

LIVING TODAY

in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges NO. 52 SEPTEMBER 2015



- The Flock—indigenous birds settle at Hookey Park
- Community forum and local awards
- True confidence for your children

10,000 free copies distributed throughout Mooroolbark and district

The Flock



Jonathan in his workshop with small working models for *The Flock*

In the June 2014 issue of *Living Today* I wrote about an upcoming steel sculpture series in Hookey Park.¹ At the time, the Yarra Ranges Council asked me not to give too many specific details about the work, as the idea was to build up a sense of mystery and anticipation about what was to be installed.

So my article focused on sculptor Jonathan Leahey and some details about the fabrication process.

Now, however, we can tell you more about the sculptures, collectively entitled *The Flock*.

The Flock derives much inspiration from the art of origami—the Japanese art of paper folding that has become tremendously popular worldwide. Jonathan not only enjoys the playfulness of origami but also the way it can set free our imaginations so that we can envisage much more than an intricately folded sheet of paper.

In desiring to be sensitive to Hookey Park and what it means to Mooroolbark, Jonathan enlisted the help of one of his

friends—ornithologist Dr Iain Woxvold, a research associate at Museum Australia who has worked extensively throughout Southeast Asia and the Pacific “specialising in the diversity and significance of bird communities.”²

During visits to Hookey Park, Iain and Jonathan made a list of regularly-seen indigenous birds. Jonathan then modified existing origami designs to create origami figures of those indigenous birds, which became the working model towards the completed works. Jonathan told me that his origami magpie originally needed 102 folds, but he has since simplified this so that the folding will be much easier for others to duplicate. To download Jonathan’s folding instructions for *The Flock*, visit <http://www.oritetsu.com>.

Each sculpture in *The Flock* is an example of *oritetsu*—a concept Jonathan coined which means ‘metal folding’ in Japanese. Jonathan created the Hookey Park bird sculptures from corten steel: a product that according to the manufacturers “is a cold-rolled weather-resistant steel that protects itself”³ with a surface coating

of rust that prevents further corrosion.⁴

Throughout the design and installation process, YRC kept a close eye on safety issues, and Jonathan collaborated with a firm of engineers in Sydney to make certain that his mounting and fixing plans were safe and feasible.

Each bird has a smart-phone-accessed QR code attached, which provides photos of the bird in its natural habitat, along with ornithological information and downloadable instructions for folding the origami designs. Jonathan hopes the birds will help foster community dialogue and interaction, in addition to promoting greater awareness about indigenous birds and their ecology.

As you might expect, when people are asked their opinion on the artworks, responses are varied. For some it’s a shrug of the shoulders; others speak about how they enjoy the artworks; yet others are ambivalent. One young lady told me delightedly that the raven scared her younger sibling. Others appreciate

¹ See pp. 12-13 Issue 47 http://mcdg.org.au/current/lt_archive.html

² Project notes provided to YRC evaluation panel

³ <http://cortenaustralia.com.au/>

⁴ <http://www.oritetsu.com/> Check out more details about *The Flock* and Jonathan’s work at this site.



Rainbow Lorikeet



PHOTO: © PIXABAY/MAGNASCAN



Noisy Miner



PHOTO: © FLICKR/LIP KEE WAP



The arrival of the magpie



Australian Magpie

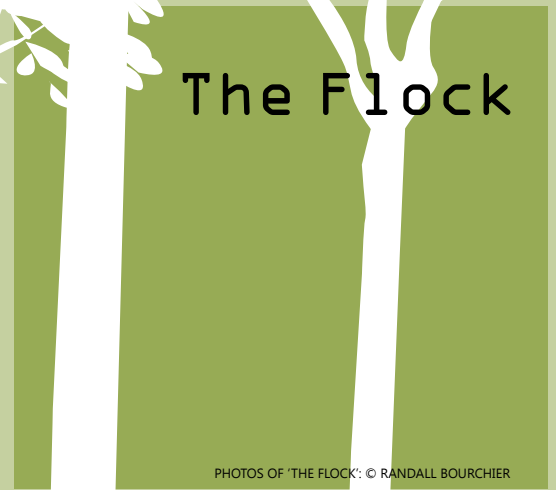


PHOTO: © PIXABAY/ROBERT LYNCH



PHOTO: © TONY HUDSON/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Australian Raven



The Flock

PHOTOS OF 'THE FLOCK': © RANDALL BOURCHIER



Installing the crested pigeon



PHOTO: © FLICKR/LIP KEE

Crested Pigeon



the engineering expertise in the sculptures. We're hoping that greater awareness of the work will produce more comment.

At least two people have learned more about our local bird life after indignantly telling me that one of the artworks was an introduced bird—and a pest at that! Interestingly, some people may confuse the so-called Indian Myna⁵ with the indigenous Noisy Miner⁶.

I asked local origami enthusiast Barry Austin to try some of Jonathan's downloadable folding plans. Barry's had years of experience! Here are some of his completed foldings:

I'm excited about this addition to Mooroolbark. It is one of the very few large scale *oritetsu* works in the world. I'm *really* chuffed, though, that the work is not only reflective of some of our native bird-life, but that it can be a drawcard for locals and visitors alike. I can imagine groups of school children visiting, or Yarra Valley tourists and regional residents coming to Hookey Park¹ for a picnic and lingering to try their hand at origami folding. It sounds like a great day out!



Randall Bouchier



Raven



Pigeon



Noisy Miner

⁵ <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Sturnus-tristis>
⁶ <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Manorina-melanocephala>

¹ <https://plus.google.com/101917947129621808758/about?gl=au&hl=en>

WHAT IS A QR CODE?

A Quick Response (QR) code is a type of barcode that you can scan with your smart phone or tablet. QR codes are used to encode small pieces of information such as serial numbers or website addresses. The sculptures at Hookey Park have QR codes attached, and when you scan a code it allows you to visit a website containing additional information about the sculpture.

To scan QR codes on your smart phone or tablet, you first need to install a QR code-scanner application from your device's

app store. Scanner apps are quick and easy to install. Once the app is installed, start the QR scanner and point the camera lens at the QR code. You will be prompted to navigate to the website page which will give you more details about the sculpture.

