

To all residents

Postage paid Upper Beaconsfield

THE VILLAGE BELL

Issue No. 152 June 2003

Upper Beaconsfield Association

Vandals target Igloo

Members of the Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve Committee are fed up. Young vandals have targeted the Igloo for the third time in recent months.

Previously there had been extensive damage to the Cricket Clubroom with storeroom door kicked in, cupboards damaged and two windows broken. In the last month another window was damaged to gain access and a fire extinguisher was discharged throughout the Igloo. Servery doors were wrecked and a roof ventilator was damaged.

Then only two weeks later on Thursday 15th May, a committee member found the kitchen trashed, with more damage and another big mess to clean up. These acts of vandalism took place between Wednesday night (after about 11 pm) and 4pm on the Thursday afternoon.

Now this is not just kids up to harmless mischief. This is wilful vandalism. Police were called in on each occasion to check the damage and are making their investigations. The police reported that by the look of the damage, the offenders are probably in the 12-15 year age group.

Principal of the Primary School, Gordon Atkin, reports that there have also been several instances of break-ins in the school during the 2.00am to

3.00am time frame. Barry Smith, Secretary of the Committee, believes that someone's children are wandering around Upper Beaconsfield late at night causing this damage. Do parents know where their kids are, and what they are up to, when they go out to meet their friends at night?

Countless hours of Committee members' own time have been spent in cleaning up the mess and repairing the damage. The excess on the insurance cover on the Igloo means that the Committee must pay the first \$2000 of any claim, which it cannot afford, so members must draw on their own resources to reduce expense.

Committee members voluntarily put in a great deal of time and effort to ensure that a recreation facility is available for community use. They do this willingly in the belief that it is of benefit to residents. To have their work trashed by mindless vandals is quite distressing and they appeal to the community for a show of support to help stamp out this undesirable element.

The Committee asks that all Upper Beaconsfield residents keep eyes and ears open for any suspicious behaviour at the reserve and school, especially at night. Report also any instances of

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Vandals target igloo

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anyone up on the roof of the Igloo or Primary School.

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School 5944 3591 BH

Robert Taylor 5944 3645 (President)

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NEW RESIDENTS

The editors of the Village Bell extend a warm welcome to each and every one of the new residents to the community. We usually welcome each family by name but no longer have access to this information.



If any new residents would like to have their names etc. printed in the Bell, please contact the editors.

Jo Carter

Subscriptions UBA and Village Bell

Your \$5 subscription gives you the most informative read every two months. Cheques made payable to the UBA or cash can be left at the Post Office addressed to the Treasurer, UBA.

Are you moving and wish to continue receiving the Village Bell? To avoid time-consuming recordkeeping, it has been decided by the Village Bell editors that non-residents wanting Village Bells posted out to them should also renew their subs every January.

If you have joined the mailing list later in the year, your subscription will still be due in January. To be put on the mailing list please contact Cheryl O’Gallagher tel. 5944 3209.

Support the Bell in 2003 by subscribing now

- The Village Bell and UBA
- The Treasurer, Upper Beaconsfield Association, PO Box 86, Upper Beaconsfield 3808
- I enclose \$5 being the family subscription to the UBA and the Village Bell for 2003.
- I understand that this subscription entitles me to vote at the bi-monthly meetings of the UBA
- Name of family
- Address
- Telephone Signed

Platypus secrets to be revealed at U Beac

Cardinia Creek is set to become the location for one of Australia's most exciting conservation projects.

Next year, if all goes to plan, surplus platypus from another waterway will be released into Cardinia Creek in the first ever attempt to re-establish a population of this unique mammal.

Geoff Williams, Director of the Australian Platypus Conservancy, said that recent extensive trapping surveys along Cardinia Creek had failed to find any platypus. The results suggest that the species is either already locally extinct or has been reduced to such low numbers that the population is not viable in the long-term.

It is believed that the devastating effect of the Ash Wednesday bush-fires along the upper sections of Cardinia Creek probably caused platypus numbers to crash. However, the habitat has now fully recovered and conditions appear almost ideal for platypus.

Accordingly, in early 2004, the Conservancy, in collaboration with Melbourne Water, intends to transfer surplus juveniles from other areas in order to re-colonise the creek.

Geoff will talk more about this project and explain why the platypus is considered one of the world's most remarkable animals in an illustrated talk on Wednesday 4 June, commencing at 8pm at the Upper Beaconsfield Community Complex.



Geoff Williams has been studying platypus in the wild since 1994, having been Director of Healesville Sanctuary and Assistant Director of Sydney's Taronga Zoo before helping to found the Australian Platypus Conservancy. He has given numerous public lectures on platypus, including speaking at the Royal Geographic Society in London and the National Museum of Australia in Canberra.

Members of the public are invited to attend the lecture. Admission is free.



Greetings to all the residents of the Beacon Hills Ward. Well have I had an interesting introduction into local government in the last six weeks! Along with the other councillors of Cardinia Shire and the Senior Officers we attended a weekend workshop during which time we discussed many

issues affecting the Shire. The Senior Officers and CEO presented us with the "big picture" of what is happening in our Shire and some of the projected developments planned for the future. With so much development going on and the population expansion moving further away from Melbourne, the Cardinia Shire can look forward to exciting times ahead.

I would like to compliment those residents involved in the planning and running of the Anzac Day ceremony in Upper Beaconsfield. The weather was perfect and the organisers put on a very moving ceremony. It was great to see so many residents

return to the RSL and enjoy each other's company. It and gave the community the opportunity to stop and reflect on the sacrifices made all those years ago.

