

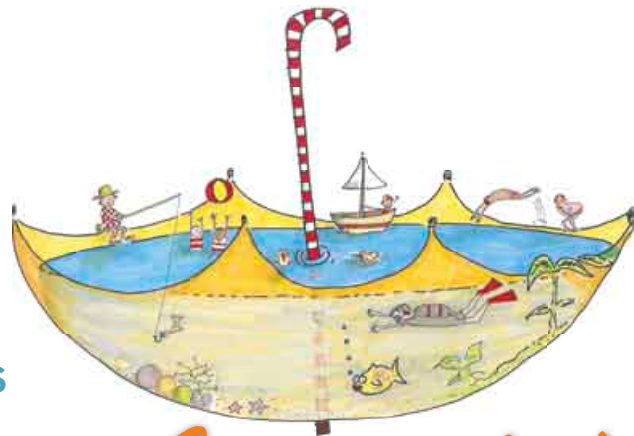
# LIVING TODAY

IN MOOROOLBARK/YARRA RANGES

NO. 38 DECEMBER 2011



*Young Quiet Achiever  
in Mooroolbark ... Page 2*



Mooroolbark Umbrella Group presents

# Quiet Achiever Awards!



Bob Gatherum



Elsie Bolwell



Terry Charity

The Mooroolbark Umbrella Group is a collection of local organisations that seeks to nurture, support, encourage and help the fine work done by the extensive range of community organisations that serve the common good of Mooroolbark.

On November 24 we hosted the first of our community forums with Detective Sergeant Ron Iddles speaking to us about his work in homicide investigation and sharing his passion for the positive role that healthy, active, inclusive community plays in nurturing people.

The occasion also saw the awarding of the inaugural Quiet Achiever Awards to local people who have served Mooroolbark, making it a far better place. I hope you'll enjoy the brief word sketches of each of them that follow.

## Bob Gatherum

Witnessing terrible events during World War II led Bob Gatherum – a Normandy veteran – to look for opportunities to extend kindness to others.

Bathurst Street was an unmade dirt track when the family settled in Mooroolbark and tackled the job of raising four children. Bob – armed with a wry Dad's Army style of humour – and his wife Bette served the community through their involvement with the Mooroolbark Lions.

Forty two years later, Bob is still active in the Lions and serves in other community groups including the Umbrella Group, and groups advising on future developments to Hookey Park and the train station.

Bob and Bette worked tirelessly supporting the Jim Fuller House<sup>1</sup>, until Bette's health deteriorated. Following Bette's death in 2007, the secretary of the management committee wrote of the Gatherums' dedicated service:

"They have worked hard in all aspects ... on the committee, offering support to tenants, undertaking small maintenance and contacting trades people when necessary.

Bob has continued to work and be part of the Mooroolbark Lions Club while Bette worked in the op shop.

Although many people participated in the Jim Fuller Community House the house would not have survived, without this long-term commitment from these two dedicated people."

Bob's youthful resolve to find ways of showing kindness to others became a life-long pattern. He loves Mooroolbark, and hopes that more of us will find ways of organising our time and responsibilities so that we might help benefit our town. By doing this, Bob hopes, Mooroolbark will continue to be a community marked by care, kindness, and good-humoured respect for others.

## Elsie Bolwell

I feel like calling Elsie Bolwell - 'Elsie Bonza'!

It's been a privilege to witness her contribution to our suburb and to work alongside her in some areas.

Elsie's memories of her father help us comprehend where her lifelong values were formed.

"My father was a very quiet man," recalled Elsie. "He taught me my love of nature. We would walk for hours in the bush – hardly saying a word to one another – and then he'd say, 'Watch that leaf when you go to school; it's going to have a wild flower on it.' And I'd watch it – and that's how I got my love of flowers in the bush."

Elsie described her father as having a Christian attitude toward others. "Some of the old chaps who'd come to work on the orchard would be invited in for a meal. He taught me to see the best in everybody."

"He was only once angry with me. I deserved it; I'd told a lie! I never forgot it – and never told another one. He taught me to be honest, true and trustworthy, to always tell the truth. He said: 'Make your words soft and sweet; you never know when you'll have to eat them.'"

Elsie has served the Mooroolbark Development Association, Red Earth Festival, Disabled People's Company, train station and Hookey Park advisory groups, church and local history groups, and has had a huge 50-plus years involvement in Guiding.

"It's been such a wonderful pleasure because now I'm meeting the young girls that I used to have in the Guides, and they've got

<sup>1</sup> a residence providing accommodation for low-income older people

their own children. They're so excited, and they say, 'Oh, I've started my little one in Gumnuts.'"

### Terry Charity

Terry Charity arrived in Australia with his wife Jean only 13 years ago. It's significant that for 12 of those years, he's quietly served within the Mooroolbark Senior Citizen's Club, after joining to cultivate friendships here.

And then it became the old story – helping out is a risky business! From assisting the exercise class tutor with some technical challenges, Terry eventually inherited the twice-weekly classes attended by 45-50 people. After that he inherited the Monday evening dance!

a Friday night. There are very few reasons 'why not'. The few barriers that may present themselves can be overcome with a bit of perseverance."

There were new terms and concepts to grapple with – 'food handling', 'risk management' and 'health and safety' – but Dylan persevered and the Pantry commenced operation last April. Now in its eighth month, it continues to serve a small but dedicated regular clientele in the Red Earth Room at Mooroolbark Community Centre each fortnight.

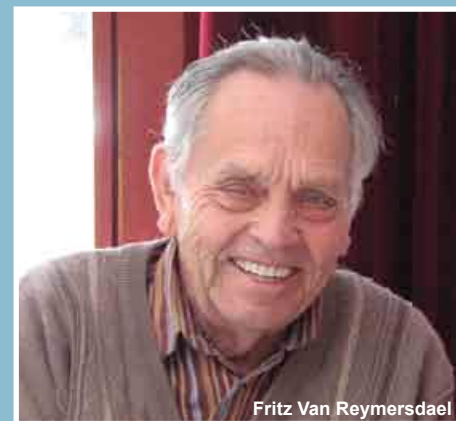
Dylan's most regular helpers have been school friends Mitch Rudderham and Lauren Fuller, and he's organised members of the congregation into teams to prepare and serve

Athenaeum Theatre. We've appreciated Michael's invaluable help with Celebrate Mooroolbark each year and the Mooroolbark Theatre Group is grateful for his expertise.

There are other sides to Michael – he's a dedicated musician, playing in a rock band, and a gifted photographer – a quiet achiever who faces the challenges of life courageously. Michael brings to his responsibilities professionalism and the personable capacity to deal with others in a quietly caring, dedicated and gracious way.

### Fritz Van Reymersdael

Fritz Van Reymersdael is the long-serving president of the Disabled People's Company – a group of people with disabilities who



Supported by his wife Jean, Terry has served on the committee for ten years – as treasurer for four years and now president for almost five years – with all of the behind-the-scenes arranging, support, phone calls, and letter-writing that come with that territory. And along the way there were the club refurbishments!

Terry gains his greatest satisfaction from seeing people come together and enjoy themselves. It's a good club – a hospitable club. Jean described Terry as "a quiet man who doesn't like to boast, but just carries on and gently handles the challenges that emerge".

Terry commented, "It seems like we spend half of our lives down there – but you either put your heart into things or you don't!"

### Dylan Butler

Eighteen-year-old Dylan Butler and some friends from Luther College dreamed of providing a fortnightly evening meal for those in need of it.

As a member of Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship, Dylan asked if the congregation would be happy to support such an idea – and upon receiving the 'thumbs-up' embarked on the somewhat daunting process of speaking with community centre and shire officials.

When I asked why he wanted to open the People's Pantry, Dylan's response was, "Why not? We have the resources and there's an opportunity for something like this on

nutritious three-course meals and to provide table companionship for diners.