Roland Huber



PHOTO: © RANDALL BOURCHIER

Editor's Note:

You may notice that there has been a change to our standard layout for the back cover this issue. *Living Today* is printed by Publication Perspectives, which has also contributed financially to the production of the magazine for many years. Recently, when it became obvious that we could not sustain our current production in these financially challenging times, Publication Perspectives offered to increase its funding for the magazine. In return for this generous support, the back cover of this issue and future issues of the magazine will promote Publication Perspectives and its associated companies, Tower Press and Buy Print Direct.

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Getting Ready for the Next Festival

celebrate
mooroolbark
festival



PHOTO: © DOUG LEWIS

I am pleased to announce that our committee has secured a council grant for the next three Celebrate Mooroolbark festivals. So the festival will be part of the Mooroolbark landscape again in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

But festivals don't just happen...

Our committee is already hard at work thinking about our next festival on 19 March 2016. We have already chosen our theme: Movie Mayhem.

Celebrate Mooroolbark aims to gather the people of Mooroolbark and surrounding suburbs together for a day of fun and family entertainment. It is an opportunity to showcase local organisations and businesses and to promote the community and ourselves. Each year more groups have come on board and we are pleased to say that as the festival grows, we have more opportunities for volunteer groups to supply food on the day. If you are part of a group, why not consider how you might use the festival to gain more recruits or to gain more exposure on the local scene. If you are short of ideas, talk to us and we can show you ways to get involved.

The guiding principle of the festival is to provide a low-cost day out for families—we seek to minimise the costs for children and families through sponsorship, and we encourage groups to put on free or low-cost activities. Our success has come from the support of our local businesses and organisations, which help with both cash and 'in kind' sponsorship. I would love to mention them all, but there are around 150 groups which help make the day happen. All that I can say, on behalf of the community, is thank you.

As usual, there will be a number of competitions in the months leading up to the festival. The festival begins with a celebration of the talents of our community with a talent quest on Friday night, 18 March.

We are looking for people and groups to get involved both on the day and to help organise the festival. We say farewell to a number of people from last year's committee and we are looking for new faces around our table. Contact us on celebratemooroolbark@gmail.com or 0490 499 320 or join our more than 1000 followers on Facebook.

Andrew Lang
Festival Chairperson

MOOROOLBARK UMBRELLA GROUP COMMUNITY FORUM



PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY TOKEN ARTISTS

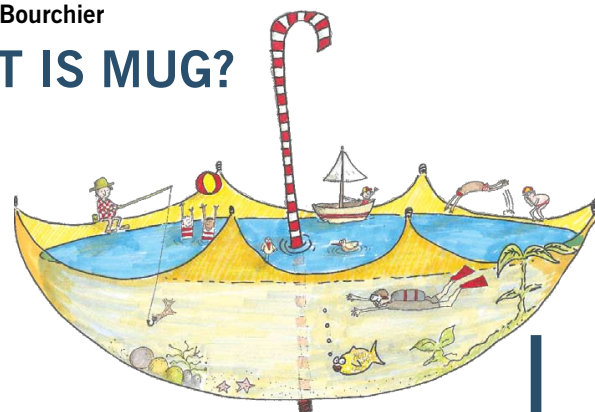
The Mooroolbark Umbrella Group's 2015 Annual Community Forum will take place in November. Our guest this year will be Frank Woodley—comedian, actor, and author. Some of you will recall Frank's work in *Lano* and *Woodley*, or have seen him in action at the Melbourne Comedy Festival. At the end of July, Penguin published the first of Frank's books for children—*Kismet and the Case of the Tassie Tiger* and *Kismet and the Case of the Smashed Violin*.

We're eager to have Frank sharing his unique humour with us in Mooroolbark on Thursday 19 November at the Mooroolbark Community Centre. The morning will see Frank working with local secondary students, and the afternoon entertaining senior primary students in the auditorium. At the Community Forum at 7:30 pm Frank will help present the 2015 Quiet Achiever awards, in addition to featuring in *Frank Woodley: the Interview*.

For more information:
moor.umb.group@optusnet.com.au or phone Randall on 9723 2693.

Randall Bourchier

WHAT IS MUG?



Mooroolbark Umbrella Group (MUG) was established as a representative voice for Mooroolbark. The group meets quarterly at Mooroolbark Community Centre to foster and enhance activities and partnerships that benefit our community. All community groups are invited to have representation in this "organisation of organisations." At Umbrella Group meetings, community group delegates are able to participate in:

- facilitating open dialogue within the community and with external agencies;
- generating interest and participation in local issues;
- helping to lead and contribute to local projects;
- being a voice of and advocate for the community; and
- providing a forum for sharing local information, views and priorities.

Community groups wishing to be represented at MUG meetings are invited to contact moor.umb.group@optusnet.com.au or Randall on 9723 2693.



Hooked on Real Estate

"I can honestly say I look forward to coming to work every morning," said Sheila Fitzgerald with a smile. That statement is quite surprising considering that Sheila's mornings have started in the same workplace for 30 years.

In March this year, the team at the LJ Hooker Mooroolbark branch celebrated Sheila's milestone 30 years of working for her current employer, Richard Nicholas. For Sheila the date also marked 20 years with LJ Hooker. In 1985 Sheila arrived for a one-day temporary receptionist position at Richard's real estate business. By the end of the day she had convinced Richard and the other partner to give her the role permanently. When the company became part of LJ Hooker in 1995 and moved one door down on Brice Avenue to its current location, Sheila was still there.

Now as a property manager, a role she jokingly described as "probably the worst part of real estate," Sheila deals with professionals, landlords and tenants on a daily basis. She credits her longevity in the job to using common sense and "going with my gut feeling—it's rarely let me down." With her engaging Irish accent—a testament to her origins in Tipperary, Ireland—and her direct

but friendly manner, it is easy to see her thriving in the role.

It is also clear that Sheila is passionate about the wellbeing of tenants and has the complete trust of the landlords she works with. In particular, Sheila enjoys giving new tenants an opportunity to enter the rental market. "Sometimes they are young and don't have a rental history or many references, but they just want a chance. It's great when we can give them that chance and the landlord says thank you as well in the end."

Sheila can recount stories of assisting first-time tenants to secure a rental home, only to have them return to her as homeowners and landlords years later. In her many years in real estate she has also had the pleasure of watching tenants' infant children grow into young adults seeking to enter the rental market themselves. She describes this cycle as one of the benefits and joys of staying in her role long-term.