The roundabout proposal at St. Georges Road continues to cause some concern. The community can have a very big impact on Council by working together in a cooperative spirit to achieve the most appropriate design. I will support the UBA on this matter and have asked Council Officers to reconsider their proposal.

A major Urban Land Authority community development has been announced for the Officer township which will mean the construction of 4000 new homes centred around the Officer railway station. The development is due to commence in

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Autumn rainfall

Month	34 yr average	2002	2003
Jan	66.7	63.3	26.4
Feb	53.5	74.4	29.2
Mar	68.2	29.4	68.4
Apr	78.2	57.4	114.1
May	92.6	79.6	
Jun	81.9	68.7	
Jul	79.4	48.8	
Aug	88.3	49.7	
Sep	94.4	56.7	
Oct	100.2	69.5	
Nov	83.5	32.3	
Dec	80.6	35.6	
Total	967.5	665.4	

The first month of autumn, March, continued the drought levels with rainfall well below the 34-year average. April exceeded the average by 36.4mm (total 114.1 mm).

The two months of autumn were in excess of the average by 6.1 mm. May normally has the third highest monthly rainfall - May 92.6, September 94.4, October 100.2mm). To the 13th May we have recorded only 6.0mm and unless we have a "Sydney" experience we will again fall well below autumn average.

We are now approaching the second level of water restrictions so every care must be taken of our water usage, and we must hope that winter and spring rains will restore our reservoirs.

George Moir

Readings taken at Barkala - Emerald- Beaconsfield Road

Drought (again)

We appear to have opened a can of worms in printing K Seaman's letter on his personal ideas on the breaking of a drought.

The editors of the Bell must advise you that Mr Seaman's letter did not reflect the personal views of the editors. We now realise that we, as editors, may have stepped outside the guidelines which have for so long guarded the integrity of our publication. We wish to thank Neil McDonald for reminding us of our obligations.

We have received several letters in reply, showing different opinions. We appreciate each of the letters. It is not possible for us to print each and every piece of correspondence received. Judy Graves sent a well-researched and documented letter based on statistics. She advised us that the average number of rainy days in January from 1861 to 1979 was 8. With 31 days in January, that gives a 25.8% chance that rain will fall on any given day in January. Rain dancers and prayer meetings have a better than 1 in 4 chance of success.

We wish to publicly acknowledge and thank the many residents who wrote to us in answer to Mr Seaman's letter and trust that the matter can rest there.

Editors group

(Continued from page 3)

2006 and promises to be an exciting project in the growth corridor.

I am now able to provide you with my contact details and look forward to hearing from residents who wish to contact me with a problem or just to have a chat about what's going on in the area.

Telephone 9769 8152
 Fax 9769 8152.
 Mobile 04171 10616
 Postal P.O. Box 7 Pakenham, 3810.
 E-mail g.runge@cardinia.vic.gov.au

**Cr. Garry Runge
 Beacon Hills Ward**

Centenary Medal congratulations



The Prime Minister announced the Centenary Medal on 28 December 2001 to honour living persons who have made a contribution to Australian society or government. This includes Australians who have lived through all our first century of federation ("Centenarians") and other persons who have made a contribution to the nation or their locality.

The medal designed by Balarinji, Sydney, features a seven-pointed Commonwealth Star, representing the six Australian states, with the seventh point representing Australia's territories. At the centre of the Star is an indigenous styling of Aboriginal traditions at the heart of the continent. The colours

in the ribbon are crimson for Federation (Sir Henry Parkes "the crimson thread of kinship") and blue and gold for the beginning of the 21 st Century. The seven gold and red lines represent the pathways to federation of the states. There are 100 dots around the outer edge of each of the obverse and reverse symbolising 100 years of federation.

Five residents of Upper Beaconsfield have been awarded this medal. Our congratulations go to:

- Lynette Anderson for service to the community through students with special needs
- John Millice Floyd AM for service to Australian society in metallurgical science and engineering
- Barry William Smith for service to the Scouting group and the Recreation Reserve
- Robert Waddell Taylor for service to Scouting and the Cricket Club Association
- Geoffrey Norman Vaughan for outstanding service to medical and pharmaceutical research.

Anzac Day April 25th 2003



The sun was shining brilliantly when the group of RSL members, boy and girl scouts, guests and residents gathered at the Cenotaph to commemorate the Gallipoli landing of 1915.

RSL president, Mr Eric Chaplin, welcomed those present. In time-honoured tradition, he read the names of the fallen from the Cenotaph, and each was remembered by the placing of a cross in front of the memorial.

Eric read the names of all of the Upper Beaconsfield RSL members who have passed away since the club was founded 51 years ago.

After the ceremony, most of those present joined the RSL members in the clubrooms for light refreshments.

Jo Carter

SOUL

Soul
Is your heart's
Desire
Your zest
For
Life
You can sell your soul
Dream and your soul will
Take you there

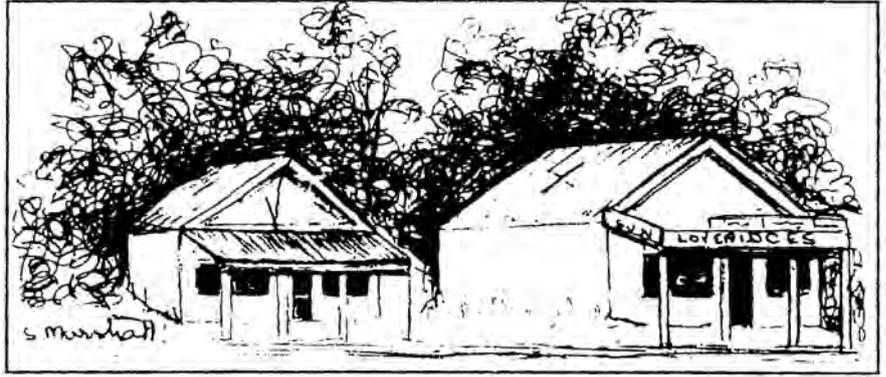
Soul
Is what it is.

