



Issue No. 158 December 2004

Upper Beaconsfield Association

School celebrates 120 years

Sunday November 7th, 2004 was the 120th anniversary of the Beaconsfield Upper Primary School. Celebrations were held at the school with somewhere between 400 and 500 past and present students, staff members and parents in attendance.

There was a large photographic display with literally hundreds of photographs to be viewed spanning from the early years (c 1891) to the present.

The Master of Ceremonies for the day was a former teacher, Mr John Wells who introduced Mr Ron Carroll, the Principal in 1984, who made a welcoming address that included memories of his years at the school.

One of the highlights of the day was the opening of a time capsule sealed in 1984 and performed by two of the students from that year, Dianne Golemak and Richard McCurdy. The contents of the capsule included drawings, photographs, a 1984 calendar, student profiles, a copy of the Pakenham Gazette and other items produced by the students from 1984.

This was followed with two of our current students, Lindsey Hobson (Year 6) and Gavin McGill (Prep), placing items in a new time capsule. The new time capsule was made by one of our parents, Geoff Schoonderwaldt who has done a fantastic job. Following this was the cutting of the 120th anniversary cake.

Anne McCormick, the School Council President then thanked everyone involved with the organisation of the day. She also thanked the people who produced the new history of the school, those who displayed the photographs and those who organised the memorabilia

that was sold.

The formal part of proceedings finished with an ex student, Rebecca Kennedy, singing the National Anthem.

The school still has some of the memorabilia for sale - the new book of the History of the School, key rings, commemorative port, and recipe books, if anyone wishes to purchase them. Please contact the school if you are interested.

We also have for sale CD ROMs of photographs taken on the day for anyone interested. Please contact the school, for further details.

All in all it was a very enjoyable day apart from the weather with many past students, parents and teachers catching up with people that had not seen for many years. From a personal point of view it was very satisfying to see so many people embrace what we all know is one of the greatest features of this school - the pride that the school takes in being not just a school, but part of the community. Just as satisfying was meeting up with students who I taught here in the years 1973 until 1976, this being the first school I taught at in my teaching career - and the best part about this is that they politely said, "I hadn't changed much".

All current students, teachers and parents along with everyone else who have been involved with the school have been invited back to the opening of the new time capsule in 2034, the 150th anniversary of the school.

Gordon Atkin
Principal



And there's more

- Quarry land for future park
- Local businesses
- School reunion photographs
- Are you prepared for the fire season?

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Merry Christmas

The Village Bell wishes all residents best wishes for the Christmas and holiday season. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way towards providing articles, suggestions, photographs, and collating the Bell. We greatly appreciate your assistance. Thank you also to all subscribers, see below. And to the advertisers, we could not continue without your financial support and hope you will continue to advertise with us in 2005.

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Welcome to new residents

Garry and Ginny Ruigrok, Lenne Road

Please contort the Bell if you would like to place an entry in this section.

Rainfall report



Higher than average rainfall in the first two months of winter continued in August with 106 mm.

The total for the period was 313.8 mm (average 247.8 mm).

Spring to date had a rainfall of 179.8 mm, (average 192.9 mm) with October being lower than normal.

The year to date rainfall has been 787.6 mm compared to the 36-year average of 796.4 mm. Hopefully this trend will continue.

George Moir

Readings in mm are taken at Barkala.Emerald-Beaconsfield Road.

Month	36 yr average	2003	2004
Jan	65.5	26.4	70.3
Feb	53.4	29.2	22.1
Mar	67.1	68.4	37.4
Apr	78.6	114.1	107.4
May	91.1	52.0	54.8
Jun	80.6	49.0	142.7
Jul	79.9	126.5	65.1
Aug	87.3	91.3	106.8
Sep	93.0	80.4	118.8
Oct	99.9	120.4	61.0
Nov	81.1	47.1	
Dec	79.1	71.9	
Total	956.6	876.7	

2005 subscriptions are due in January

Your \$5 subscription gives you the most informative read every three months. Cheques made payable to the UBA can be posted, addressed to the Treasurer, UBA PO Box 86. Or place your subs in the drop box at the General Store.