Along the way, Dylan produced a short, humorous guide for those helping out.

He concludes, "Being able to make a difference is easier than you think. I'm grateful for the support of 'many hands making light work'. Having the opportunity to give to another is a very special thing – better than receiving!"

### Michael Gerrish

Michael Gerrish is much loved by Mooroolbark Community Centre users, and is recognised for his friendly, helpful manner and engaging smile. He is the Venue Operations Supervisor for both Mooroolbark Community Centre and Montrose Town Centre. In this role, he works to support performances, meetings and events by sourcing and providing technical equipment and, in many cases, operating the equipment. There are other community centre responsibilities, too – setting up, packing down, and overseeing building maintenance to name a few.

Michael told me that he relishes working with performers, both professional and those who may be semi-professional or amateur. He said, "I enjoy the opportunity to work with both in the areas of lighting and sound. I find my musical background helps enormously."

After completing an audio engineering course and working for a lighting company in Sydney, Michael has had extended experience at many venues throughout the shire – including considerable experience at Lilydale's

meet together each week at the Mooroolbark Community Centre.

The group has a 20-year history and provides members with the chance to meet together regularly to encourage and support one another.

Fritz is a man with a sharp mind and a keen sense of humour. I can't remember a time when his face hasn't lit up when he greets others.

He works with MetroAccess in Maroondah on projects that improve the physical environment for people using a wheelchair or electric scooter, and we frequently see him zooming around Mooroolbark and stopping regularly for a chat with many who know him.

Over the years, Fritz has actively approached all businesses in Mooroolbark, looking for ways to help improve physical access to their premises.

I for one always enjoy a few words – and invariably a laugh – with this beautifully compassionate, personable man.



Randall Bouchier

# Mooroolbark Junior Football Club

Any way you look at it, MFC Juniors had a great year in 2011. Club President, Colin Reyment is particularly proud of the fact that the club was awarded the Eastern Football League's best junior club award. The "Gordon Parker - Best Club of the Year" trophy was awarded in recognition of the high level of effective and responsible management of every aspects of the club's life.



Club President, Colin Reyment

This year the club was given the opportunity to host the grand final at Longfellow Avenue and received much positive feed-back after a most outstanding day.

Colin speaks most highly of the generous and dedicated contributions to the club made by many volunteers. Two of the club's outstanding coaches, Nick Batten ( U/12 ) and Drew Reilly (youth category) were nominated for coach of the year. Colin presented his junior club president's award for "Junior Club Person of the Year" to Cindy Palmer, a mother of five who still finds time to be heavily involved in many aspects of club life, including acting as a team

manager, serving in the canteen and working in the club's Sunday night dinners. Colin was pleasantly surprised when he received a similar expression of appreciation for his significant contributions to the club.



Seniors club president, Allan Westwood, presented his award for "MFC Club Person of the Year" to Colin for his outstanding work.

The club is very excited about the new developments to their club-room facilities which will serve the club extremely well when completed – around Xmas time. Members are most appreciative of the outstanding support they have received from the shire in attaining the new facilities.

The Auskick program had another most successful year with 120 children taking part. Anyone interested in registering their 5-12 year-old for this program is advised that the registration day will be conducted just prior to the next season.

Congratulations to the three young people pictured, on winning their awards and to the following players who made it through to the next level of the EFL Interleague selection: Jakob Jones, Mark Butler, Jock Duach, Jai Atkins and Blake Daniels.

Congratulations also to all who work to manage and support this great club. Well done!

## BILLANOOK COLLEGE STUDENTS BUILDING BICYCLE AID FOR AFRICA

Students at Billanook College are aware that they are part of a wider community - not just local, but global. A component of Billanook's core values and philosophy,

"Service to Others", means that students at the college are challenged to find ways in which they can assist their community at both levels.

That's why, when they were approached with a project, co-ordinated across Australia by Bicycles Empowering Namibia (BEN), Billanook's Year 10 Engineering Extensions students jumped at the chance to participate. BEN's program aims to supply many villages in Namibia with much-needed bike trailers.

The trailers, which attach to bikes, are used to earn an income in a variety of ways. They operate as bicycle taxis, and are also used to transport goods to and from market: firewood, maize, fertiliser, portable generators and drums of water, etc.

Most importantly, they often carry patients to hospital. BEN partners with community-based organisations throughout Africa, delivering the bicycle ambulances (trailers) to needy areas. Healthcare volunteers receive training in the use, maintenance and reporting on the performance of the ambulance.

A participatory management session also helps partners address

issues like storage, access and covering costs of maintenance. The bicycle ambulance is not intended to replace motorised ambulances, but to fill a gap where no services are provided. Indeed, for most of Namibia, there is no public emergency ambulance system, and people often die because they cannot afford to pay for private transport.

The students' designs were required to carry a minimum weight of 120 kilograms, be sent as a flat pack to load on top of bikes, have a seat-post attachment system that must incorporate some form of universal joint or flexible coupling, be extremely strong and reliable, have secure tie-down points and be locally repairable.

Students utilised computer-aided design software to draft and create the trailers, and then conducted practical testing to ensure that they stood up to the design specifications. The Billanook community assisted in providing and sourcing material for the trailers.

Once the trailers were completed, tested and flat packed, the students and staff assisted in packing the shipping containers in preparation for their departure to Africa.

The Billanook staff and students involved in the BEN project were ecstatic at seeing the project through to finality, knowing that the trailers will make a huge difference to the lives of people in a community thousands of kilometres away.



To find out more about the Billanook College's BEN project and its Round Square philosophy, go to [www.billanook.vic.edu.au](http://www.billanook.vic.edu.au)

# Mooroolbark Lions Club - Long-serving Members

**P**eter and Glenys Giddings have an amazing record of service in the Lions Clubs organisation. It all began in Papua New Guinea in 1965 when Peter joined the Sogeri Lions club.

Peter, who was originally from Mildura, was working at the Yallourn power station when he first met Glenys, who held a teaching position in the local area. Glenys was born in British East Africa (now Uganda) where her father was working in the British Colonial Service but spent most of her early childhood in South Wales before the family migrated to Australia in 1949.

Not long after they were married, Peter was successful in an application to join the ACT police force and they moved to Canberra. He found that the small ACT police force provided a variety of policing duties and he gained much valuable experience over his three years there.

Early in 1964 this adventurous couple moved to Papua New Guinea when Peter was appointed to the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary with the rank of sub-inspector. Having originally accepted just a two-year contract, they went on to spend a total of 18 years in PNG working mainly in Port Moresby and Sogeri, a more rural area near the start of the Kokoda Trail. Peter was the first regular police officer at Sogeri, as the area was previously under the control of a patrol officer.

Peter and Glenys speak most fondly of their time in PNG as being some of the best years of their lives.

During their time there, Peter was successively promoted to the positions of inspector, chief inspector, superintendent and chief superintendent. At various times he was the officer in charge of the Port Moresby CIB and the director of A Division – with responsibility for police administration of Papua.

Finally he became the assistant commissioner – crime, in charge of the CIB for the whole country. Peter's career has been very distinguished. Peter and Glenys continued their Lions Club service with the Port Moresby Lions Clubs until they left PNG. They returned to Australia in 1981.

After returning to Australia, Peter worked in security management positions in Brisbane and Melbourne before taking up positions in local government.

Peter resumed his community service work when he joined the



Glenys and Peter Giddings

Mooroolbark Lions Club in 1983, where he and Glenys have been active for the past 27 years

Peter has served as president of the club on three occasions and as secretary many times.