From her office, Sheila has seen Mooroolbark's main street change dramatically over the past three decades. The years have also seen all three of Sheila's children attend Mooroolbark Early Childhood Education Centre,



Richard Nicholas and Sheila (seated) with her children, who were pre-teens when Sheila began working for Richard. Those children now each have two children of their own. L-R: Sheila's son Gordon and wife Bridget, daughter Alison and partner Glenn, and son John and wife Rania.

then St Peter Julian Eymard Primary School and finally Mount Lilydale Mercy College. Her six grandchildren have now embarked upon the same schooling pathway.

Through these changes and more, Sheila's dedication to her work is self-evident over the 30 years that she says have "gone by in a heartbeat."

Carissa Sianidis

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

A Helping Hand

Most of us would never consider having a transit lounge in our own homes! But to professional organiser Veronica Kennedy, that idea is not too far-fetched.

An airport transit lounge has an air of anticipation as passengers await the start of their journey to somewhere important. Similarly, there are items in the home that are just waiting to be taken somewhere. There's that piece of Tupperware that needs to be returned to its rightful owner, or the wrapped present for a birthday, or books due to the library. Sometimes these items get left on the bed, or the kitchen bench or table, and then get forgotten altogether.

Veronica advises her clients to solve this problem by setting up a personal "transit lounge" in the home by placing these items in a box, basket or on a peg near the door that is used to exit the house. Having the items close to the door reminds those in the home that these items are also travelling on a journey out today. The transit lounge is just one of the tips that Mooroolbark resident Veronica shares with clients of her aptly named organising business, A Hand to Help.

Veronica, who is married with two teenagers, has been a natural organiser most of her life. Helping people sort out a cupboard or a room vitalises Veronica and she loves the idea that she has helped someone to see results almost immediately. Her organisational skills led to her starting her own business as a professional organiser. Veronica can help you reorganise food and other items so

that your kitchen pantry and cupboards function as they should, or will help you create and maintain space on your kitchen bench for easy work flow and food preparation.

Veronica has found that asking people what they need and being non-judgmental is part of her success. The problem could be something as simple as finding a place to put the house keys, or as involved as downsizing after the children have left home. To Veronica, it is not a matter of changing the person, but changing unproductive habits by putting a system in place that works for that person. Problem solving is what she enjoys.

Veronica is a member of the Australasian Association of Professional Organisers (AAPO) which, among other things, provides guidelines for professional and ethical conduct by its members. Through the AAPO, Veronica attends professional development courses and monthly forum meetings, which provide the opportunity to get together with other organisers and to work on bigger projects.

Word-of-mouth recommendations are important to Veronica as they confirm that people have been happy with her work. Her husband Phil is a big support and handles some of the administrative aspects of the business.

If you could benefit from Veronica's skills as a professional organiser, you can contact her on 0408 609 709 or email veronica@handtohelp.com.au.



PHOTO: ©BARBARA AUSTIN

Veronica would love to lend you a hand to help restore your space!

Barbara Austin



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Living Today in Mooroolbark



Carter Evans enjoys time at the playgroup with his mother Bec.



For Carter, Heidi, Demi, Oscar, Nate, and Faith, playgroup offers a change of toys and time to play together, with the security of knowing their parents are there too.

Blairgowrie House Still Going Strong

Sunlight streams through the large windows of Blairgowrie House, lighting up the brightly painted walls and colourful toys of the playgroup as the children play happily side by side. Occasionally a delighted squeal from a young child punctuates the low murmur of the parents' voices. The children, impulsive and undecided, move quickly from toy to toy. A visitor to the playgroup might be surprised to learn that, less than a year ago, this vibrant playgroup was in danger of closing due to low attendance.

Bec Evans has only been Blairgowrie House Playgroup president for about six months, but she is an enthusiastic supporter of everything playgroups have to offer. "It's a place to meet other parents who are going through what you are going through and to have that support network," she said.

When Bec's son Carter was a newborn, she joined a mothers' group set up by the local maternal and child health service. The young mothers met regularly at each other's homes and became great friends. "But by the time our kids got to walking age, our houses weren't big enough for ten kids," said Bec, "and everyone felt pressured to clean and make sure the house was presented nicely. As a young mum, you just don't have time for that." Krystal Fairweather, one of the mothers in the group, searched the Playgroup Victoria website for a group to join, and found Blairgowrie House in Mooroolbark.

Bec's group joined Blairgowrie House in October 2014. They were delighted with the bright spacious rooms and the large backyard equipped with swings, a cubby, sandpit, and plenty of toys. But to their surprise, the playgroup was only running one session, which had four members. In fact, it seemed that after operating for more than 35 years, it would have to shut down. According to Bec, "the name wasn't out there—people didn't know it was still going." The president at the time didn't even have a child of playgroup age anymore; she was just staying to help out.

The new members joined the playgroup committee. The facility was excellent—better than others they had considered. "We wanted to stay and see if we could keep it going," said Kerryn Coyne, another member of Bec's mothers' group. One of the other members took on the role of president, and when she was unable to continue several months later, Bec stepped into the position.

Since then, the playgroup has been busy promoting Blairgowrie House in the community. They have had an Open House, stalls at the Celebrate Mooroolbark and Picnic in the Park festivals, and a fundraising sausage sizzle. The playgroup now runs 17 sessions a week—three sessions a day Monday to Friday and two sessions on Saturday.

The turn-around has been amazing, and Bec is quick to describe it as a

team effort. "We've got a great group of girls... we've got a lot done in a very short space of time, thanks to them."

Children attend a two-hour session each week, which is run by the parents. Each group can choose to run it as they wish. "Usually the kids dictate what happens—they eat when they are hungry and they do crafts when they want to. It's very relaxed; it's just a bigger space for them to play in," said Bec. "They know that they are coming here to interact with other kids and they enjoy the different toys and different environment."

The parents enjoy the chance to have a coffee and a chat while the kids play. The low fees include tea and coffee supplies as well as arts and craft materials and full use of the facilities. Blairgowrie House is a not-for-profit organisation and all fees go back into maintenance and improvement, with fundraising supplementing the fees.