Are you moving and wish to continue receiving the Village Bell? Subscriptions are renewed in January. To be put on the mailing list please contact Cheryl O'Gallagher on 5944 3209.

Quarry land for future park

A meeting convened by Hillview Quarries was held at the Upper Beaconsfield Hall on 26 October. Vince Latham, General Manager of Hillview Quarries, introduced Nick Wimbush, of NRM Services Pty Ltd, who made a presentation of the proposal. Hill View Quarries hope will pass council when a planning application is eventually made, probably in the near future.

About 30 residents, including surviving members of the Quarry Impact Association responsible for well-researched protest presentations to various authorities over twenty years, attended the meeting.

It is about 25 years since the first planning application to establish a quarry on their property bounded by Leppitt Rd, Bathe Rd, Officer-Upper Beaconsfield Rd and Brown Rd, roused opposition from residents and Council.

At this meeting, Hillview presented a proposal to re-subdivide by re-aligning the boundaries of currently 9 large lots into a similar number of smaller lots ranging from 1 acre to 3 acres clustered in already cleared land at the corner of Bathe and Leppitt Roads.

Already arrangements have been made to present the remainder of the 54 hectares to Parks Victoria if the application succeeds. At least three flora surveys, the first in 1979, and one fauna survey, have been undertaken that all rate these 54 hectares as an environmental treasure. Discussions have been held with council officers and fire brigades about their requirements that are to be incorporated into the plan.

The meeting resulted in a general approval of the proposal. There will be opportunity for formal comment after a planning application is made. Hillview Quarries have stated that those who received an invitation to the meeting, and others on the attendance list will receive notification of the application.

Laura Levens

Carols * * by Candlelight

	<u>COMPERE</u>	The incomparable Greg Ross
★	<u>VENUE</u>	Keith Ewenson Park, U B Community Complex
★	<u>DATE</u>	Christmas Eve 2004
★	<u>TIME</u>	From about 7.00 pm
SANTA'S SCHEDULE		
★	Grant Court	7.45 pm
★	Burton Road	8.00 pm
★	Paul Grove	8.15 pm
★	Keith Ewenson Park at 8.30	
Singers for stage all welcome, come on up!		
Bring your friends and family Picnic blankets Refreshments available		
Come along and enjoy Upper Beaconsfield's best community event		

Have your say in planning

Anyone wanting to have an input into reviewing the Upper Beaconsfield Strategy Plan, prepared 6 years ago, is welcome to do so.

The review process involves consideration of key issues - what has been achieved, what is yet to be achieved and emerging new issues.

The review covers areas of:

- Social and community issues
- Fire control management
- Natural systems and ecology
- Transport and movement

- Residential development
- Retail economy and commercial
- Physical infrastructure
- Open space and recreation

The results of the review by the community will be forwarded to Cardinia Shire for its assessment. This matter will be on the agenda for reports and discussion at the next UBA meeting, Wednesday 1 December at 8 pm. For information, phone 5944 3036.

Ruth Hainsworth

Local businesses have plenty to offer

This article continues our survey of local businesses.

Milk Bar

On the east side of Emerald-Beacy Road is the very pleasant Upper Beaconsfield MilkBar/TakeAway/Cafe, which is run by Alen and Andrea Barrie Tel 5944 3423. They are open Mon-Wed 7.30am-8.15pm, Thurs-Sat 7.30 am-9 pm, Sun 8.30am-8pm.

This is the place to purchase one of the famous "Krasch Burgers". They also do fish and chips, coffee and cakes, milk, bread, cigarettes, ice cold drinks, lollies, ice creams and Peter cones. Eat in or takeaway.

They have videos and DVDs for hire, and specials at the moment include: great deals on fish and chips (family packs) and DVDs at reduced prices. They will also cater for meetings and parties. Breakfast is offered all day everyday.