Matthew Axelsson
Writers' group

Vale

Jack Stephens

1919-2003



Jack was born at Irymple, near Mildura in 1919. Three years later his parents moved to Emerald, where Jack attended school until he was fourteen.

In 1933, depression years, he managed to get a job on a farm owned by Mr. Madigan, the local butcher. At the end of his first day of work he had picked up 10 bags of potatoes, which so impressed Mr. Madigan that he promptly gave him a job in his butcher shop, where Jack worked until he enlisted in the army in 1940.

As a young man Jack was an able sportsman, playing cricket and football for local teams, and it is said he was invited to train with the Melbourne Football Club but declined the offer.

Whilst Jack was in the army Mr. Madigan sold the shop, but made it a condition of the sale that Jack was to have his job back when he returned home.

Jack was discharged in 1946 and soon was back in Emerald working in the shop. Mr. Madigan then decided to buy the shop back, and let it to Jack and his younger brother Bill.

In 1948 Jack married Beth Worrall then aged 18, and they became the proud parents of four children, Marlene, Jacky, Peter, and Vicki. Over the years they became grandparents to Leon, Sean, and Robyn, Todd, Ben and Christy, Luke and Corry, and later had nine great grand children.

In 1951 Jack obtained a taxi licence, and spent part of his time driving a local taxi for several years.

About that time business was quiet in Emerald. As there was no butcher in Upper Beaconsfield, Jack made regular deliveries of meat to the Pine Grove Hotel, and quite frequently stayed for a beer or two. One of his drinking companions was Bill Russell who managed the Upper Beaconsfield general store for Loveridge's, and lived in a small house next to the store. Jack and Bill had several conversations about using the front of the house as a butcher's shop.

Sheila Marshall's sketch of the old butcher shop and Loveridge's general store, before 1983.

Finally Jack decided it was worth a try and offered Bill £5 a week for rent, Bill said No! £3 was plenty.

In 1960 Jack set up his butcher's shop next to the general store establishing a successful business, which continued there until 1982. During this 22-year period all three of Jack's daughters worked in the shop for a time.

Jack freely admitted that he was a good butcher, and ran a good shop. He was very proud of his business claiming that he had never had a complaint from a lady customer in 22 years. Known for his kindness, he often advised young women on the best cut of meat and the way to cook it.

Jack felt all of his customers were his friends, and said he felt a bit lonely after he retired. Although he hadn't made much money from butchering, he had made friends, and it is true there were always a few in his shop for a beer after his work finished on Friday night.

Jack and Beth had moved to Upper Beaconsfield and built their home in Stoney Creek Road, sadly in February 1983, in common with 185 others, their house was lost in the Ash Wednesday fires. After living in a caravan for some time the Stephens rebuilt.

Soon after this Beth began to show signs of an illness, known as Huntington's chorea, which she had inherited from her father. Within a short time she was unable to swallow and her high nutrient food had to be administered via a plastic tube passed down her throat. Soon this method also failed and it became necessary to insert a tube

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UBA update

At the June meeting there will a guest speaker, Geoff Williams of the Australian Platypus Conservancy. He will explain about the introduction of a platypus colony into the Cardinia Creek. See the article elsewhere in the Village Bell. We invite all residents to attend.

Concerns over speed

The UBA has written to the road traffic branch of Victoria Police expressing concern about the excessive speed of motorists through the shopping precinct on the Beaconsfield-Emerald Road, as well as in Salisbury Road.

Residents are advised that there have been recent sightings of speed cameras, as well as the highway patrol vehicle. Drivers rest assured, if you speed then there is an increased likelihood of you being detected. We all must do our part in ensuring that our village is safe.

Bikes and Trail Bikes

The UBA has sought clarification of the current regulations which control the use of motor bikes and trial bikes in the Shire of Cardinia. Mr Barry Jones, Manager of the Regulatory Services Unit for

the Shire of Cardinia, has indicated that the Shire has adopted laissez-faire attitude towards the use of bikes where there are no complaints from residents. However, if neighbours are not happy with the use of these vehicles, then he encourages them to contact the shire and the following process will be adopted.

The users must obtain a permit to ride on private land. An interview is conducted with the applicant and discussions are encouraged between the applicant and neighbours to reach agreement on the use.

The criteria considered in such an application include, noise amenity, hours of use and, the time of day when any vehicles may be in use.

Barry Jones commented, "The Shire is very keen to ensure that everybody affected is completely happy with the process. Please contact me at the Shire if you have a problem".

Rob Hansen
Secretary UBA

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through her abdominal wall directly into her stomach, allowing her daily food and fluid requirements to be met. She also became quite unable to care for herself.

Throughout this difficult time and until Beth's death in 1998, Jack cared for his wife in a very devoted, compassionate, and skilful manner. That Beth survived for such a very long time was due to Jack's wonderful nursing. Beth died on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Jack was a very friendly man, happy, always a smile and cheerful and possessing a great sense of humour. He had a good repertoire of stories, but it was wise to listen carefully in case he was having you on.

One of his favourite stories was of his pudding club. With a naughty twinkle in his eye, he tells how he placed a notice in his window that read, "if you want to be in the pudding club come and see

me." Intrigued, many Upper Beaconsfield ladies did so, and Jack claimed he sold a great number of puddings that Christmas, and had hundreds of women in his pudding club.

For years Jack used to fly the Australian flag on a tall flagpole - when asked why? His reply "so everybody will know I am not a republican".