The playgroup committee tries to work out payment plans and subsidies for those who are unable to afford the fees. "Some people are going through very difficult circumstances and we want to be there to support them rather than focusing on the money," said Bec.

In addition to the mums there are dads who attend regularly, as well as grandparents. Sometimes a parent comes one week and a grandparent comes the next. "It's whatever fits around their lifestyle and works for them," explained Bec.

Newcomers to Blairgowrie House who already have a group of friends can create their own group, or individuals can join an existing group.

Bec summed up the value of playgroup: "It can be hard enough adjusting to becoming a mum. It's important to have the support of people who understand what you are going through because they are going through it at the same stage."

Janet Van Dijk

Blairgowrie House is at 168 Manchester Road, Mooroolbark. To find out more, phone 9726 5985, email bgh.playgroup@hotmail.com or check out the website: www.blairgowriehouse.webs.com

FREE FAMILY FILM NIGHT

When Oh—a lovable misfit from another planet—lands on Earth and finds himself on the run from his own people, he forms an unlikely friendship with an adventurous girl named Tip. Through a series of comic adventures with Tip, Oh comes to understand that being different and making mistakes is all part of being human. Together, they discover the true meaning of the word HOME.



94 minutes - Rated PG

All Welcome—Mooroolbark Community Centre

Wednesday 23 September 2015
Film commences at 7:30 p.m.

Free ice-cream, tea & coffee available

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

Bookings commence from Wednesday 9 September

**To reserve your tickets* phone 1300 368 333
 or book online at ach.yarraranges.vic.gov.au**

*If you have not made a booking, please come anyway, as any uncollected tickets may be re-issued at 7:15 p.m. – there are always seats available.

Confident Kids



All parents want their children to live confidently. Confidence is something children take with them wherever they go and whatever they do. It makes every task they attempt easier, more enjoyable and rewarding.

So, what IS confidence? The dictionary describes it as 'a feeling of trust or belief in a thing, self or others.' Self-confidence is the feeling that we have 'what it takes' to achieve what we set out to do. Naturally, everyone is going to have different levels of confidence, and confidence can also change from day to day, sometimes quite a lot!

As adults we can easily lose confidence, and that is from a relatively mature emotional foundation. A knock to our confidence can make everything harder than it was before. We may be tempted to 'throw in the towel' and give up, forgetting times when we have experienced success. Even when people have superior skill in a particular area, their performance can be diminished if their confidence is low.

How is it for kids? Emotions play a significant part in every child's developing life. They also have a smaller bank of experiences to draw from, making it harder for them to be sure of their ability. This means their confidence level becomes a widely variable outcome of the things they experience and feel from day to day. Confidence develops and matures once they have experienced success a number of times, and therefore begin to believe or trust that they are likely to succeed again.

Some people seem to have a confidence that oozes from them. This kind of confidence may be a show to impress others and is often superficial and fragile, easily damaged when they meet a serious challenge that threatens their world view.

What can we do to make sure we are encouraging the right kind of confidence in our children and other young people we have an impact on?

Confidence develops at home

Home is the place where confidence can form a firm foundation. A stable home, where children are nurtured and can try new experiences in a safe and encouraging environment, provides children with a bank of positive experiences

When children have a foundation of confidence, they can build on it with every new experience.

that can be the start of a confident life. When children have a foundation of confidence, they can then build on it with every new experience; everything they do will contribute to it—sometimes even if they fail.

Notice their abilities

Every child has a unique gift set. In our society, there is considerable focus on academic or sporting success. While these skills are worth noting, there are also many



other areas of ability that we could miss if we aren't looking for them: maybe a particular child loves to cook, play an instrument, work outside or organise things. A starting point is to take note of the things your kids naturally enjoy doing—the games they like playing and the puzzles they enjoy are great indicators of their natural talents and abilities. Expose them to a wide variety of activities and encourage them to have a go at new things, without feeling pressured to perform. When they know they are good at one or two things, confidence will spill over, making it easier for them to venture into areas that are not so comfortable for them. The hobbies they enjoy and the talents shown at even a young age are important signs for their future career choices. Children who know what they want to do after finishing school have a strong advantage over their peers.

Help them to manage mistakes

Children will inevitably make errors that cause them to question their own abilities. Managing the challenge of failure is an important step towards a healthy self-confidence. The process of making mistakes and dealing with repercussions means that children won't develop a false confidence—the type that lets them down when they need it most. When they make a mistake, when it doesn't work out like they hoped, help them to see the wider perspective. Rather than focusing on what went wrong, treat it as a learning point and an opportunity to develop confidence in dealing with setbacks.

Managing the challenge of failure is an important step towards a healthy self-confidence.

Persistence

Not many things that are worthwhile will be easy straight away. Children are unlikely to become good at an activity if they don't persist with it for a time. You may need to introduce

incentives so that your children stay with a task for long enough to see that they are capable of achieving a certain standard. This may also mean setting restrictions around screen time and use of electronic devices, so that they have some time to develop their skills. Let them know that you will support them while they obtain footing in a new activity. When they want to give up, share some stories of things that you struggled with at first, but then began to have some success at—small steps and gradual progress in an activity that you have now become confident in and enjoy.

Create opportunities for children to make their own choices and decisions.

Decision making

Create opportunities for children to make their own choices and decisions. For younger children, provide just two or three options—a choice of

clothing or breakfast cereals could be a start. As they mature, extend the range of options and encourage them to add some of their own ideas to the mix. Work through the available choices together, evaluating the strength or weakness of each option. Children will gradually develop confidence in making decisions and will understand the process involved. As time goes by, they will become more certain of their ability to judge, discern and evaluate options, leading to better outcomes. It is important they are only involved in decisions appropriate to their age or ability. If too many options are provided—or worse still, none at all—children may feel bewildered, unsure of how to proceed. Work up gradually, giving them greater levels of independence as they demonstrate their growing ability to make sound decisions.

Looking outward

There's a kind of confidence that has an outward focus to living. The more we are centred on our own interests, the less *true* confidence we'll have. When we're focused on ourselves, our

interests, our needs and our wants, we aren't building or exhibiting true confidence—we're simply imagining that the whole world revolves around us. Conflict and disappointment inevitably follow when we are put back in our place.