Open house at Petruccelli Art Studio



Are you interested in art? Have you ever considered trying your hand at oil painting or pastel? If so, come along to Peter and Mary Petruccelli's Stoney Creek Road Studio on December 12 to their 6th annual Open Day. Adult students

have participated in classes throughout the year on Sundays and Mondays under the guidance of Peter Petruccelli. During the warmer months classes were held outdoors in the picturesque surrounds of the studio and at venues further afield including Churchill Island and Lysterfield Lake Park. Still life studies and portraiture classes were conducted within the studio. A selection of works completed by students during the year will be on display.

Peter and Mary extend an invitation to all interested residents of Upper Beaconsfield to join them on their open day - December 12, 11 am to 5pm at 102 Stoney Creek Road. Ring 5944 3224 for further information.

Cheryl O'Gallagher

Creations Hair Salon

Between the Butcher and the Hind Quarter Steak House is Kathryn Brewster's Hair Salon, Creations, telephone 5944 4173.

She has been hairdressing in Upper Beac for 2½ years and has been in the industry for 18 years.

She provides hairdressing for the whole family. Open Tues, Wed, Fri 9am-5pm, Thurs 9am-9pm, Sat 8am-1 pm. Closed Mondays. Please note that the salon will be closed from Xmas eve for three weeks.



Local traders update

We were also going to feature the Upper Crust Takeaway but have found out that the business is closing down on Friday 19th November 2004. The lease on the property has finished and the owners have decided to call it a day as they feel that is time to enjoy some quality time with the family. At this point, we do not know what will happen to the shop, but will let you know in the next edition of the Bell.

It is a reflection of the difficult time small traders can have in Upper Beaconsfield in balancing the long hours, small margins and increasing competition from Berwick. It is important that the community supports local businesses.

Jo Carter and Sarah Sankey

School reunion contd.

Photographs page 5

1. The large crowd listens to the speeches in the MPR
2. Former teachers Fay Smith, Beryl Jakobi and Ros Harding
3. Former pupil Carol Fletcher and Paul Stinear, former School Council President
4. Former principal Ron Carroll, teachers Judy Skinner, Marcia Wilkinson and Leonie Tonks
5. Part of the extensive photographic displays
6. The new time capsule, to be opened in 2034
7. Former pupils including Keri Hoffman, Elinor Hansen and Sheri Bain
8. The De La Rues and the Zeislers pore over the contents of the 1984 capsule

Please note: If anyone has school photographs of interest, please contact the school on 5944 3591. The school is putting together an archive of photographs, including many of those displayed at the reunion. All photographs will be scanned and the originals then returned to the owners.



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CARDINIA

Well it finally happened, the toilet block at Charing Cross has been completed and I was delighted to officially open it on October 9th. I was very pleased to see how well

the Toomuc Valley road has come up since it was recently sealed. This section of road is part of the 50 kms of road sealing which is being undertaken by council and is a good example of how council is listening to the needs of the residents of the shire. Through good planning council will continue sealing many of our important, connecting roads. We will all reap the reward of this project now and in the future.

A recent public meeting was held at the community centre to discuss the future of the Hillview Quarry property on the corner of Leppitt road and Bathe Road, Officer. As you will know, Hillview has owned the quarry site for many years and there has been much community concern about the future of the site. At the meeting Hillview announced that they no longer intended pursuing the site as a quarry but intended sub-dividing the property to protect the environmental values in perpetuity and to gain some financial return. The explanation provided by the Hillview representatives was balanced and clear and gained overwhelming support from the residents who attended the meeting. This is a good outcome for the community and although some further work needs to be done prior to an application being presented to council I feel confident the outcome is a worthy one.

I am also pleased to announce the opening of the \$3.8m Beaconsfield Community Complex. This facility will serve the needs of the Beaconsfield and surrounding

community for many generations to come. Please take some time to inspect this wonderful building and enjoy the community spirit it offers.