When he retired Jack continued to work hard, if his garden was sometimes a little untidy, his large plastic house was not, and grew excellent tomatoes, cucumbers, and other vegetables - he was very generous and if you displayed any interest in either vegetables or plants, Jack insisted you took some home. He loved to share.

Jack died at the age of 83 years. He was certainly one of the district's memorable characters, who will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

Charles Wilson

Predation on livestock and wildlife

Editor's note: For your interest, we have permission to print in the Village Bell the following article from Australian Rare Fauna Association Research newsletter April-May 2003.

The study of predation by recognised native and introduced species is a wide and complex field. One significant problem is that predation is rarely observed or filmed and many times investigation has found that dogs are blamed for stock losses without concrete evidence.

In cases of fatal attacks on larger animals such as horses, cattle, dogs, sheep, kangaroos, wallabies and wombats, Australian Rare Fauna Association Research Association (ARFRA) is not aware of any evidence that foxes could be primarily responsible though signs of their subsequent visits may be found.

In cases where foxes can be ruled out, the following several patterns of predation have been reported to ARFRA.

1. Decapitation

Numerous instances of decapitation of larger animals and further feeding on the carcase including neck, shoulders, front legs and chest region have been reported. At least two witnesses have reported an animal they identified as a Thylacine feeding in this manner. Dogs and foxes have not been seen doing this. A third witness said he saw a Thylacine and further on a dead kangaroo that had been decapitated by the time he passed that way a few hours later.

2. Carcasses in trees

Reports have been received from various parts of Australia of remains of sheep, deer or kangaroos being found up in trees. Unfortunately no clear photographs have been received of this leopard-like arboreal behaviour.

3. Bellystrapping

Several instances of an unusual predation pattern involving two feeding sites. One allows entry to the chest cavity; the other nearer the groin allows entry to the abdomen leaving an untouched strip between. The identity of the predator is unknown.

4. Dragging

Heavy carcasses such as kangaroos are sometimes found at the end of drag marks. It seems that foxes would not be strong enough

to pull such a weight, suggesting that other predators may be responsible. This summary is not exhaustive of the wide variety of reports that ARFRA has received but an admission of our limited knowledge of this complex subject.

You can contact Mike Cleeland (5956 7883) or Dorothy Williams (9756 7205) to report sightings or kills or strange animals or to obtain further information. Sighting reports that include accurate time, date and place information are most useful but all relevant information is welcome. See also the ARFRA website www.arfra.org

Mike Cleeland
ARFRA

Toys for all children

The Upper Beaconsfield Toy Library needs new members and its existing members to rejoin.

The Library offers a great range of toys for newborns through to school aged children. We are continually buying new toys and are always open to suggestions on what to purchase. Members are also entitled to borrow extra toys when holding children's parties or other special occasions.

For only \$20.00 per year you can become a member and enjoy a huge range of Ride on vehicles, slides, activity sets, puzzles, videos, musical toys, learning aids, games, infant and baby toys.

The Toy Library is located within the UB Community Centre and is open every Thursday morning from 9.30-10.30am (during school terms).

Please call in and have a look around, have a chat to other members about all the advantages of being a member. For more information you can phone Lisa on 5968 4945.

We look forward to seeing you.

Thank you to all who supported our Easter Raffle and Congratulations goes to the winners

1st Prize – M Gale

2nd Prize – R Bryen

3rd Prize – C Wallen

Wildlife Watch

Remember the April day it rained? And rained and rained and rained?

I was with a group of people who have Trust for Nature covenants on their properties. We were part way around a walk on one of those properties when rain began making us wetter and wetter until SOPPING was an apt description. And drowned rats. But never mind, nice hot drinks awaited under shelter of a verandah.

On the drive home with wipers going full pelt, water rushing soil in sheets from long driveways and treeless, almost grassless paddocks into Westernport, flooded Pakenham-Gembrook Road in several places in the hills. On the flat lands and along Leppitt Road where heavy rain has often causes flooding there was only dampness showing and the creeks were hardly running.

Another amazing sight was in the deep gutter along the road in front of our place. All the leaves collected there, and all the weeds and soil they were growing in on the bottom, had been forced to one end almost blocking the drainpipe. The hard base of the gutter, created when the shire first used 'that awful machine' that threw everything up onto well maintained nature strips, was revealed. Next morning I went out to clear the build-up expecting

to find a gutter full of water, but not a drop of that 63.5mm remained!

On a walk around my patch of bush on Anzac weekend I discovered patches of nodding greenhood, *Pterostylis nutans*, leaves. Gnat orchids, *Acianthus exertus*, were in bud near the top of the hill. Nearly at the base were two species with small flowers along slender stems. One was a sharp midge orchid, *Genoplesium despectans*, with dark maroon flowers and the red-tipped greenhood, *Pterostylis* sp. aff. *parviflora*, which has red-tipped green and white striped flowers. A solitary specimen of common heath, *Epacris impressa*, was in pale pink bloom right on our top boundary.

An unusual sighting for this time of year was masses of sweet-hounds-tongue plants newly sprouting. There were a few sad plants of *Cynoglossum suaveolens* early last November, which is their usual time for spreading their soft, sweet perfume.

Laura Levens

Neighbourhood Watch



The most recent meeting of the Upper Beaconsfield/Guys Hill Neighbourhood Watch Group took place on 14th April 2003. The next meeting is at 8 p.m. on June 16th at the Community Centre, Salisbury Road.

Please feel free to come along to contribute or ask questions. Surely the enviable quality of life that we enjoy in our area is worth a little effort to maintain.