The best kind of confidence is one that stays with you no matter what happens in life. It might be invisible to others but, deep within you, you know you will get through the challenges. It's important to be true to yourself. No matter what happens, you have a firm foundation and know some basic things about yourself that never change: things like honesty, integrity, loyalty, reliability and fairness. These core qualities are revealed through how we behave in our relationships with others, through kindness, gentleness, timeliness and politeness.

Encourage children to become confident about who they are. Skills and activities lead to a growing confidence in themselves. What parent doesn't want that? And who doesn't want to be with someone who is not self-centered, but has an outgoing concern for others because of the confidence within?

By promoting independence and persistence, and encouraging your children's abilities while helping them to look beyond themselves, you will help them on their way to becoming truly confident kids.



Steve Steel

The more we are centred on our own interests, the less true confidence we'll have.

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NO TASK TOO SMALL...

by Joseph Tkach *Speaking of Life* series:
<https://www.gci.org/spol413>

Several years ago, the monks of Saint Sixtus Abbey in Belgium received a special honour: their Trappist ale was declared the best beer in the world. As word got out, the beer—and thus, the monastery that brewed it—exploded in popularity. Thousands of people drove hours to get there, while thousands more flooded the brewery's phone line with orders; as many as 85,000 calls per hour! The demand for the product became so great that it was almost impossible to get a case of the ale.

But here's the interesting part: instead of using their newfound fame to increase production or raise prices, the monks continued to make exactly the same amount of beer, and sell it for exactly the same price as before. Why?

The answer is simple: they brew beer not as a business, but to support the operation of the monastery. Or, as their abbot said, "We brew

beer to be able to afford to be monks." In other words, they never set out to brew the best beer in the world. They simply set out to honour God with their best, and everything else just followed after that.

The apostle Paul reminds us that, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Think about that for a second: whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God. For His first thirty years on Earth, Christ worked with wood: shaping it into tables, chairs, or maybe even a doorframe or two. Like brewing beer, carpentry is hard work. It's exacting and takes many hours of concentrated effort to master. But He pushed through, making each chair to His Father's glory,



The Saint-Sixtus Abbey of Westvleteren, Belgium

and He taught us a valuable lesson by doing so: God's glory isn't limited to great actions or moments. Sometimes it's found in the small and mundane details of our daily lives.

So the next time you're facing a task you don't appreciate, remember the monks of Saint Sixtus. Remember that if their efforts at things as simple as brewing beer can be used to reflect something of God's creative, good, wise, skilful, perfecting work, whatever you're facing certainly can too.

PHOTO: WESTVLETEREN ABBEY AERIALVIEW BY WESTVLETEREN ABBEY

OXLEY KIDS



Kim Sopar
Director – Oxley Kids

Oxley Kids opened the doors to its lovely new facility on 5 January this year, after several years of planning. What a joy it is to come in each day and see the faces of children who now call Oxley Kids home. As we have settled into our new spaces, it is exciting to watch the rooms come alive. The children's artworks, their current projects and investigations, and evidence of their learning combine to create a warm and welcoming environment. Our team of friendly, dedicated staff is the icing on the cake—making sure that each child feels at home and is ready to learn.

Oxley Kids is a hive of activity, offering long day care for children from 18 weeks old, both sessional and long day 3 and 4 year old kindergarten programs, before and after school care for primary school aged children, and providing a home for LMC Jellybeans Playgroup. While Oxley Christian College has provided excellent kindergarten programs for more than

30 years, it is wonderful now to be able to offer that same high quality education to younger children, and to offer extended hours options for the families we require it.

After a period of settling into our building, we held our official opening on 31 May. It was an honour to hear from The Honourable Mrs Christine Fyffe (our local member of state parliament), Pastor Graham Nelson (Chairman and Senior Pastor of LMC) and Pastor Hal Oxley (founding pastor of LMC.) We were able to celebrate with those who had a part to play in bringing Oxley Kids into being—from the planners and designers to the builders and current staff. A big thank you to all involved, both past and present, as it is such a beautiful, peaceful environment to which so many have contributed.

As I show new families and other visitors our lovely centre, I love hearing their feedback. "I was expecting institutional—but this is beautiful", "What a lovely building", "It feels so

calm and welcoming" are all comments I have heard as people see our facility for the first time. Even better is the feedback from our families: "My child loves coming to Oxley Kids", "He never wanted to go to his old childcare but he wakes up excited to come to Oxley Kids", "Everyone is so lovely—thank you for the way you go above and beyond." These are all comments that regularly come to me in phone calls, emails and meetings with our parents.

We have been open more than six months and already are almost full. We are now taking enquiries and enrolments for 2016 and urge you to contact us today if you are considering Oxley Kids for your child. Some rooms are already full for this year, while many are also full for next year. Don't delay, especially if you are looking for kindergarten in 2016 for your child.

For further information, see our website www.oxleykids.vic.edu.au, phone 9727 9200 or email office@oxleykids.vic.edu.au.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Breaking Ground for Chin Baptist Church

The members of Mooroolbark's Victorian Chin Baptist Church are excitedly looking forward to the prospect of having their own church building.

For more than a decade Mooroolbark has been home for many Chin people, who come from the north-west area of Burma. Since the early 1960s, when an oppressive military regime took control of the country, thousands of Chin have had to leave Burma for their own safety. Particularly at risk were those who were involved in the pro-democracy movement or who were Christians, as are most of the Chin people.

The Chin refugees who settled in Mooroolbark, Croydon and Ringwood were warmly welcomed into the Mooroolbark Baptist Church. As their numbers increased, the Chin had a vision to start their own congregation. This new congregation began with only 13 members in March 2003, under the leadership of Pastor Japheth Lian. Worship services were held at the Baptist church, with the Chin meeting in the afternoon and the rest of the Baptists having services in the morning. In the past 12 years the Chin congregation increased rapidly as more families arrived in the community and as resident families had children. The church, which now has about 450 regular attendees, is a very youthful congregation. "Last year, there were 31 baby dedications," said Japheth. "This year, there were 32."

As the church grew, it became apparent that it would be ideal if the VCBC had its own building. With a loan from the Baptist Investment Fund, the church was able to secure the purchase of a large 2.2 hectare site in Lusher Road, Croydon. The planning permit has been obtained from Maroondah City Council and once details have been finalised with engineers, plumbers and electricians, the church will apply for a building permit. The plan is to have the first stage of the development completed within the next two years.