This past year has been a great experience for me. The opportunity to serve as your ward councillor has given me great personal satisfaction. The chance to serve as the Mayor of the Cardinia Shire is a once in a lifetime opportunity and I have enjoyed it immensely. Thank you for the support so many members of the community have offered me. As we head towards the end of 2004, Sue and I wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

**Cr. Garry Runge,
Mayor Beacon Hills Ward**

Tel 9769 8152 Mob 0417 110 616



A group of interested residents inspect the new toilet block after the official opening

Noticeboard

Platypus update

Geoff Williams from the Platypus Conservancy reports that further monitoring of the platypus has been undertaken recently. One platypus was caught and found in very good condition. The others have been radio tracked and have settled in well. The Conservancy hopes to release some more platypus next autumn to boost their numbers to establish a viable population.

Cardinia Ratepayers and Residents' Assoc.

Gloria O'Connor from the association asks that residents CRRA forward the surveys on rates and charges, community facilities and road maintenance to PO Box 411 Emerald 3782. If you object to the municipal levy, put it in writing to Cardinia Shire rates Officer and forward a copy to the CRRA. The association can also be contacted at crravic@yahoo.com.au or ring 5942 7739 or 59415519.

Tutors required for 2005:

Qualified Yoga tutor required for Monday evenings. VicFit Aerobics/Group Exercise Instructor required for day and evening work. For more information please contact the Coordinator: Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre Inc. Phone: 5944 3484.

Notice of public meeting

Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve Committee of Management Inc. will hold a meeting on Wednesday, 9 February at 8.00 pm in the Club Social Room, Burton Road, for the purpose of electing four public members as community representatives to the Committee of Management. Members of the public are invited to attend this meeting.

Nominations can be forwarded to The Secretary, P.O. Box 28 Upper Beaconsfield 3808, or can be tabled at the meeting. Details from Secretary Barry Smith 5944 3219.

Brigade warns of fire season ahead

Rains reduce fire danger

Good spring rains experienced over the last few weeks have provided relief from the danger of bush fires, which often begins at this time of year.

This relief must be seen as temporary as a couple of hot, dry and windy weeks in January and February will soon turn the lush spring growth into high fuel loads for an approaching wild fire.

Cleaning up before summer

Now is the time to start preparing for a fire free summer if you haven't already. Reducing the flammable material such as leaf litter and dry grass around your property will reduce the intensity of a fire if it does happen.

Together with mulching and tipping, under council laws, burning of vegetation may be undertaken prior to the commencement of the fire restrictions. Your local fire brigade may be able to assist you with burning of large amounts.

Fuel reduction burning

Parks Victoria, Cardinia Shire and Upper Beaconsfield fire brigade will all be conducting fuel reduction burning programs prior to the start of the fire restriction period.

These burns will be conducted on mild days with mild to warm temperatures and low wind speeds. If you see large smoke plumes on a mild day, don't panic. You can check by calling the CFA on 9887 7766.

Community Information Meeting

Many local residents updated their knowledge on protecting themselves and their property at the recent Community Information meeting.

Topics discussed included:

- Are residents at risk?
- Making a bushfire survival plan
- Will you stay or go?
- Managing vegetation around the home
- Preparing yourself and your property for bushfire
- What to do before, during and after a bushfire
- How to source information during bushfires

If you missed this meeting and would like to find out about this, visit the CFA web site on www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call Graeme MacGowan on 5944 3374

Quiet Spring for fire brigade

Your local fire brigade has had only a small number of incidents to attend during winter and spring. Most of these have been motor vehicle incidents.

New members welcome

The brigade is currently taking on a group of new members. If you would like to join, contact Ron Sawyer on 5944 3055 to arrange briefing or just come along to training at 7:30pm on Wednesdays.



Busy on the sausage sizzle on polling day are fire brigade members from left: Neil Brandie, Captain Graeme MacGowan and Greg McDonald.



Building works on the GO at PreKinder

The extension works at PreKinder commenced during the school holiday break. A specialist company removed all asbestos from the building and the bathroom was fully renovated. The builders have continued during fourth term and the sub floor and frames for the extension is near complete and trusses should be up before the end of November.