As reported in the NHW Newsletter our position at NHW has been strengthened by the new three year partnership entered into with major electrical

retailer The Good Guys. The three year agreement will see The Good Guys provide significant financial and logistical support to the program, underlining their commitment to community safety.

It is worth remembering the NHW statement of purpose which is "To improve the quality of life by eliminating crime and promoting closer community ties."

As a start to making your property less attractive to a would-be thief, how about engraving it with your driver's licence number. For this purpose we have engraving machines here just waiting to be borrowed and all it costs is a phone call to 5944 3767.

Roger Haywood

Beaconhills Country Golf Club

There has been lots of activity at the Golf Club over the summer and autumn periods, culminating in an excellent Mother's day lunch crowd in excess of 125 members and guests.

The major highlight for the Club in recent times has been the success of the membership drive which has resulted in a net increase since August last year of 140 members. Another campaign will be launched in winter this year for the Spring period and all budding golfers are urged to consider Beaconhills as a great venue for golf.

Club championship events for both men and women were decided with Rod Beel and Brianne Arthur being successful. Rod has won the event previously, however this was Brianne's first Championship trophy, and she is only fifteen years old! She has a very bright future in the game.

The twilight competition concluded on the last Wednesday of daylight saving, and was run magnificently by John Watson and Barry Pitcher, who are both to be congratulated for their efforts.

The Lady Members held their Charity Day recently and raised in excess of \$2000.

All pennant teams in senior and junior competition performed admirably during the season, with the division one mens' team on course to play in another final.

On the green pastures, the 3rd Tee on the Old course has been reconstructed and is playing beautifully. The 17th Tee on the Lakes course has also settled well after major works, and further work on tees will be undertaken in spring 2003. Some nine months ago the Club encouraged some of it's members to assist the course staff with general maintenance on one Monday per month. This initiative has proved very successful and all members who have taken part are to be thanked sincerely for their efforts.

In terms of longer-term planning for the golf course, the Club awaits the outcome of the State Government's review of the Melbourne 2030 strategic plan and, in particular, it's assessment of the green wedge belts that were specified in the document. The Club will base any future project

work on the terms and conditions laid down in the document and will work closely with the local community to achieve an outcome in the best interests of all parties.



The important point for all of us to remember is that a strong and vibrant golf facility on this site is the best option, and the Club seeks full support from the local community to maintain the magnificent flora, fauna and wetlands that exist.

The alternative is not a pleasant one, but may become a reality if we do not all work together.

As we head into the winter period, I ask all residents who live along Stoney Creek Road to keep an eye on the golf course precincts from a security viewpoint (and contact the local police if needed) and ask all local community members who walk on the golf club grounds to keep well away from areas where golf balls may be flying, and also to contact the Club in advance, so that we know who is on the property.

This is very important from an insurance viewpoint, given the instability in the current market. Please remember that persons who enter the property do so at their own risk.

I look forward to providing an update for you in the next bulletin.

Andrew Austin
Sec/Manager





Red Cross Calling

Residents in our area have once again responded magnificently to the annual Red Cross Calling doorknock held during March, resulting in the record amount of \$6,318.45 being raised for 2003. This was \$851.55 more than last year. Your support is very much appreciated by Red Cross.

The bushfires and the war in Iraq had seen the work of Red Cross brought strongly to attention in the media and callers were met with great generosity and a number of \$100 and \$50 donations were received.

One caller, Mary Griffin, was amazed to find that a jar of money handed to her contained \$361.35 when counted. Contributions to the Red Cross tin on the bar counter at the Pine Grove Hotel amounted to \$69.50. The tin contained \$13 in 5 cent coins alone, plus many bulky 50 cent coins.

Red Cross appreciates the donation of these nuisance coins by patrons, which mount up over the year. Thank you to the new management of the Pine Grove for allowing the tin to remain on the counter again this year.

35 volunteer callers cover the area that includes Dewhurst, Guys Hill and a small part of Beaconsfield, north of the highway.

Callers this year were Peg Bellair, Sandie Bliss, Rosemary Bryen, Tom Cantwell, Jan Carmody, Dianne Conn, Lesley Davidson, Kathy de la Rue, Beverley Dow, Margaret Edwards, Wendy Erwin, Doug Field, Barry Gates, Carol Gibson, Mary Griffin, Barbara Jackson, Rae Jessop, Kerry Kresojevic, Laura Levens, Gillian Lewis, Anne McCormick, Matt McDonald, Bernadette McGoughan, Karen McQuilten, Sandra Mew, George Moir, Sue Ogilvie, John Patterson, Kim Pitcher, Bev Sinclair, Heather Studham, Jamie Tainton, Ann Taylor, Wendy Thomson and Gerald Williams. Thank you all for your commitment in helping Red Cross.

Other fundraising

The Unit has sold \$ 1,050 worth of tickets for the Australian Red Cross major raffle of a Honda car to be drawn during June. Thanks and good luck to all who have supported this fundraiser.

Donors needed

With winter approaching the Red Cross Blood Bank is always looking for new donors as colds and flu prevent many regular donors from keeping their appointments to donate blood. The Red Cross mobile blood bank will be at the Berwick Leisure Centre, Manuka Road on Friday 13 June from 9.45am to 3.45pm, and at Pakenham Hall, corner John and Henry Streets on Monday 16 June (1.30pm to 8pm) and Tuesday 17 June (1.30pm to 7.30pm).

Red Cross "Been Around Before" shops at both Pakenham and Cranbourne have winter clothing at very reasonable prices and good quality.

The Pakenham Red Cross Unit will be holding a soup and sandwich lunch at Meryl Waterhouse's home 315 Pakenham Road, Pakenham on Wednesday 23 July at 11am. The lunch is in aid of International Project 2003 East Timor and the guest speaker is from East Timor. All welcome.