The initial building will include an auditorium, a meeting hall, offices and a kitchen. "We have a second-stage vision," Japheth said, adding that the second phase is dependent on raising the necessary money and might take several years to be completed. The second stage will include a multi-



A Chin boy in his native Burma. Many of the Chin people who have fled persecution in their homeland have settled in Mooroolbark and surrounding suburbs.

purpose room and an extension to the auditorium. "When we have a large auditorium, the first-stage hall will become a sports hall where we can play basketball and indoor games."

While very grateful for the friendship and support of the Mooroolbark Baptist Church, the Chin people are looking forward having their own space, not only for worship services but for church socials, weddings and celebrating National Chin Day. It won't be long before the first spade hits the earth, breaking ground and preparing the foundations for the fulfilment of that dream.

Janet Van Dijk



Car Boot Sale

Stallholders Welcome

Are you doing a clear-out and have some treasures to sell?

Book your own stall or get together with your friends, family or neighbours to share a stall. Community groups—this could be your next fundraiser!

... or just come along and browse the stalls for a bargain.

\$10 per site for private sellers/community groups; \$20 per site for commercial sellers*

Stall bookings essential

Mooroolbark Railway Station Car Park
Sunday 11 October: 9:00 am–3:00 pm

Food and drinks available including breakfast from 8:00 am

* Bookings/enquiries: Stephen Alter 0477 586 284 or aaalter@hotmail.net.au

Car boot sale hosted by Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship. Funds raised by stall bookings will support People's Pantry, which provides free community meals in Mooroolbark.

Carols
by Candlelight
Hookey Park
Friday 4 December 2015

- 6:30 pm** Picnic dinner in the park:
 BYO or purchase at family-friendly prices
- 7:45 pm** Enjoy the sounds of Croydon Citizens' Brass Band
- 8:00 pm** Community carols, including performances by local schools

Bring your own rug or chair
 Food for sale including the famous Lions Christmas Fruit Cake
 Battery-operated candles for sale
 Parking: rear of Terrace Shopping Centre

Running for Her Life

Would a brush with death cause you to re-evaluate your lifestyle?



Natalia with her beloved cocker spaniel Lulu



Happy after finishing her first half-marathon

It certainly had that effect on Natalia Cajide, who came close to losing her life in July last year. A day after returning home from hospital after major surgery, Natalia experienced rapid blood loss. Her husband rushed her to the hospital's emergency department, where she lost consciousness. It was discovered that she had a potentially fatal blood clot, and she remained unconscious for a few days, requiring blood transfusions and another three weeks in hospital.

Like many of us, Argentinian-born Natalia had a vague 'bucket list'—things she wanted to do before she died. Now that she had come so close to death, she began to examine her priorities. "I started thinking about what I should be doing with my health, and my life," Natalia said. "You start questioning everything you are doing, how you employ your time."

Running a marathon had been one of the items on Natalia's bucket list. While she already had quite a healthy diet, she realised that she needed to improve her physical fitness—especially if she was to keep up with her husband Andres, described by Natalia as being "very sporty." Andres and Natalia's daughter Maia, then 12, was a tennis player and had recently begun tennis conditioning at Max Performance Fitness¹. Natalia was impressed with how trainer Michael managed Maia's training, and

asked what he thought about her running a marathon. With Michael's encouragement, Natalia joined a group fitness class and began working towards doing a marathon.

Natalia began running several times a week, doing laps around a lake in her housing estate. When she started doubting herself, Michael encouraged her to text him with her progress. She still trains twice weekly at Max Fitness and also runs four times a week: two short 5K runs, a 10K run and a longer run of up to 20 kilometres. She and Andres do the long runs together.

On Sunday 26 July, Natalia completed her first-ever event, joining tens of thousands of runners in *The Age's* eighth-annual Run Melbourne. Natalia ran the 21-kilometre half-marathon, her husband running beside her, and the experience was invigorating. "I felt amazing," she said. "I kept my pace at a 6.40-minute-per-kilometre average and I finished with a smile on my face."

It's only 'onward and upward' from here for Natalia. Next, she plans to tackle a full marathon: the Melbourne Marathon on 18 October. Other items on her bucket list include travel, and the Kokoda Trail. It's not hard to imagine Natalia, with her quiet determination, undertaking the 96-kilometre Kokoda Challenge race!

¹ Located near Mooroolbark's Five Ways roundabout: see our story in the June 2015 issue of *Living Today*.

Janet Van Dijk



Plans are well under way for the redevelopment of the school site at Pembroke Primary School. In 2014, the school received \$2.2 million from the state government to undertake an upgrade of the majority of its facilities. Crucial to the overall design has been the plan to maximise the learning opportunities—not only in the classroom, but also in the natural external treed environment. The brief given to the architects also included the planning of spaces for the continuation of Pembroke's specialist science program and for extension of the school's sporting facilities. These facilities are seen as central to the school's plan to build on the strong sporting program that is currently in place and in providing a learning experience for all Pembroke students that is state of the art and implements best practice in terms of meeting student needs now and into the future.

Stage one of the upgrade will begin

in Easter 2016 and will take around eight months to complete. It will see the construction of a new administration and classroom wing and a space called 'The Sanctuary'. This space will be used for specialised science and technology tasks including Science and Sustainability, Home Economics and ICT (Information and Communications Technology). A covered 'boulevard' area will connect buildings and provide opportunities for students to work outside classrooms on a range of tasks whilst also providing 'retreat' spaces during recess and lunchtime. An amphitheatre area, complete with stage and in-built seating, will be the venue for performing arts, public speaking and whole-school activities.



In stage two, the current performing arts/multi-purpose room will be upgraded to provide open access to two new basketball/netball courts. A community space will also be provided for the continuation of the school's playgroup and the new four-year-old Write Start literacy program, in addition to other community programs such as the large community garden, which is due for construction in September 2016.

Carolyn Elliot
Principal

It was a dark and stormy day...

(With apologies to Edward Bulwer-Lytton, author of the novel Paul Clifford)

It was a dark, cold and stormy day: rain, hail and the occasional violent gust of wind swept over the planting site, trying to dampen the wonderful camaraderie and chatter of the tree planters. But the weather didn't stand a chance!