This work already shows significant improvements to the building and that a facelift was certainly due. Committee members will commence a roster shortly to repaint the inside of the building progressively, so that everything is ready for next year. We are in the process of recruiting an Assistant for next years program and feel very excited about the value of all these improvements will make for the children within our community. A large shade sail is also being installed over the next couple of weeks.

We are calling on the community to support this project by purchasing a paving brick. Every dollar counts as we are contributing significant funding to this project. Paving bricks can be personalized with a family name or children can contribute their own artwork. The cost of a brick is \$25.00 or you can make a larger donation. Your brick can be laid at either PreKinder or Kinder, or if you wish, you may keep it for yourself. The bricks do look fantastic and we will display samples at our local businesses along with order forms. You may even know of people outside of our



community that may want to contribute.

If you would like an order form, please contact Nikki Le Brocq on 5944 3343 or call into either of our buildings. We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing the works finished by the end of this year.

Cherylle Hampton

President

Upper Beaconsfield Kindergarten and Preschool

A wonderful life

Vale Annabel Ford 1906 - 2004

Annabel was born and educated in Scotland. When she was 23 she made a trip to Burma which gave her so much pleasure that she returned to the region the following year.

On this occasion whilst in Mandalay she was given a part in a play, which was seen by Captain Frank O'Neil Ford, a British army officer stationed in Burma. After the show Frank said to his companion "I am going to marry that actress" and arranged for an introduction. They fell in love and were married in Scotland two years later.

The newly weds returned to army work in Burma, where they spent 10 happy years. Four of their children were born there and their youngest child was born in India.

Annabel enjoyed the army life, although often a bit lonely whilst Frank was away on duty. The army constantly emphasised the importance of physical fitness for all, so Annabel played golf, tennis, and walked a lot. On one occasion Annabel travelling partly by mule, and partly by walking covered more than 100 miles to meet her husband whilst he was working in the interior.

Soon after the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939, the Ford family was moved to a beautiful hill station called Taunggyi where Frank recruited and then trained soldiers, while Annabel worked closely with the local people, whom she came to love and respect.

About this time Annabel was appointed a cipher clerk, decoding for the army. For this work she had to sign the Official Secrets Act, forbidding her to disclose to anyone, even her husband, the knowledge she acquired as the result of her work.

Following the Pearl Harbour attack, and then the fall of Singapore, the Japanese were uncomfortably close, as Annabel became aware from her work. Air raid warnings became frequent as Mandalay was bombed, and it became necessary for the women and children to leave. This could only be done safely by train, as the roads were too dangerous and cholera was rife.

Carrying bare necessities, wives and children were seen off by their husbands on a special train which had all the doors barred, hopefully to ensure the safety of its passengers. After a terrifying, incident-filled trip, the train reached its destination safely. Then followed a short flight in a crowded plane to Bangladesh, and a boat trip across the Ganges delta, before Annabel and her children were fortunate enough to reach Calcutta. The youngest child, who had developed severe dysentery, was treated in hospital there.

During the three years Annabel spent in India whilst Frank was waging war in Burma, she began to work with the Red Cross, a task she continued throughout her lifetime. In 2001 she received the Red Cross Laurel Wreath Service Award for 50 years service.

(Continued on page 10)

Community in action

This term the Community Centre proudly published our long awaited history book "From the ashes: A history of the Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre 1983-2003". It was quite a buzz. The book beautifully demonstrates what a community centre is all about ... people. It is a book bursting with people.

Collecting and arranging the photos, maps, cartoons, newspaper extracts and various documents of historic interest was a big task taken on by Ruth Hainsworth and Alison Ryan, with Philippa Meyer responsible for layout. All are congratulated for the liveliness of the final production. What a pleasure it is to browse through the pages and be reminded of happy times and past friends. And what a great gift for any long-term local resident who will know many people mentioned or pictured or who have contributed reminiscences in the book.

It is interesting to note that our Centre is as healthy now as it was during its difficult birth in the aftermath of the bush fires of 1983. Memberships have grown 65% over the last 5 years and 40% of current memberships come from the Upper Beaconsfield township.

