients and new customers alike.

Ray and Lyn have lived in Ringwood and Lilydale for most of their adult life. They have a son, living and working in the USA and a daughter and three grandchildren living in Lilydale.

You Can Bake It offers 50 varieties of pre-packed bread mixes which require just the addition of water and yeast – everything else is included. Ray points out that all of their bread mixes are healthy alternatives, being preservative-free and unbleached. They also have a range of totally gluten free products and “Spelt mixes and flour” (They will gladly explain the nutritional and historical significance of the low-gluten Spelt products.) In addition, they have a range of bread machines,

bread tins, kitchen-ware, yoghurt makers and mixes, etc. The Gordons are pleased to be able to assist those requiring a gluten-free diet and helping other local customers find ways to provide more healthy products for their families.

For those not familiar with the bread-making process, Lyn advises that preparing the ingredients for baking a loaf of bread takes less than 5 minutes – less time than it would take to go out and purchase a loaf – and the result is so good.

We welcome Ray and Lyn to Mooroolbark and wish them every success in their new business premises.

Mayor's Lifetime Achievement Award

TOM AND ARLINE MYERS



Mayor Cr Len Cox

Our hearty congratulations to Tom and Arline Myers on receiving this well-deserved award for a lifetime of outstanding contribution to community life in our neighbourhood.

Both now in their seventies, their involvement in the community is just as strong as it was when they started in Mooroolbark 32 years ago.

Arline spent much of her working life in kindergarten teaching and in running her own antique business. Over the years she has been a committee member at Mooroolbark East Primary school (where she also taught religious education classes), and a member of the Mooroolbark High School Council— with a term as president. She has also been involved in the Red Earth Festival, the committee for establishment of our community centre, the Mooroolbark Chamber of Commerce and is currently a member of the Celebrate Mooroolbark Committee where, amongst other things, she manages the talent quest.

An active member of the Baptist church, she has contributed to youth work and various aspects of church development in Mooroolbark and Wandin.

She attends art classes at the Mooroolbark Community Centre and has entered a number of her works in exhibitions.

Tom is a Chartered Engineer who is well recognized for his work on marine propulsion.

He has had a long interest in music. In 1976 he joined the Croydon Concert Band and is a life-time member of what is known as the Croydon Wind Symphony. In 2003 he formed the Swing Sound Band to provide musical support for the Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival



Tom and Arline Myers

Tom has always supported Arline in both community and business ventures, and together, in 1978, they formed the **Mooroolbark Theatre Group**. An "institution" in Mooroolbark - the Theatre Group it is still going strong – thirty years on.

As well as acting in their plays, Tom is responsible for set-design and construction, programming and publicity.

Arline has directed over 40 plays, acted in many of them and also worked as ticket secretary. They have introduced a theatrical award at Mooroolbark Secondary College and have established the "Wandin Players" group.

Through the Theatre Group and their church, they have been active in raising funds for needy groups in various ways. These include support for the Caledonia day Centre, "Feed the World" concerts, and a World Vision child sponsorship.

In every way, they have been outstanding local citizens. We thank them and congratulate them. Well done!!

Marilyn Hage

LIVINGTODAY

in Mooroolbark

Production
LIVINGTODAY in Mooroolbark is produced by Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship, assisted by local volunteers



Editor
Doug Lewis

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 lewisdm@bigpond.net.au

Distribution
11 500 copies distributed throughout Mooroolbark and the surrounding district

Contributing Writers for This Issue
Randall Bouchier, Andrew Lang
Rod Keeble, Chris Gough
Steve Steel, Barry Austin

Photographs
Randall Bouchier, Andrew Lang
Barry Austin, Chris Gough, Tom Myers

Graphic Design
Publication Perspectives
Mulgrave, Victoria

Printing
Publication Perspectives
Mulgrave, Victoria

Like to Contribute?
If you have a good news story about people or groups who you believe are an inspiration to the community, Please contact the editor through our church-office tel. number or by email (as above)

Proudly supporting Living Today
in Mooroolbark.

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



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