Sunday 26 July marked the twelfth consecutive year that volunteers from Mooroolbark and surrounding suburbs planted trees in the community. This year, 600 trees were planted along Landscape Drive in an hour and 15 minutes by over 50 men, women and children in freezing conditions.

Three very cheerful Shire of Yarra Ranges horticulturists—Paul, Aaron and Richie—prepared the site and stayed with the volunteer planters all day, offering help and advice and clearing the site of left-over pots and stakes.

When asked, "Why do you come here year after year?" the volunteers gave a variety of responses. For one of the shire workers, it was "a good day out, protecting the environment and developing the ground." His colleague said, "I like to see the area being greened up and the aesthetics of the area being improved." For organisations like the Mooroolbark Scouts and the Country Women's Association, it was about contributing to the community. A member of the Lions Club agreed: "We like to turn up and do our bit."

One man commented that "the partnerships that have developed between the Yarra Ranges Council, CWA, Lions, scouts and guides, schools and church groups, have made for a closer community."

"I only come here because my pastor 'suggested' that I should," one man joked. "But it's good to get out in the cold and give a bit of a hand where it's needed and it's great to give something back to the community." As a distant voice called, "Don't stop him working!" the man said, "That's my pastor getting on to me again!"

There were many families present, enjoying each other's company as well as the chance to do something positive. "It's good to do this as a family thing and to contribute to the community this way," said one father. "It's a lot of fun and gets us out of the house doing some good stuff for our local community." One of the mothers was looking forward to taking her children back to the site in a few years' time to see how much the trees have grown.

For the very little children, it was all quite simple. "I come to help mummy and daddy," said one little girl, and a young boy had very practical reasons for coming: "I'm here because I'm trying to dig holes," he said.

Some participants hinted that they came



Jordan Roache from the Mooroolbark Scouts was happy to lend a hand



Paul, Aaron and Richie

mainly for the scones and tea that were served after the tree planting. Whatever their reasons, these intrepid tree-planters weren't about to be daunted by a little bad weather. And as a result, Mooroolbark is now just a little bit greener!

Barry Austin

PHOTOS: © BARRY AUSTIN



National Day of Thanksgiving

Lives of Service Celebrated at Mayoral Breakfast



Colonel Hal Oxley responds to a question from Anthony McAleer

The National Day of Thanksgiving on 30 May was marked by the tenth annual Shire of Yarra Ranges Mayoral Breakfast, which was attended by over 200 people at the Foothills Conference Centre. Shire of Yarra Ranges Mayor Maria McCarthy hosted the event, which this year again focused on the theme of 'laying down our lives.'

During the morning's program, eight members of our local community were honoured for their service to others. Some represented all who served in our armed forces, while others were representatives of the many who give so generously of themselves to contribute to life in our community. Some of those honoured are pictured below with the mayor.

Mayor McCarthy said, "We depend on the work of the council, we depend on the thousands of people who work in service organisations or the health and education sectors—and we depend especially on the thousands of volunteers who give of their lives to serve others. All of these people substantially enrich our lives."

Guest speaker for the morning was Colonel Hal Oxley, who served with the Australian Commander-in-Chief's Forward Battle Headquarters as the youngest colonel in the Australian infantry forces. From headquarters in Moresby, Colonel Oxley worked as General Service Officer (Operational Plans) during the critical battle for New Guinea. He was later transferred to MacArthur's Forward Battle HQ in New Guinea to coordinate Australian plans with the Americans. Colonel Oxley was interviewed by another guest, Anthony McAleer. Anthony is currently secretary of the Mt Evelyn RSL, and is a highly respected author and military historian. Together, the two guests provided a host of interesting and valuable insights into the experiences of our Australian forces in various fields of conflict.

During the breakfast the Oxley Christian College vocal ensemble provided delightful musical contributions to the program.

Doug Lewis



Mayor Maria McCarthy (centre) with community members honoured for their service to others: Gail White, Bill Morris, Alex Ingram and Steve Beitzel. Also honoured were Robert Waldron, Paula Herlihy, Keith Smith and Jim Blundell.

PHOTOS: © MATT DALEY



Victorian Seniors Festival

The Victorian Seniors Festival will be celebrated this year at Mooroolbark Community Centre with a Jonathan Biggins' comedy play, *Australia Day*, on Monday 5 October.

Drawing on his experience as an Australia Day ambassador, Biggins has created a play full of straight-up Aussie humour based on an Australia Day organising committee in the fictional country town of Coriole.

This committee can't raffle a chook in a pub, yet they decide plan a multi-cultural Australia Day extravaganza. Watch as preparations disintegrate into hilarious chaos!

With colourful characters including an ambitious Liberal mayor, an Australian-born Vietnamese school teacher, a Greens councillor and a member of the CWA all fighting for their own celebration, it quickly snowballs into a complex and controversial matter of cultural identity.

The first dates of this tour have received rave reviews, with the *Ballarat Courier* labelling the production a "gem of Australian comedy" and *Stage Whispers* calling it "explosively funny".

Mooroolbark Community Centre is encouraging seniors to reach out to those who may not have regular company, with a special theatre ticket called Three's Company, which offers three tickets to *Australia Day* for \$36. If you already have a partner-in-crime for theatre going, think about that person in your life who may not: a niece, neighbour, even your postman—and spread the joy of theatre!

The performance at Mooroolbark Community Centre will begin at 2 pm and includes afternoon tea.

Tickets are on sale now at www.culturetracks.info or by phoning 1300 368 333. Tickets are: \$22, \$18 concession and \$36 for a group of three.

Sally Williams



PICTURES: SUPPLIED BY HIT PRODUCTIONS

Free Chemical Drop-Off Point FOR YARRA RANGES RESIDENTS

Yarra Ranges residents can now safely dispose of old paint, household batteries and compact fluorescent lamps at the new permanent Detox Your Home site. The site, in Coldstream, will be open throughout the year and allows residents to dispose of those items at no cost.

Yarra Ranges Council successfully advocated for a permanent detox site at the Coldstream Transfer Station, which opened on 1 July.

Mayor Maria McCarthy said, "We are thrilled to secure a permanent drop-off point in the Yarra Ranges which will help our residents dispose of their unwanted paint, batteries and compact fluorescent lamps safely and without harming the environment."