Some major achievements of the Mooroolbark Lions Club, of which he is very proud are:

- The establishment of the "Jim Fuller" Group Home in Wynyard Drive.
- The installation of the hydro therapy pool for the Rosine Nursing Home / Melba Centre.
- The construction of the Hookey Park rotunda, which marked the 25th anniversary of the Mooroolbark Lions Club.
- Assistance and support for the Early Childhood Intervention Centre at the Charles Street Kindergarten.
- The establishment and management of the Lions District Project which raised \$140,000 for the Bone Marrow Donor Registry.

We sincerely thank Peter and Glenys for their remarkable record of service to our community, and wish them on-going good health and much enjoyment in their retirement years.

**Doug Lewis**

## MOOROOLBARK STATION

The Mooroolbark station precinct is finally set for a major upgrade, thanks to state government funding announced in September. Yarra Ranges Mayor, Cr. Terry Avery, has welcomed the announcement by the Department of Transport, of a total of \$3.8m funding allocated to the development of Mooroolbark station as part of the "Creative Community Hub Project". Yarra Ranges Council is contributing \$300,000 of the \$3.8m.

The Mayor commented, "Our community has been working together on a shared vision for the station development over the past four years. It is fantastic that the plans will finally come to fruition." A consultative committee including council, the Department of Transport, Metro Trains Melbourne, Victoria Police and local community representatives began working on the project in 2007. Along the way a number of events have been held at the station including a community planting day, a youth art project and the steam train shuttle day. The committee is delighted to see its efforts recognised – with the provision of funding to develop project outcomes.

Design plans include a new entry precinct with a creative community hub structure, an upgraded site for the café, and associated



Oct. 2011 meeting - consultative committee representatives

landscaping. In addition, the northern car park will be redeveloped to improve parking for commuters. Mayor Avery added, "The proposed changes to the station and the surrounding area will make the journey much more enjoyable for commuters and will provide a positive centrepiece for the community and for Mooroolbark traders". Note: A timeline has not yet been set for the work.

**Lisa Whitehouse**  
Secretary and Council Representative.

# celebrate mooroolbark inc.

# 2012

● **Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup> – A free family festival**  
**Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> – The Mooroolbark Talent Quest**

Planning for Celebrate Mooroolbark 2012 is well under way. We are a family festival with the theme this coming year being We are Family – Multicultural and Community. We are looking for partnerships with new participants in the festival to make it bigger and better. Maybe your business, school or group would like to participate in the market-place or get involved in the festival parade. We have writing, poster and photo

competitions for school-age children and many opportunities for local acts and performers. We are seeking local acts for the community stage or as roving performers and groups to provide family-friendly activities or affordable food.

Then there is the Celebrate Mooroolbark talent quest. If you can sing or dance or play an instrument or can entertain an audience why not enter the talent quest with the opportunity to win cash prizes. Entry is free, with two categories –

Under 16 and Open, with first, second and third prizes as well as a People's Choice.

If we have not been in touch with you yet, please contact us on [celebratemooroolbark@gmail.com](mailto:celebratemooroolbark@gmail.com) and we will get information out to you.

**Andrew Lang,**  
**Chair of the Celebrate Mooroolbark**  
**Committee**



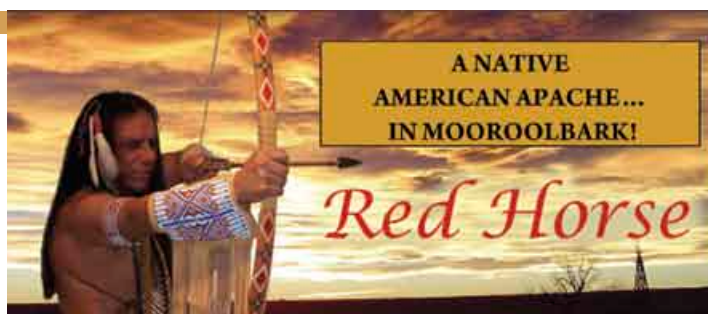
The diversity of the people in our little town of Mooroolbark never ceases to amaze me ... let me introduce you to "Red Horse" ... a descendent of the American Indian! Red Horse came to Australia in 2001 and married his wife, Natalia, in 2004. They have three grown-up daughters, from a previous marriage, Sophia, Isabella and Josephine.

Red Horse is an Apache from the Mescalero tribe, whose native homelands are in New Mexico, in the south west of the United States of America. There are seven major tribes that make up the Apache nation. Four of these tribes, the Mescalero, Lipan, Jicarilla and the Kiowa lived on the southern plains; and three tribes, the Chiricahua, Western Apache and the Navajo lived in the desert. Red Horse has a passion for his Apache heritage which taught him, through tradition and culture, how to live and care for the environment and how to respect his parents and family. Because of this traditional background that he has lived, he and Natalia are well equipped to conduct "sustainability incursions" in the primary schools of Victoria. This means that they teach, by the example of the Plains American Indians, their quality of life and how to live it.



Natalia

By explaining how the Plains Indians lived their lives, Red Horse not only shows how to sustain our environment and world as the Indians did, but also how they left a true record of their civilisation after they lost their identity through the decimation of the American Indian by European settlement and the American government. I have been to one of these fascinating "sustainability incursions" and was enthralled by the energy of the inter-tribal dance, the colour and spirituality of the exhibits on display and the wistful sound of the Indian flute. The culture and way of life of the Native American Plains Indians nation in the 1800s is related by Red Horse through stories that have been passed down through the generations. These exciting stories, told to Australian children, teach good living, standards and morals. The visual nature of the incursion stories keep the children (and adults) so enthralled that they become a lifelong



memory for them to hand down to their children.

Red Horse and Natalia also hold fantastic workshops on the culture of the Plains Indian for adults, the first of which was held on the 5th November 2011. And on Saturday March 24th 2012 Red Horse will be performing at the Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival.

In order that Red Horse can fulfil this passion for his Apache heritage ... surprisingly, he has to have a job! He and Natalia offer a very professional carpet cleaning service. Unsurprisingly, the business is called "Apache Carpet Cleaning".

If you would like to have your home or business carpets cleaned with the latest "Rotovac Technology System" please call Red Horse or Natalia:  
 Mobile: 0411 568 963  
 Email: [apachecarpetcleaning@hotmail.com](mailto:apachecarpetcleaning@hotmail.com)

To enquire about the Native American incursions for your school contact Red Horse or Natalia at:  
 Native American Productions  
 Phone: 0425 428 088  
 Email: [info@nativeamerican.com.au](mailto:info@nativeamerican.com.au)  
 Web: [www.nativeamerican.com.au](http://www.nativeamerican.com.au)

Red Horse's favourite quotation:

**"There is no death, only a change of worlds."**

Chief Seattle's speech in 1854.

**Barry Austin**



# MIRANDA LEE.

## High end fashion store

Shop 12 Brice Ave Mooroolbark. Ph: 9736 9191



Miranda Lee Teo grew up in Ringwood East and now lives in Croydon. She has always had a keen interest in fashion – particularly in the area of design. This interest led her to complete four years of study beginning at Box Hill TAFE, studying fashion design and then on to RMIT to study product development and merchandising. Her studies included design, product development, marketing, accounting, trend forecasting and much more. During those years she worked hard at her part-time jobs and was able to fit in extensive travel opportunities in USA and South-East Asia.

In the beginning of 2011 MIRANDA LEE. was ready to begin her career by opening her boutique at 12 Brice Avenue Mooroolbark. She has been ably assisted by her partner Victor, who is involved in business and Victor's sister, Leanne, who runs "All Buffed Up" in Mooroolbark. MIRANDA LEE. speaks very highly of the assistance she received from her family along with Victor's family, who have been extremely supportive and helped every step of the way. Her brother, Ryan (graphic designer – identi Graphic Design), has provided the inspiration for the logo and all design concepts used. Vic (Victor's dad) has been the man behind the store set up, from the floors to the walls. MIRANDA LEE. has also received assistance from the New Enterprise Initiative Scheme. This government initiative is offered free of charge and helps participants to put business ideas into practice. It assists with developing a viable business plan, and mentors and guides participants through the whole developmental process. Over the years it has helped more than 100,000 new businesses to get started.