Service Award

Member Gyneth Troy has recently been presented with the Victorian Service Award for Australian Red Cross Victoria at a ceremony at Government House. Gyneth joined the unit in 1987 and in 1988 became Treasurer and except for 2 years as Secretary, a position she held until her resignation due to ill health in 2002. Gyneth has organized Red Cross Calling in the Berwick area since 1996 and was also a member of the former District Appeals Advisory committee. Gyneth has also been involved with Emergency Services in registration and catering.

Barbara Jackson
5944 3554

Berwick/Upper Beaconsfield Red Cross Unit

Fungi facts

- Fungi grow as a network of fibres in soil or decaying wood and break down organic matter and return nutrients to the soil. The "mushroom" we see is the fruiting body of this organism.
- There are an estimated 20,000 species in Australia that have fruiting bodies visible above the ground.
- Not much is known about native Australian fungi. Only about 15% of these have been described or identified.
- The fly agaric toadstools (red with white spots) that are common in Upper Beaconsfield are a European species. They arrived on the roots of trees. These are poisonous and their name comes from the fact that in Europe, this toadstool was often mashed into a container of milk to be left out in dairies as a deadly lure for flies.
- The most common cause of poisoning from wild fungi in Australia is the yellow-staining mushroom (*Agaricus xanthodermus*). It is similar in appearance to the field mushroom (*Agaricus campestris*) and the cultivated mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*), but differs in the rather square profile of the cap when young, the strong unpleasant odour (like hospital disinfectant - caused by the presence of phenol in the mushroom) and the yellow stain when the cap or stem is bruised.
- Death caps (*Amanita phalloides*) account for 90% of the deaths worldwide caused by fungal poisoning. These fungi arrived in Australia on the roots of trees, often found in the vicinity of oak trees.

For more information, type Fungimap in Google. This will take you to a web site based at Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens, where a program to identify and map the location of Australian fungi has been operating since 1994.

See also Australian Geographic 1999 Jan-Mar, Australasian Science 1999 Jan/Feb and check your local library for books on fungi.

Helen Smith



A bumper crop

What a bumper season it has been for toadstools and mushrooms! The combination of warm weather and some rain at the right time made conditions perfect for fungi and they have been popping up on nature strips, back gardens and in bushland, in larger numbers than usual.

A most fascinating sight I saw as a child was some ghost toadstools glowing eerily green in the dark at Pakenham Upper. This feature is called bioluminescence. As I am not in the habit of walking around at night in the dark I will be lucky to see these toadstools again. Seen during the day they look quite ordinary.

Field mushrooms have been plentiful this year and we had two delicious feeds after a Sunday drive to Neerim South resulted in purchasing some from a farm stall. A farmer's enterprising son picked bucketfuls from the paddocks the previous night. The key to finding field mushrooms is location. Only pick them from grassy paddocks in full sun and away from trees. Occasionally there are reports of mushroom poisoning, so if in any doubt, don't eat them.

Postcard from Dandong, P.R.C

"Huan ying Nimen dao Dandong"! No, not a typo, but a welcoming phrase in Chinese: 'Welcome everybody to Dandong'.

On a recent visit to my new home my parents remarked that I couldn't have found a destination more varied to Upper Beaconsfield if I'd tried. I'd never really thought of it in terms of polar opposites, but I suppose in many ways they are right. A roaming gardens, twittering birds, friendly post office and decent bakery kind of town this is not.

In fact Dandong could never be described as having any of the above (I can't remember the last time I heard a free-roaming bird chirping, let alone a lawnmower), but a friendly people and zest for life this place certainly does have. In abundance.

I never set out on my 'grand world tour' to see myself settling down for any long period of time in one place, let alone the NE of China, but it's happened all the same. I arrived in China just under 3 years ago with very little cash, and even less Mandarin (in fact I couldn't speak a word of their language), but am now the proud owner of my own business in the form of a private language school, and as schooling is a 7-day-a-week business in China I am constantly busy.

As I am one of only a handful of 'big nosed aliens' (foreigners) I am quite a novelty, and with novelty comes inquisitiveness. I teach anything between 200 and 1,500 students on any given day, plus with my day to day activities whether that be the buying of vegies at the local market, or having a kung fu lesson at 6am, I am talked to or talked about constantly. "Do I have a koala as a pet? Am I lonely? Can I use chopsticks? Am I from Russia or Spain? How much would I make in one month if I worked in KFC in Australia?..... and so the list goes on!

I suppose the main attraction for me about life in China is that everyday is different to the next, and that you never know what surprise lies around the corner - whether it be a chewing gum company seeking you to feature on their latest TV ad, to being forced to sterilize my school with hideous chemicals every few hours in an attempt to control SARs.

And although decent bread is nowhere to be found, and blue skies can only be seen on 5 out of 7 days (which is an excellent average for developing China) I do feel very privileged living here and experiencing all that I'm experiencing.

Another plus for me is sharing so much with people who are so eager to learn. Travelling to over 50 cities in China and to as many countries as I have seen seems like a dream to the majority of locals who don't even have the opportunity to apply for a Chinese passport, let alone hug a gum tree.

And if that isn't humbling enough, the view from my kitchen window (if I didn't have an apartment block in the way containing about 60 families) is of North Korea. And although I am living less than 1.5kms from the DPRK the likelihood of me being allowed to visit is very slim.

But still the mysticism of the area and the realisation of just how lucky we are in where we've come from and what opportunities we are able to grasp, makes you feel very small and very lucky indeed.