One aspect of the Centre not covered in the 'history book' is the contribution that local business sponsors have made to its successful functioning over the years. It is a considerable act of generosity for small businesses to provide sponsorship to community projects. This year alone we express our gratitude to the following businesses for their speedy response to the committee's requests for assistance in supply of materials, raffle prizes, purchasing of advertisements, etc. We encourage all residents of Upper Beaconsfield to support these businesses:

- Beaconsfield Swim School
- Berwick Basketeers
- Foodwise, Upper Beaconsfield
- Forty Winks, Dandenong
- General Store, Upper Beaconsfield
- Helen De Jager - Piano, keyboard & Guitar teacher
- Loveridges Pty Ltd, Berwick
- Milk Bar, Upper Beaconsfield
- Petruccelli Studio
- Pharmacy, Upper Beaconsfield
- Williams Family Butcher, Upper Beaconsfield
- 3D Paint & Colour, Narre Warren

Finally, we thank everyone who has been involved in this dynamic Centre during 2004. Copies of the 'history book' are available at the Centre for purchase now and don't forget to look out for the Term 1, 2005 programme of classes in your letterboxes towards the end of January. On behalf of the committee of management and the staff I wish everyone a happy festive season.

Judy Graves



Allison Ryan, Philippa Meyer and Ruth Hainsworth pictured at the book launch.



Present and past Crèche workers Marlene Norbury and Liz Smith.

Below: Lyn Chadder and Chris Edwards, former Community Centre coordinator and president, pictured in front of the excellent display of photographs.



Cardinia Catchment Landcare

After a wonderful wet winter and the onset of some warm weather the bushland and gardens generally are looking their best. It has been a good season for orchids and I have found it hard to keep up with local 'sightings'.

We are in the middle of our spring planting season and will have planted 2,000 more plants into four properties by the end of November. Most of these are wet sites, which have allowed us to plant late into the season. In fact we have had to wait for some sites to dry out sufficiently to allow access. The four properties are all very different mostly requiring restoration of understorey.

One in particular has a significant weed problem, which has required professional assistance - large pittosporum and pine trees in particular. Pittosporum is a significant weed in Upper Beaconsfield and has become a monoculture on many properties. It is a native shrub but a weed in this area.

It is amazing the diversity of understorey and ground cover that will regenerate once they are removed. Growing so densely these shrubs stop sunshine penetrating to ground level and so stop other species from growing. They are easy to pull out when young but require cutting and painting with poison when larger. If you have a problem with this weed you might like assistance and advice with its eradication.

If so call at the Upper Beaconsfield Indigenous Nursery on Fridays (10.30 am-5 pm) in Halford St. Upper Beaconsfield.

40,000 plants!

Many plants from small wildflowers, to creepers through mid and lower storey to upper storey plants are available at the nursery both for wet and dry conditions.

In excess of 40,000 plants have left the nursery during the last 12 months. The money raised goes to Landcare works and allows us to subsidise fencing costs and pay for weed control on properties when necessary.

We are always in need of volunteers at the nursery and for our planting days and would welcome anyone interested. The remaining planting day will take place on November 28th from 9 am till lunch time. Lunch is provided.

Please ring Margaret Cromb on 9707 2415 for details.



School drains update

The search for an alternative solution to disperse waste water is continuing with the Primary School and Recreation Reserve Committee of Management. The proposal to locate drains on the Reserve is now considered inappropriate as it would compromise the amenity of the Reserve.

Recreation Reserve Committee Members, School Principal and Architects, Department Education and Training delegate, Council Health Officer and local MP Tammy Lobato attended a joint meeting on 20th October.

The suggestion to redesign proposed works to position new buildings away from existing sewerage system and retain this system was again presented by Committee Chairman Bob Taylor. As Chairman Bob summed up, removing the need for drains on the Reserve and/or the School land, would result in a win-win situation for everybody.

School Principal Gordon Atkin is working with the architects and Department Education and Training staff to investigate alternative treatment for the waste water and resolve the issues that have arisen.