MIRANDA LEE. saw a great opportunity here, in Mooroolbark, to provide a boutique-style women's clothing store to the local areas: one that would be typical of an inner city store, through unique store design, high quality and on trend fashion items, at an affordable price. MIRANDA LEE. carefully selects items from quality brands such as Ladakh, Sass, Fate, Betty Basics, Anise, Huntingbird, and much more. It is her long-term goal to develop and distribute her own MIRANDA LEE. label.

From the day the store opened on August 20th this year, MIRANDA LEE. has been greatly encouraged by the patronage received from the local community and the many positive comments she has received. She feels that her Brice Avenue address has been a good choice and looks forward to further building this business. We congratulate her on her strong initiative and determination and wish her every success in this new venture.



## Mooroolbark Pet and Stock Feed

101 F Cardigan Road Mooroolbark Ph: 9725 1000

Jenny Van der Meer grew up in Cardigan Road Mooroolbark. Her parents still live there in the family home. Some years ago, whilst Jenny and Seymour were visiting Jenny's parents, they noticed that the shop their business now occupies was available for rent. It immediately attracted their attention as it was just the type of shop they were looking for to establish the business outlet that they had planned.

Seymour and Jenny had, for many years, been running a canvas manufacture and repair business from their family property in Toolangi. Their business offers a custom manufacturing service for such items as horse float covers, outdoor settings, etc, and also a repair service for all types of canvas products. They had 20 years of experience in this field before moving into their Cardigan Road premises.

When they opened their shop in 2003, they also focused on the manufacture of camper-trailers which Seymour had recently begun constructing. However, soon after opening the shop, the market for camper-trailers was severely impacted by changed economic conditions and the arrival of lower quality Asian imports. So, while on-road and off-road camper trailers remained a significant part of their business, they realised the need to broaden their operating base even further.

It was then that they decided to add stock and pet food sales as another dimension to the services they were offering at Cardigan Road. They had already been operating this business, on a small scale, from their Toolangi home and now transferred those operations to their new outlet.

Today, they have expanded to carry a comprehensive range of premium quality pet foods for cats, dogs, guinea-pigs, rabbits and all different types of pets – including special pellets for feeding of kangaroos. Other stock items include fresh meat, chicken pellets, horse food, and hay in bales and in small bags for domestic pets. Their combined experiences with horses, alpacas and emu enable them to offer helpful advice on many matters affecting those animals.

In addition to these food products the shop now also carries a range of pet animal enclosures, chicken pens, etc. Jenny and Seymour have been particularly encouraged to see this stock and pet food aspect of their business continue to grow month by month.

On Black Saturday, Jenny and Seymour were severely affected by bushfires that swept



through their 10-acre property. As they had carefully prepared for such a circumstance, they decided to stay and defend their home. In doing so, they lost their sheds, barn, stables and a number of animals, along with all of their fencing, but managed to save their home which was blackened at both ends but survived.

It was some time before they realised the full impact of these events on their lives. In speaking about these experiences they express their deep appreciation and thankfulness to local CFA members, and others, for the priceless support they received in the process of recovering from the various aspects of this disaster.

We wish them on-going success with the development of their local business.

# WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

A terrible and significant moment ...riots, fires, deaths.



Many will remember the riots in England a few months ago. Did you wonder what was wrong for people to behave as they did? Do you think the same thing could happen here?

We were all amazed at the damage being done to the English communities. Local people's businesses – not just big businesses, but "mum and dad" shops and restaurants – were being burnt to the ground. These were places where the customers and the owners know each other ... just like here in Mooroolbark.

Very old buildings that had survived WWII bombing were destroyed! People died because of violent actions fuelled by uninhibited anger and frustration.

A Malaysian student was a hapless victim. As he was being helped by someone after having his jaw broken in the riot, an accomplice ransacked his backpack. A Twitter campaign managed to raise £20,000 to help him get his life back together.

In another incident, a car was driven at a group of young men as they protected community property, immediately killing one, with the other two dying later that day.

These were all very sad scenes that deeply concerned and perplexed their nation – they concerned our nation too.

Could the same thing happen here? What was the catalyst that fuelled this behaviour?

As the riots continued past the first day and into another four, and also spread to other cities nearby, the authorities and politicians were at a loss to explain the rioting and to deal with it effectively.

After events died down, measures were taken to explore why it had happened. A team was established to interview people involved in the riots. Without threat of being incriminated or charged, many came forward to share their views and experiences.

As I write, there are crowds rallying in other cities around the world – including here in Australia. They are concerned about the banks and stock markets, about big business and over-paid executives. Some of these executives get annual or severance bonuses many times more than any of our lifetime incomes. Inequality seems to be a common theme in people's expression and rhetoric. They want a lot more fairness. These are peaceful rallies, but the concerns are similar.

***Is "stuff" really that important?***

During the English riots, one brave woman yelled out in the midst of the rioting, forcefully telling the looters they weren't fighting for a cause – they were "just stealing stuff"! The shooting of Mark Duggan may have triggered the riot, but that point became

England Riots 2011



moot when the overwhelming actions were of violence against the innocent, and blatant damage and burglary.

Rajab, an observer of the English riots, remarked, "The saddest thing is that while our parents fought for noble causes such as equal rights and the end of apartheid, our generation fights for Nike trainers and iPads. This, I am afraid, will define my generation."

Every day, all day, we're all surrounded by an incessant focus on materialism ... the latest gadget, trendy clothes or some other irresistible attraction is flaunted constantly in the media. When there seems no legitimate means to have what someone feels they need or deserve, some take it by force when given the chance. The riots were just that chance – an opportunity for some people to take what they wanted, leaving a huge mess behind.

Young people can see a very bleak future where employment is hard to get. Depressed economies mean high unemployment, so it's not surprising when young people begin to run out of hope and see very limited potential for a dignified future for themselves and their community

### **How do we know when 'enough is enough'?**

Is today's "enough" the same as it was 20 years ago?

As parents, we might find it helpful to ponder whether we are reinforcing healthy lifestyle values. We live in an age of materialism! Our kids have grown up with physical possessions in abundance – has it done any good? Or has it made them more self-centred? Do they feel that they deserve this and that because 'everyone else has got one'?

Is this thinking creeping into our attitudes as well? How will the next generation cope with an excessive focus on materialism and belongings ... will they simply expect to

have whatever is advertised on TV or online?

Can we be more encouraging of gratitude and appreciation for all we do have, especially here in Australia – opportunities, safety, food, shelter, social security, education – all well in excess of most of the world, which lives with very basic and desperate needs every day?

Advertising suggests that we are not worthy as people without the material possessions that we are somehow expected to afford and to have. Instead, we must realise that we are of great value to each other when a community respects all of its people and seeks to ensure they have what they need – as opposed to showing them what they should want.

### **What's still important – no matter what?**

I have noticed that when young people simply please themselves for an extended period of time like school holidays, and have little activity focused away from themselves, they become very miserable and grumpy (to say the least).

Humanly we are hard-wired to have a portion of giving in our lives. It adds a dimension to our inner person that we don't get from pleasing ourselves. Advertising tends to focus on what we should want for ourselves. There are only occasional mentions of opportunities like the Blood Bank where we can play a vital role in assisting others in need.

In our wonderful nation there is a truth that will never be made redundant by succeeding generations. It is this: "appreciation and gratitude is essential to a healthy society". Along with our many freedoms and rights, we have an equally significant responsibility to contribute to our community where we can.

Thankfully, our nation has a healthy proportion of volunteers – old and young alike. As never before, we depend on their willing and generous contributions to our daily lives.