Should anybody wish to travel to China I cannot recommend it highly enough, although you won't discover any of its true attractions until you get off the beaten track and meet some of the locals, oh and BYO bread!

Heidi Haywood

Editor's note:

Heidi, now 27, lived in Upper Beac from 4 years of age and attended the local primary school before going to Berwick Secondary College and MacRobertson Girls' High. The day after completing a double degree at Monash University she left on her overseas adventure. We wish her great success in her business and life in China.

If anyone has an interesting "postcard" suitable to be published in the Bell, be it from Australia or overseas, please let the editors know. We would love to hear from you. See contact numbers page 2.

Upper Beaconsfield Kindergartens

The children are back at Kinder after their Easter break, and have made a flying start to the new term with many exciting activities for them to look forward to.

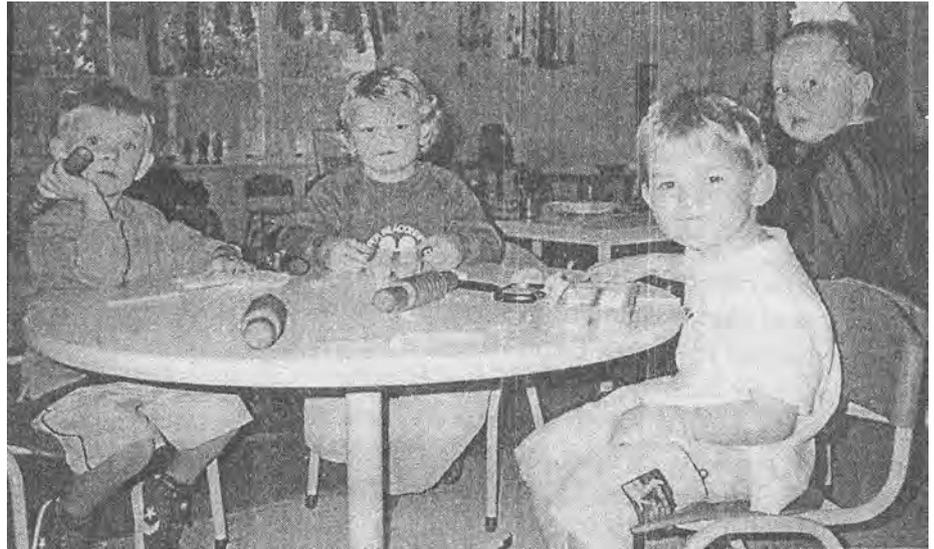
Last term at Kinder the children took turns to be the star of the week. The stars chose activities first, answering group discussions and games, as well as drawing and dictating stories all about themselves! The star children have looked very proud with their star badges pinned on their chests as they showed other children their photos on the display board.

On Saturday 29th March we had a morning where working Dads (and Mums!) were welcomed to the Kinder to enjoy a session to watch and join in with the children. This was a great success with 29 children and 45 adults enjoying the activities. Grandparents were also welcomed to the Kinder on Tuesday 8th April and Wednesday 9th April. The children proudly showed their Kinder to the grandparents. The children made the most delicious scones and also made hot cross buns from dough supplied from Emerald Bakery, which everyone ate up happily.

This term the children have lots of fun activities to look forward to including a trip to the Upper Beaconsfield Shops, and a Hospital Awareness Program. At the end of last term the Pre-Kinder children were having lots of fun with Easter activities with a visit from Easter Bunny who surprised the children with Easter Eggs for their baskets they made.

Fundraising

The kindergarten is holding its Annual Kinder Dinner Auction on the 14th June at 7pm in the Windmill Room at the Pine Grove Hotel. We are having a DJ, a surprise twist, three-course meal and an auction all for only \$30 per head. For enquiries please contact Nikki Le Brocq on 5944 3343.



Also look out for the KPV raffle tickets we are selling through the Kinder, there are raffle books at the local shops.

On Sunday the 6th April, the Kinder held the Great Upper Beac Car Rally and a fun day was had by all. The rally got away on time and ended at One Tree Hill National Park in the Dandenongs where we had a picnic, Easter egg hunt, raffle and some very entertaining games. The rally was won by Anna Viney and family, a very close second was Natalie Roberts and family and third place was Marianne Sawyer and family.

A special thankyou to all our sponsors for their support of the car rally: Moonshine Motors, Upper Beaconsfield; True Value Hardware, Upper Beaconsfield; Upper Beaconsfield Supermarket, Upper Beaconsfield; Beaconsfield Automotive Service, Beaconsfield; Beaconsfield Auto Electrics, Beaconsfield; Pride Detailing, Berwick; Harris Freer Toyota, Berwick; David Nutter Ford, Berwick; Chrysler Jeep, Berwick; Barry Burke Holden, Berwick; Burson Auto Parts, Berwick; Kids Of Berwick, Berwick; McDonalds, Berwick; New World Honda, Narre Warren; Bevic Auto Parts, Narre Warren; Auto Barn, Narre Warren; Lynda and Spencer Harrison.

Enrolments

Please note we are now offering a third four-year-old kinder group, and places are now available. Enrolments for Pre-Kinder are taken from birth and from 2 years of age for Kinder. Enrolment enquiries for Pre-Kinder contact Karine McGill on 5944 3238 and for Kinder contact Sally Randall on 5944 3390.

Building bridges

"I wish I had some way to make a bridge from man to man... . Man is all we've got."

Cross Damon in Richard Wright's Outsider

One reason for living in a village community like Upper Beaconsfield is the ease with which we can find bridges between one another. Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre provides one of the many pillars to our village 'bridge'.

At the moment there are several groups that meet at the centre providing support for residents with needs that can best be met by sharing experiences. Sharing is such an empowering activity. Blocked writers can join the Writing and Discussion Group and discover how easy it is to enjoy that time when the written word just won't flow.