"I encourage Yarra Ranges residents to detox their home and make the most of this free opportunity," said Cr McCarthy.

There are 31 free permanent drop-off sites around Victoria which are administered by Sustainability Victoria in collaboration with local councils and are funded by the Victorian landfill levy.

You can register for the mobile collection by visiting Sustainability Victoria's website or by calling 1300 363 744. Registration is required to manage the traffic flow and avoid queues on the day. The location details of this mobile collection service will be provided on registration. <http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/detoxyourhome>

**Nate Leslie
Yarra Ranges Council**



Mayor Maria McCarthy and Graham Brew (centre) from the Yarra Ranges Council, with Michael Strickland (left) and Garry Higgs (right) at the Coldstream Waste Transfer Station.

PHOTOS: © SARAH OLDMAN

 **Mooroolbark
Denture Clinic**
9726 7284

Making Smiles Come to Life

Proudly supporting
Living Today in Mooroolbark

Community Events Calendar

First Sunday of each month	Farmers Market: Bellbird Park, Swansea Road, next to Lillydale Lake. Combined Rotary Clubs. All proceeds to local and overseas projects. Contact Bill Sutherland: 9727 0037.
Friday nights during school term	Fridays@Kids Domain: Activities for primary school age kids. 4-6 p.m. Oxley College stadium. Details: phone 9726 8111 or www.lmc.org.au
Monday evenings	Scottish Country Dancing: Mondays 8 p.m. (except public holidays). Beginners and experienced. Minimal charges. St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. Enquiries: 9876 9206.
Second Monday of each month	Mooroolbark Country Women's Association: 1 p.m. at St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. New members always welcome. Contact Jeanne Wilson: 9726 9858.
Thursdays during school term	Music Together program: 0-5 years. Run by trained music therapist. St Margaret's Uniting Church 9:45 a.m. Morning tea & playtime included. \$12.50 per session per family. Call Yvonne: 9726 9347.
Thursday evenings each week	Maroondah TOWN Club: (Take Off Weight Naturally). Weekly, starting at 6:30 p.m. St Margaret's Uniting Church. Hull Road. More information: Marcia 9725 1259.
Wednesdays during term time	Kilsyth Primary School Playgroup: Painting, story time, activities and games for children birth - 3½ years. 9:15 a.m. More info: 9725 4320 or www.kilsythps.vic.edu.au.
September, October, November	Yarra Ranges Council Immunisation Sessions: Mooroolbark Community Centre. Also 1 & 22 September, 6 & 27 October, 24 November.
13 September	Music at St Margaret's: 2:30 pm Sunday, Sunday 13 September. Gold coin admission to enjoy talented artists and afternoon tea. Hull Road, Mooroolbark.
25-27 September 2-3 October	ARK Theatre: Hannie Rayson's <i>Hotel Sorrento</i> . Lilydale Heights College PAC, 17 Nelson Rd. 25/9 & 2/10: 8 pm, 26/9: 2 pm & 8 pm; 27/9: 4 pm; 3/10: 8 pm. \$20 includes refreshments. Info: 0491 151 340 or www.arktheatremelb.com
Friday 2 October	Yarra Valley Light the Night: From 5 pm. Twilight lantern walk at Lillydale Lake to raise funds for Leukaemia Foundation research. Enquiries: Brian Hodgson 0419 397 650 / Brian Mier 0418 326 670. Facebook: Lilydale Light the Night.
Sunday 11 October	Community Car Boot Sale: 9 am-3pm, Mooroolbark Railway Station. Food, drinks, bargains! See notice page 11. Contact: Stephen Alter, 0477 586 284 or aalter@hotmail.net.au
5-14 November	Mooroolbark Theatre Group: Comedy Cash On Delivery: Mooroolbark Community Centre. \$18; \$16 concession. Doors open 7:30 pm. Table seating & BYO. Bookings: 9726 4282 (Arline)
Sunday 7 November	Annual Fete: St Margaret's Uniting Church, 207-219 Hull Road. From 9:00 am. Something for everyone!
Friday 4 December	Community Carols: Picnic dinner from 6:30 pm, carols start 8 pm. More details see notice page 11.

Mooroolbark Community Centre and Montrose Town Centre

The following special events will be held at Mooroolbark Community Centre (MCC—Ph 9726 5488) or Montrose Town Centre (MTC—Ph 9761 9133).

Bookings can be made by phoning 1300 368 333 or online: www.culturetracks.info

24 August – 20 September	Interludes by Dearne Mills: FREE, open during business hours. MCC Red Earth Gallery.
3rd Monday every month	Montrose Movie Club: Classic cinema hits screening every month. Movies coming up include <i>The Searchers</i> , <i>Love Me or Leave Me</i> and <i>Harold and Maude</i> . \$10 subscription. MTC
Weekly	Art workshops for adults: Pottery, oil painting, sewing, craft, belly dancing. Art workshops for children: Pottery, Young Artist mixed media. Try a class for FREE. See website for class times. MCC & MTC
13 September	Royal Australian Navy Band: Big band music covering dance band classics to contemporary jazz. 2pm, \$10. MCC
21 September – 2 October	School holidays: Free and low-cost activities including kids' shows, art workshops and movies. MCC & MTC
23 September	School holiday FREE family movie: <i>Home</i> . Tickets available from 9 September. MCC
2 October	Asanti Dance Theatre: An African adventure in dance and rhythm. 11am. \$8 or \$5 online, library members. MCC
5 October	Matinee theatre: <i>Australia Day</i> comedy play, 2 pm. Special offer : Three's Company - \$36 for 3 tickets. MCC
9 October	Glitch Dance Party: All-ages dance party with DJs and big screen games. Hosted by FReeZA and Yarra Ranges Council Youth Services. Fully supervised, drug/smoke/alcohol free event. 7-10 pm, \$5. MCC
15 November	Grigoryan Brothers: Internationally acclaimed guitar duo. 2 pm. \$28 / \$24 concession. MTC

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

To include entries for your group's community events in future issues please contact
Doug Lewis on 9761 1121 or email 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 submitted one month prior to the distribution date.

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LIVINGTODAY in Mooroolbark

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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)

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MISSIONSTATEMENT

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

We seek to achieve this by:

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

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