Sadly, we may not even notice most of them – not until we need blood or some other essence of life.

We can't change the whole world, but we can have a positive influence in our own families and in our local communities. It will pay huge dividends to our community when our kids pass on the lessons we have taught them, to their own children. What more can we hope for?

Our employers are looking for people who have good values and principles – a good work ethic. When businesses have valued staff, they can effectively train the next generation of workers and, eventually, business owners. These future employees and leaders are our kids! Our kids need to have a sure and firm grasp of what makes society tick. They need to understand how to value people – not just what they have.

In the future it will be our kids who manage the economy, the super funds, the countries, and the businesses that employ local youth. We need to show them the way! As distressing as the sickening and turbulent times in the headlines have been, they can benefit us if we take stock of who we are as families, and clarify which positive values and standards will survive the test of time.



**Steve Steel**

  
**Professionals**

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# CHURCH NEWS

Reflecting on Some of Nature's Beauty Seen Around ...

## Mooroolbark this Spring

"I tell you, don't worry about life, wondering what you are going to eat, or what clothes your body will need . . . Think of the wild flowers, and how they neither work nor weave. Yet I tell you Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed like one of these." (Luke 12:22, 27 Phillips)



Early cap Orchid



Green comb Spider orchid



Clubbed or Plain lipped Spider orchid

Photography by Randall Bouchier



## Senior Pastor Appointed Mooroolbark Baptist Church

commences his role as Senior Pastor at Mooroolbark Baptist Church.

Michael, his wife Christy and their two children, Camden and Bailey, moved to Mooroolbark from Portland, Victoria where Michael has served as Associate Pastor since 2006. Growing up in Northern Virginia, in the USA, Michael first met Christy when they were both attending the same university. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science - Communications, Michael moved into computer related roles as a technical writer and software trainer, working in the Washington D C district. During that time, he served in his local church area in a part-time capacity. In 1997, when Michael felt the call to full-time ministry,

The community of churches in Mooroolbark extends a very warm welcome to pastor Michael Drennan and his family as Michael

that he decided to enrol at the South Western Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. At the end of a three year course there, he graduated with a Master of Christian Education degree. Returning to Virginia, in 2004, Michael met John Simpson, Pastor of Portland (Vic. Aust.) Baptist Church, who was visiting in the area. The two quickly formed a close friendship and the following year John invited Michael and his wife to come to Australia and visit his Portland Parish.

Michael looks back on their Australian visit as most stimulating time and a great introduction to our country. Following on from that visit, in 2006, Michael was offered the position of Associate Pastor in Portland. He says that due to the great time they had experienced here, the family felt no hesitation in accepting that offer- which they took up in December of 2006. Reflecting on his five year tenure in Portland, Michael says, "Our family really treasures the relationships that developed during our years in Portland and we have many very fond memories to look back on."

When Michael was approached by Mooroolbark Baptist Church to accept the role of Senior Pastor, he says "We felt very strongly that this was what God wanted us to do." He was inducted into the position of Senior Pastor on Sunday, October 16th. Michael says, "Our family has been quite overwhelmed by the love, kindness and generosity expressed by so many people in the local church and in the Mooroolbark community. We look forward to a long and fruitful time here."

We all wish the family a most uplifting and rewarding time in Mooroolbark in the years that lie ahead.



### WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Combined Church Service  
Friday March 2nd 10 am  
St Peter Julian Eymard  
Hull Road Mooroolbark  
All Welcome

# From Wonga Park to Africa

Janet Dickson



Marita Simpson grew up in Wonga Park. Now, she is living in a remote village in Uganda, running a school for orphaned and vulnerable children. What made Marita decide to leave her comfortable lifestyle in the eastern suburbs, to live in an isolated and impoverished African village? The driving principle of Marita's life is simple. She believes that the more we have (wealth, opportunities, education), the more responsibility we have towards others. Marita went to school at Oxley College in Chirnside Park and then trained and worked as an accountant in Melbourne. She then became a teacher and worked at Oxley College. After receiving an excellent education herself, Marita felt that she wanted to use it for the benefit of children living in poverty. So, in 2008, she established Amari Community Development Organisation, with the aim of relieving poverty through education for children in Uganda.

## A jewel near the Nile

Marita started the Amari School in the village of Kisiabi, near Lake Albert, not far from the Nile River. She chose that area because of the extremely high number of orphans: 30% of children in the local primary school have lost one or both parents. The school is like a little jewel of quality education, in an area where many primary schools have over 100 children per teacher, and resources are scarce.

## You can't just pop out to Bunnings!

Marita has just completed the first school buildings: two classrooms, storerooms and staff offices. Any building project is challenging. But for Marita, the challenges are extreme. Because of the remote location (eight hours drive from the capital, Kampala), all the materials have to be trucked long distances over rough roads. If something has been forgotten, it may mean weeks of delay!

## A veranda out the front

Local Ugandan builders were baffled by Marita's plans for the school: she wanted a wide, Aussie-style veranda along the length of the building. This was completely unheard of and the builders tried to talk her out of it. But – Marita had her way.

The verandas are not just a bit of Aussie nostalgia – they have proved to be a valuable extra learning place and play area for the kids. They provide shelter from the hot sun or the tropical rain.

## Every child has a story

Each little one at the Amari school has a story of hardship and poverty. One little boy lost his dad then his mother abandoned him. Then his grandmother took him in, but she was blind. They were being helped by a man who was already caring for two other orphans, as well as his own seven children.

Another little girl lost her father last year. Her mother has to work, to grow food for the family to eat. The child is being raised by an aunt, who works extremely hard to help support 30 other dependents – mostly nephews and nieces, whose fathers have died.

## Aussies are generous!

Most of the children at the Amari school are being supported through child sponsorship. If you would like to know more about sponsoring a child, please contact [sponsorship@amari.org.au](mailto:sponsorship@amari.org.au) or call 0405 547 725. The building works are funded through donations. Marita and the village families have been amazed at the generosity of Australians, who have shown such interest in their community. If you want to find out more, or if you'd like to donate, please contact [missions@lmc.org.au](mailto:missions@lmc.org.au). All donations, including child sponsorship, are tax deductible.



## Mooroolbark's Carols by Candlelight, Hookey Park

Come join us at Hookey Park on Friday December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2011!

● Food stall opens at 6:30 pm ● Carols commence 8:00 pm ● BYO chairs / rugs

Mooroolbark's Carols by Candlelight at Hookey Park has become a much-anticipated and greatly enjoyed annual event in the life of our local community.



In our last edition of *Living Today* in Mooroolbark, long time local resident, Barbara Mills, recalled the very first carols event at Hookey Park in 1960. Back then, the organist and singers were arranged by her father, Sydney Buck, and their presentation took place on the back of a truck driven by Peter Hookey. Barbara says that a number of passers-by stopped to enjoy the carol singing.

Soon after that time, the Lions Club began to support the event, the Croydon Citizens Band joined in and a local choral group and various churches contributed to the formation of a choir. The carols took on a new life after the Lions Club built the rotunda in Hookey Park in 1994. This new facility gave a great focus for the event which the Lions continued to organise and fund.

Bimbadeen Heights Primary School became involved in the carols, leading to an increase in community participation. A

few years later other local schools began to participate.

This year, it is anticipated that six local schools will be involved and attendance at the event now averages over 400.

In 2002, at the request of the Lions Club, Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship began partnering with the Lions in arranging and managing the event. The Lions continue to provide the necessary funding and supply programs and candles. They also arrange for a first aid officer to be in attendance.

The SES gives much-valued support with lighting, assistance with set-up and provision of tarps for school groups to sit on. Mooroolbark Community Centre provides seating for the Croydon Band in the rotunda and the shire council has been very supportive in providing a rubbish removal service and access to toilets attached to the library building.