Worried about your body image? Come along to the Weight Control Group and share your blimps, bumps and bulges around!

If you are experiencing the challenges of getting on with life after being diagnosed with a debilitating condition the Cancer Support Group or the Fibromyalgia Support Group may be valuable.

Does that knitting or sewing project never seem to get done? Come along to our Craft Support Group and talk away as you knit or sew. It will be finished before you know it.

There are many other activities at the centre, all are designed to tease out those common interests that link the diverse range of people in our community.

Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre: building bridges between residents.

We would also like to acknowledge our wonderful family of volunteers that help to make the Centre tick. Their hard work and dedication cannot be measured and certainly add to the village 'bridge'. Thank you all for your contribution to your Centre and your community.

For more information please contact:
Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre
Phone: 5944 3484

Community Centre Coordinators

(Continued from page 14)
for Pre-Kinder contact
Karine McGill on 5944
3238 and for Kinder
contact Sally Randall on
5944 3390.

Photographs

*P 14. Playing with
playdough at Pre-Kinder*

*Right: The children at
Kinder dancing for their
grandparents!*

Philippa Meyer
Vice-President
(Marketing) Upper
Beaconsfield
Kindergartens



Netball Club enjoys a successful season



and Under, one 17 and Under mixed and one senior ladies team have been entered.

At the present time all teams have been filled, but the club is continually on the lookout for more players especially beginners to fill teams in the coming seasons. If anyone is interested in playing netball, please contact Peter Brennan on 5944 3916 who will take your details.

Peter Brennan
Secretary, Upper Beaconsfield
Netball Club

There has been a changing of the guard on the executive with Susanne Tozer and Lynette Cousins, president and treasurer respectively for the last six seasons, stepping down. The new president and treasurer are Cathy Opsblum and Rae Sturt. The club wishes to thank Susanne and Lynette for the tremendous amount of work they have done over the last six seasons.

After the completion of the summer season, several teams played off in the finals with the 15 and under team Voo Doo Dolls winning the grand final defeating one of our other teams, Lightning.

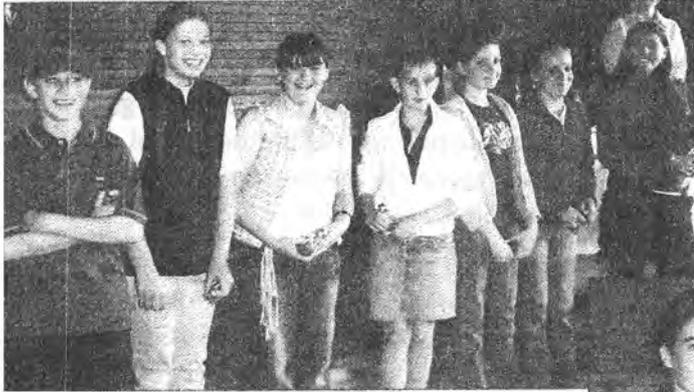
Award winners for the summer season were: Voo Doo Dolls, Larissa Burns, best and fairest, runner-up Emma Cashen, team award Nicole Forester. Lightning, equal best and fairest, Melanie Tozer and Rachel Wallace, runner-up Jodi Cousins, team award Elissa Marie, Storm, Kerrie Allen, runner-up Lisa Tilly and the team award went to Kelly Van Dyk.

Participation trophies were presented to all players in the 11 and under Comets and Shooting Stars, and the 13 and under Little Devils. Jodi Cousins also received a long service badge.

The netball club has just commenced its Winter season and has entered seven teams in the Pakenham Netball Association competition. One 11 and Under, one 13 and Under, three 15



Netball team presentations



Page 16

Top: Voo Doo Dolls,

Middle: Larissa Burns and Nicole Forester

Bottom: Comets

Little Devils, left

Shooting Stars, right



Below: Lisa Tilly and Kerrie Allen



Above: Emma Born celebrates her birthday with team members.



Left Rachel Wallace, Melanie Tozer and Jodi Cousins





Enrol Now

Upper Beaconsfield Kindergarten

We are now taking enrolments for a third four-year-old kindergarten group.

To visit our kinder or enquire about enrolling your child

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Or Deb on 5944 3822**

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Greens branching out

We are delighted to announce the birth of a new branch of The Victorian Greens. On Friday 21 st February, at the Central Hotel in Beaconsfield, more than 50 members and supporters gathered over a delicious pub tea, in the delightful private dining room, to celebrate the arrival of the Casey/Cardinia Greens.

We listened to, and were alerted and alarmed by, Alan Griffiths speaking on how the World Trade Organisation's GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) Regulations will affect us all.

Mary Henry entertained us with a capella pastiches. Wonderful raffle prizes donated by The Green Vineyard (Albers Rd; Upper Beaconsfield), the UB Indigenous Nursery (Halford St, Upper Beaconsfield) and the Wetland Ecosystems Nursery (Thompsons Rd, Carrum Downs) were appropriately won by Ross Jephcott, Bret Fishley and Margaret Cromb.

Anyone interested in becoming involved in the development of this healthy newborn branch is welcome to contact the Secretary Jim Reiher on 9707 1428.

Noel Ridgeway and Judy Graves
Members of the Casey/Cardinia Greens

Babysitting Club

This club is made up of a group of mothers who take turns to babysit in the comfort of children's own homes, when their parents wish to go out in the evening.

Please contact Cathie Usher, secretary for the months June to September, for more information and how the club operates.



Cathie Usher
5944 4183

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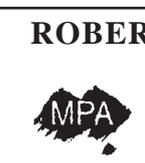
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