This annual event has now grown into **Mooroolbark's Community Carols & Twilight Picnic**. In 2006 a food stall

was commenced - offering low cost evening meals for those who wish to use this service. This has provided a very popular and well-patronised service and a great start to the evening.

This year's event is scheduled for Friday December 2<sup>nd</sup>. We look forward to another most enjoyable evening – celebrating the festive season and our vibrant local community.

## FREE FAMILY FILM NIGHT

### ALL WELCOME

Come along to Mooroolbark Community Centre  
**Tuesday January 31<sup>st</sup> 2012**

***™The Smurfs™***

Commences at **7.30 p.m**  
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.



## Life Begins at Thirty-Six

Japheth Lian was one of the earliest Chin refugee arrivals in Mooroolbark. During a recent conversation, he personalised one of our old sayings as: “Life begins at thirty-six.”

For Japheth, arriving in Australia at 36 meant new freedoms, new experiences and new challenges.

Hearing some of his story helps us welcome and understand the newly-arrived Chin who are changing the demographic of Mooroolbark.

### Childhood

Japheth was born in Hakha in the Chin state<sup>1</sup> of Burma (Myanmar) in 1966 – the second of six children. His father had been an orphan; his mother one of a family of ten children.<sup>2</sup>

“I grew up in a Christian family,” Japheth told me. “My parents were committed to God and one another and active in the church. My father was a deacon and choir conductor. Growing up, we children learned the Christian life as our parents led us in family prayer and devotions. They taught us to respect one another. My mother was very devoted to us. She still lives in Burma with my younger sister and her family. My father passed away in 2003.”

“With little educational background, life was very hard for my parents as they raised us. They used to collect and sell firewood from the forest.”

“Although it is difficult for Chin young people to go to university in Burma, it can be done if there’s a strong desire and personal commitment. I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Mandalay University.”

Unfortunately, Japheth’s siblings are not with him in Australia. “My elder brother died when I was in year 10,” he said. “One brother lives in the US and the other in Burma and another sister is in Malaysia with her family.”

### The long route to Mooroolbark

Although Japheth is currently the pastor of the 600-strong Chin Baptist Church of Victoria, he resisted becoming a pastor for many years – and in several countries.

“When I studied for my matriculation, my church leader and the pastor visited my house and asked me to go to Bible college – but I refused them. I said that this is not my will. I thought I would become a civil officer, which didn’t eventuate due to my involvement with the democratisation movement in 1988. I was one of the local leaders.”

The movement, known as the 8888 uprising, is noted in Wikipedia: ‘the ...uprising was started by students in Yangon (Rangoon) on August 8, 1988. Student protests spread throughout the country. Hundreds

of thousands of ochre-robed monks, young children, university students, housewives, and doctors demonstrated against the regime. The uprising ended on September 18, after a bloody military coup by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). Thousands of deaths have been attributed to the military during this uprising, while authorities in Myanmar put the figure at around 350 people killed. During the crisis, Aung San Suu Kyi emerged as a national icon.<sup>3</sup>

“I fled to India,” said Japheth. “Some of my friends joined the underground movement. Some are still committed to the Chin National Front. Some have died.”

“In India, I taught five years in high school. Some of my Chin National Front friends occasionally visited me. I helped them as I was able.”

After five years in India, Japheth no longer felt safe. “I went to South Korea for three years to earn some money. After three years the Chin community there wanted me to start theological studies but I refused them again. So I went back to India for another three years. I was prepared to help the Chin pastor, and serve the church as much as possible, but I didn’t want to become a pastor myself.”

“My wife and I arrived in Australia in January 2000 to attend the Baptist World Alliance conference in Melbourne. Following

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chin\\_State](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chin_State)

<sup>2</sup> Japheth said that his mother was the only child in her family not to be educated.

<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8888\\_Uprising](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8888_Uprising)

the conference, we stayed in Perth for a year and applied for asylum here.”

Japheth was surprised that in the year that followed there was no interview, or any information from the immigration department. “Some of my friends in Melbourne had their interview within two to three months, and following an application became permanent residents with the opportunities that such residence affords. By contrast, although we could open a bank account, we couldn’t rent accommodation because we didn’t have the necessary visas. We stayed with our friends and paid them for our lodging. Because I didn’t have a work visa, I couldn’t work in a factory, either.”

Japheth ended up working on a farm, with no idea how the labour system in Australia worked. “In 2000 they paid me \$6 an hour at the farm and charged me transportation on top of that,” he said. “After about six months I learned that many people earned \$15-20 per hour. I talked to the guy who hired me. He explained to me that I’d agreed to work for \$6 per hour when I’d arrived – but things changed and he paid me a higher daily wage after that.”

Japheth and his wife had still heard nothing about the processing of their residency applications, so when the Chin community in Melbourne urged Japheth to come to Melbourne, they returned and transferred their application to the Melbourne office.

“Within two months we had an interview and were successful,” said Japheth. “Looking back, I believe that God was leading me here.”

Japheth’s first job in Melbourne was working in a factory. “My manager was very happy with me and he wanted me to complete a machine operator’s course,” said Japheth. “The plan was that I would study three days and work two days each week.” However, the factory changed hands and the plans came to nothing.

“After that,” continued Japheth, “I applied to study for a Bachelor of Teaching. I received an acceptance letter, and two weeks later, received another letter saying I wasn’t accepted on the grounds that I wasn’t a native English speaker.”

“By this time, we had started the church and some of us taught in rotation. This time when asked to start theological studies, I approached the Bible College of Victoria in Lilydale. The principal allowed me to start the course even though I had no documents to prove my former education.”

“After three weeks, I couldn’t follow the lectures. Because I had no money I had to do farm work. If I had a class in the morning I had to work in the afternoon. If I had an afternoon class, I had to work in the morning. Many times I’d fall asleep in the classroom. My teacher suggested I go to the doctor, because he thought I was ill. I didn’t want to tell him about my hardship. One day when I was changing my clothes in the bathroom he saw me and called me to his office. After hearing my story he kindly

gave me all his lecture notes so that I could catch up.”

Japheth remembered another significant act of generosity which helped his studies. “One year I couldn’t pay my school fees – \$3,800. I had a prayer partner – once a month I went to her place and we would pray together. We prayed about my fees, and that day a man came to her house and the following day anonymously paid my fees at BCV.”

“I remember receiving a receipt from the college. I let them know that there must have been a mistake – but they assured me that the fees had been paid. Later I had the opportunity to thank this generous person.”

“At first, I commenced a Master of Divinity – but I had to give up after three weeks because of the requirement to study Greek or Hebrew! But I was able to finish a graduate diploma from BCV and after some more study at Whitley College, finally completed my Master of Arts.”

“So step by step I became the pastor here. I’ve been very happy in a very enjoyable role.”

## Australia

Japheth is enthusiastic about life in his adopted country. “It’s wonderful!” he said. “I feel that there’s warmth of welcome and no racism. Mooroolbark is a little bit like Chin state – a little bit hilly – nice! People are very kind, especially from the church. Some pastors have been very helpful mentors. I’m very happy.”

“When Chin people arrive, they feel very comfortable here. We experience new freedoms. In my country, we are second-class citizens because of our faith<sup>4</sup> and ethnic identity. Even in India or Malaysia we risk deportation as foreigners<sup>5</sup>. Life for most has been very tough. Peace, and smiling, welcoming faces makes them feel very privileged. A man in Adelaide recently told me that living here makes him feel that he is finally a human being.”

“In an ideal world, Chin refugees would prefer to stay in a free Burma. Although it’s difficult to start afresh in Australia without all the things that have been left behind, there is freedom, safety and opportunity here.”

“Our people want to work, get jobs, study, and financially support their families as quickly as they can. They are grateful for the privilege to be here – and feel a responsibility toward the nation – a need to defend and love this nation.”

According to Japheth, many Chin people have little educational background. “Some of our people have been very isolated”, he explained. Chin parents want education for their children so that they can have well-paid careers and opportunities that were denied to the previous generation.

## Settlement

One of Japheth’s roles in the community has been helping integrate newly-

arrived Chin families. “The last five years in Mooroolbark, I’ve been on call 24/7,” he said. “New arrivals don’t drive, don’t speak much English, and they don’t know how things work here.”

“For instance, when a family has a baby, they ring me because they don’t know how the system works. I ring the hospital and give the hospital details about the frequency of contractions and so forth ... and finally I take them to the hospital. Many times I’ve stayed in the delivery room. It’s helpful for the families – with my experience, I can help them with the nurse, talk to them, hold their hands, and pray for them. It’s been a great privilege to share private family moments and feel their happiness. Later I’m able to drive them home with the baby and pray for them at home. A year later we share times remembering.”

“If somebody has an accident, they ring me and ask what to do. I go there, talk to the insurance people and the police if necessary.”

Japheth also meets each new arrival, and helps his people with practical community matters, such as how to hire a sportsground or how to approach the local council about various issues. Japheth is also able to speak to the local member if there’s a refugee issue in India or Malaysia

Life is now much more relaxed than it was in his first five years here, according to Japheth. “We have more than 30 or 40 high school students. They can read and respond to correspondence. They can help their parents. I no longer have to translate for them. Many in the community drive. Fifty percent of men have jobs – family lives are changing and most are able to speak English a little bit.”

“So from this year, I can devote more time to the work of a pastor – prayer and teaching. I can spare more time for my family. I’m so grateful for my wife Irene. She’s been an ‘iron lady’ looking after the children and encouraging me.”

There are still challenges remaining for the Chin in Mooroolbark, acknowledged Japheth. “Family dynamics in Australia are different from Burma. There’s some culture shock as parents learn to develop an understanding relationship with their children. They have to learn how to encourage children to pursue their studies. This can be difficult as many parents haven’t had much education, and therefore struggle to understand what high school students need, like computers and other materials.”

It’s been a real privilege getting to know Japheth and his family in recent months, along with some of the members of the Chin community. They bring much to our township and region. They’re wonderfully friendly, industrious people.

On behalf of *Living Today* and our readership – we welcome them warmly!

**Randall Bouchier**



<sup>4</sup> In Chin state, 90% of people are Christian. Here it is 100%. Christianity is very important to us.

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR30/36-37.pdf> and <http://www.chro.ca/>

# YARRA RANGES POLICE COMMUNITY SAFETY REGISTER



In our senior years, as links to broader community life diminish, it is not uncommon for older individuals to experience a growing sense of isolation.

The Yarra Ranges Police Community Safety Register has been initiated in response to this situation. It aims to help senior residents living in the Yarra Ranges to be assured that they are not alone, to feel safe and confident wherever they may choose to live and to know that our local police are proactive in relation to their specific needs and general welfare.

In establishing and offering this service, our local police seek to help provide peace of mind, not only for our senior residents but for their relatives and friends as well. It provides a service of keeping in

regular touch with seniors (if that is their wish) and for contacting family members or close friends in emergency situations. It can also offer advice about local services that are available to those with particular needs. In these ways the program is particularly helpful for newcomers to the area and for isolated residents who desire to continue to live alone.

The register has been established by police and operates with the assistance of a number of volunteers who are based at the Lilydale police station.

To register your name, simply contact "Yarra Ranges Police Community Safety Register" at Lilydale police station, Ph: 9739 2396. You will then receive a telephone call from one of the friendly volunteers who will confirm that you are registered in the program and answer any questions you may have. You will then be forwarded an identification card to carry with you at all times so that in the case of an emergency, your next of kin can be contacted.

Note: Your details will be entered on a confidential computer data base that will only be accessed by authorised personnel in the case of an emergency.

The register is open to couples or individuals. It is available to anyone who might live alone or feel they need this service. There are no age requirements.

**Volunteers – Anyone wishing to volunteer to assist in this program is invited to contact Leading Senior Constable, Linda Hancock at**



## Senior Citizens' Art Classes

Art/painting classes have long been a much-valued and greatly enjoyed part of the activities offered each week at our Senior Citizens Club in Brice Avenue. Currently there are both morning and afternoon classes offered each Friday.

These local classes are run by Robert Knight, a well-known Australian realist artist who describes his own work as "realist - with a contemporary design element". Examples of his exciting and quite unique style can be viewed at [www.robertknight.com.au](http://www.robertknight.com.au). This very individual style has created considerable interest amongst art enthusiasts and he is often asked to run workshops to demonstrate his techniques. One recent workshop program took place at Halls Gap. It was titled "Grampians Brushes" and brought a number of artists together to demonstrate a range of techniques.

Whilst Robert speaks of the Australian bush as being his favourite subject, he also enjoys painting seascapes and various aspects of nature. In addition, city scenes have become a significant focus in recent times. Robert has won a number of major awards, including the Australian Guild Art Excellence Medallion, and many of his works are held in both corporate and private collections in

Australia and overseas. He has held many exhibitions in Melbourne, country Victoria and the ACT. Early in 2012 he will be holding a joint exhibition with Ev Hales, another well-known Victorian artist. The venue for this exhibition is the *Light Factory Gallery* in Eltham. Robert grew up in the local area and attended Mooroolbark Technical School. He now lives with wife, Linda, on a much-loved 30 acre bush-block in Gruyere.

He first became involved with Mooroolbark Seniors 20 years ago, when art classes were being run by artist Terry Collins. It is thought that Terry's earliest classes were the very first offered in a seniors' club in Victoria – in 1977 Terry mentored and encouraged Robert in his personal art development as well as involving him in the work with seniors art classes. In his classes today, Robert invites participants to choose their own subjects and then works closely with

them, sharing the beauty of the topic they are focused on as they develop their individual projects. Most of the painting is done in oils, but some prefer water-colours.

Over the years he has developed many close friendships with class members and feels very much a part of the Mooroolbark family of seniors. He comments,

***"The personal relationships we enjoy add a great deal to the enjoyment of our weekly classes."***



Realist artist - Robert Knight with class-members Fay Sleeman, Betty Mckenzie and Pat Moon

## From the Mayor – Cr. Terry Avery

Holidays are fast approaching as yet another year – and my term as Yarra Ranges Mayor – comes to an end.

I have greatly enjoyed my time as mayor and learned so much about our community and the tremendous work being carried out by our countless volunteers. Because of these people who dedicate so much of their time to helping others, the Yarra Ranges is a richer place.

I am also proud of Yarra Ranges council and some of the wonderful work being done in our region.

One significant highlight of the past year has been the confirmation of the funding for Mooroolbark as a Creative Hub project. This will greatly improve the Mooroolbark Station precinct.

Another great initiative is council's funding of a dedicated graffiti crew as well as a clean-up crew to help keep our streets looking their best.

Some Mooroolbark schools also enjoyed presentations this year which tackled the topic of graffiti in an interesting and informative way. The innovative pilot "Graffiti Education" school program was jointly funded by the Department of Justice and Yarra Ranges

council. Performers from Warner Awareness Education did a fantastic job in communicating with students.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage our residents to get involved with the local Mooroolbark Traders and Community Group. We are keen to increase our membership and we want your input.

As we head into the Christmas period, it is the perfect time to enjoy the great outdoors that the idyllic Yarra Ranges offers.

I would like to encourage everyone to remain aware of summer safety issues over this busy time – just a few small changes can make a big difference.

Our roads become much busier over Christmas, with many tourists drawn to the beauty of our region. Let's make sure we all adhere to traffic speeds. Arriving late to an event is a better option than jeopardising yourself and others.

Also, coming into the warm weather we are reminded of the importance of safety measures relating to backyard swimming pools. Pools and spas are a great addition to a property, but they do pose a risk to toddlers and young children. Vigilance is needed and children must be supervised in the pool and



spa areas by a responsible adult. Take the time to make sure you have the correct safety barriers in place and that locks on gates are in working order.

On behalf of my fellow councillors and staff at Yarra Ranges council, I would like to wish the readers of *Living Today in Mooroolbark* a very happy and safe Christmas.

**Cr. Terry Avery,  
Yarra Ranges Mayor**

## Transition Town "Mooky" is Born

*To a growing number of people the idea that oil will last forever and planet earth is just fine, is as foreign as saying that population won't increase.*

More communities are realising that we actually do need to look at ways to act in transitioning to a local economy less dependant on oil. They are seeking ways to improve their own sustainability and reduce their carbon footprint. Originally formed in the UK in 2005 and in response to growing concerns over these fundamental issues, Transition Towns (TT) was born and has gone global. Here in Australia Transition Initiatives has developed into a vibrant network spanning all states and territories.

Here in Mooroolbark, Montrose and Kilsyth, local residents Christina, Lisa and Bronwen have joined forces to form a Mooky Transition Town (an acronym for these communities). Holding its inaugural monthly meeting in August, Mooky looks at ways in which locals can contribute to transitioning their own communities from oil dependency. The ideas are certainly there. Some of these are holding an outdoor cinema summer series, developing a community garden, recycling commercial coffee grounds and "Nanna Knowledge" days. More ideas are invited. They are hoping to attract locals who feel inspired to participate – from simply helping out – through to leading projects. Mooky welcomes everyone. It's an exciting time.

With the support of Yarra Ranges council's Community Climate Change Officer, Alison Fogarty, Environmental Volunteer Support Officer, Sarah Fowler and Deputy Mayor, Cr. Len Cox, Mooky is establishing itself as a group focused on making a positive contribution. Mooky has been developing links with other local groups including local township groups, neighbourhood houses and other Transition initiatives. Everyone brings their unique skills which, when combined, makes for great potential in



L to R - Mooky Transition Town Founders - Christina Caleo, Lisa Regester, Bronwen Dunn, Community Climate Change Officer, Alison Fogarty and Councillor Walling Ward and Deputy Mayor, Cr. Len Cox

realising how the future could look for our communities.

Having now established a website, facebook and twitter, TT Mooky is accessible to all online. If you would like to find out more simply go to one of these online facilities or better still ... see you at the monthly meeting. Starts 6pm 2nd Sunday of each month, except January, at The Bridge Community House, Durham Rd, Kilsyth.

**Christina Caleo**

Webpage: [www.ttmoogy.wordpress.com](http://www.ttmoogy.wordpress.com)  
 Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/TTMooky/>  
 Twitter: [ttmoogy](https://twitter.com/ttmoogy)  
 E-mail: [ttmoogy@gmail.com](mailto:ttmoogy@gmail.com)

## Community Events Calendar

First Sun. of each month	<b>Farmers' Market.</b> Bellbird Park. Swansea Road, next to Lilydale Lake. Combined Rotary Clubs. All proceeds to local and overseas projects. Contact Bill Sutherland – Ph. 9727 0037
Friday nights during school term	<b>Fridays@Kids Domain.</b> Activities for primary school age kids. 4:00-6:00 pm. Oxley College Stadium. Details – Ph. 9726 8111 or <a href="http://www.lmc.org.au">www.lmc.org.au</a>
Dec 2nd	<b>Carols at Hookey Park.</b> Food stall opens 6:30 pm. Carols commence 8:00 pm. BYO chairs / rugs.
Dec 3rd	<b>Jazz &amp; Tap Dancing Concert.</b> Presented by Mooroolbark Community Centre – dance workshop students. Bookings – Ph. 9726 5488
Dec 7th	<b>Montrose Movie Club</b> presents <b>Smiley</b> (PG). 2012 will be “Classic Hollywood” Membership \$20 for the year, (includes 11 screenings). For more info – Ph. 9761 9133
Dec 11th	<b>Combined Churches Carols Service.</b> Commences 7:00 pm @ Life Ministry Centre, Old Melbourne Road, Chirnside Park. Ph 9726 8111 <b>Christmas Lights Show</b> – Dusk to 10.30 pm, Dec 11th – 23rd.
Oct - Nov	<b>Montrose Movie Club</b> presents <b>The Odd Angry Shot</b> – Sept 7 @ 7:00 pm, <b>Death in Brunswick</b> - Oct 5 @ 7:00 pm, <b>Clubland</b> – Nov 2 @ 7:00 pm. Montrose Town Centre 9761 9133
Dec 23rd- Jan 16th	<b>Mooroolbark Community Centre and Montrose Town Centre will be closed</b> over the Christmas–New Year period, from Friday Dec 23rd to Jan 16th, 2012.
Jan 16th, 17th	<b>Red Cross Blood Bank.</b> Mooroolbark Community Centre. Bookings 13 14 95
Jan 31st	<b>Free Film Night. The Smurfs,</b> Mooroolbark Community Centre. Commences 7:30 pm Free ice-creams and tea & coffee. Bookings 9726 5488
Jan and Feb	<b>Yarra Ranges Council Immunisation Sessions.</b> Jan 11th & 24th, Feb 7th, 8th & 28th Mooroolbark Community Centre. More info – Ph. 1300 068 333
Feb 2nd	<b>Mooroolbark Theatre Group</b> starts the new theatre year on Thurs 2nd February 2012 at 8:00 pm in Mooroolbark Community Centre, Brice Avenue. All welcome – with or without experience. Come along and see what we and our next play are all about. For more info, contact Arline on 9726 4282 or visit our website <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7u4fn">tinyurl.com/7u4fn</a> .
Feb 6th	Term & weekend <b>Art &amp; Craft Workshops.</b> Commence week 2 of 2012 school term. From Monday 6th Feb. More info. go to the Mooroolbark Community Centre website <a href="http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/mcc">www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/mcc</a> .
Feb 16th – Mar 15th	<b>Red Earth Gallery, VCE Creative Showcase.</b> Showcasing the work of 2011 VCE Visual Arts Students attending secondary schools in the Yarra Ranges. Mooroolbark Community Centre 9726 5488.
Mar. 2nd	<b>World Day of Prayer.</b> Friday Mar 2nd. Commences 10:00 am @ St. Peter Julian Eymard. Hull Road Mooroolbark. All welcome.
Mar 16th	<b>Blue Light Disco.</b> Supervised dance for youth aged 12–15 years. Mooroolbark Community Centre, 7:00 pm – 11:00 pm. Low cost admission, food and drinks available.
Mar 23rd -24th	<b>Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival.</b> Theme “We are Family – Multicultural and Community”. Talent Quest Fri. 23rd Free entry. Cash prizes. Under 16 and open sections. Festival – Sat 24th @ 9:15 am – 4:00 pm, Red Earth Park. Contact: <a href="mailto:celebratemooroolbark@gmail.com">celebratemooroolbark@gmail.com</a>

Our *Community Events Calendar* offers a service to local clubs and organisations. To include entries for your group's community events in future issues please contact the editor on 9761 1121 or [lewisdm@bigpond.net.au](mailto:lewisdm@bigpond.net.au)

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

# LIVINGTODAY in Mooroolbark

## Production

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



## Editor

Doug Lewis

## Publication

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## 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 phone number or by email (as above)**

## 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

## ADVERTISING POLICY

Living Today does not publish direct advertising. We do, however, greatly appreciate the valuable contributions made by those who partner with us in serving our local community through this magazine. We acknowledge those partners in each issue.

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in Mooroolbark.

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