Barry Smith, Secretary
Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve

Annabel Ford (continued from page 8)

In 1944 the Fords returned to England, but found it hard to settle, after such an exciting life. In 1949 they left for Australia, settling in Berwick, where Annabel was soon involved in a number of community activities, continuing her Red Cross work, and also joining the CWA, and the Berwick Hospital Auxiliary. She was a very active member of any group she joined and became known as an excellent fundraiser and organiser. From these activities arose many close and long lasting friendships.

In the early 1960s when the family moved to Upper Beaconsfield, Annabel added to her interests, joining the local RSL Auxiliary, and attending St. John's Church.

In 1965 she became a member of Beaconhills Golf Club. A gifted golfer, she won the Beaconhills Ladies Championship two years later, and held the championship for six years in succession. Older players remember her as a legend.

After Frank died in 1980, Annabel returned to Berwick to live, becoming a member of Women's Legacy and Probus. Annabel maintained close contact with St. Johns and Upper Beaconsfield and was often seen with a group of friends who have been meeting for Saturday lunch at the Pine Grove Hotel for more than 30 years.

Annabel was naturally friendly, gracious, generous, and charming. She had a lovely smile and a mischievous sparkle in her eyes. She enjoyed her family, her friends and her life; a great inspiration to all who knew her.

Charles Wilson

Fun day enjoyed by all

A beautiful day saw about eighty people turn up for the Upper Beaconsfield TC Annual Tennis Fun Day. With the Barbeque sizzling and the courts in fine condition many of the local children took to the courts. With the coach Paul Osborne doing some drills and the committee members, members and parents giving out prizes, running games, operating the ball machine and measuring the speed of serves with the radar gun, a great day was had by all. Look out for the 2005 Fun Days as it's a great way to get an introduction to tennis.

Our AGM was held in August and the new committee of the UBTC is: Ian Jackson (President), Glenn Burridge (Vice President), Anne Hutchinson (Secretary), Jenny McCormick (Treasurer), Phil Scott (Juniors Coordinator), Mary Winther (Midweek Ladies Coordinator), Ian Stanley, Marita Meeking, Steve Chisnall and Nick Gamble. The new committee would like to thank the previous committee including outgoing president Anne Hutchinson for all their great work over the past year.

The lead up to our Junior Club Championships was held recently and we will be watching Brett Hillier Vs Jason Cousins in the joys, Laura Scott and Sam Cashen in the girls. In the round robin events we will see Michael McPhie Vs Riley Florence in the boys and Sophie Gajnik Vs Emma Mickle in the girls. The finals of these events will be held at the Club's Christmas party on the 11th of December. It is hoped that the finishing touches to the clubhouse extension will be completed for this big event.

Mid week ladies are just completing the Spring Season for 2004.

The Dandenong District Tennis Association (DDTA) has the finals starting the week from the 7-11-04. Upper Beaconsfield have 3 of the 5 teams entered in the finals series - they are Section 8 on a Tuesday and Sections 3 and 6R on a Wednesday.

Upper Beaconsfield also plays in the Peninsula Tennis Association on a Friday, which offers a rubber of singles and a rubber of doubles. We have 3 out of 3 teams in the finals series - they are Section 3, 4 & 5.

The new season starts in Feb 2005, however the teams have to be submitted before 3 Dec 2005. If anyone is interested in joining or making their own team please call Mary Winther on 5944 4796.

Finally we would like to congratulate one of our members for some outstanding tennis achievements recently. Upper Beaconsfield player Laura Scott recently tried out for and was selected for the Victorian Bruce Cup Team. The Bruce Cup is a School Sports Australia event for students 12 and under and is made up of some of the best junior tennis talent Australia wide. Laura was part of the 7 girl, 7 boy team that represented Victoria against the other States and Territories.

Laura had a very successful event winning a bronze medal as part of the third placed Victorian team. Laura finished with a 4 win 1 loss record in singles, 4-2 in double and 4-0 in mixed doubles. Congratulations on your superb effort in representing the State Laura!

The courts are available for public hire at the rate of \$8 per hour. To book please call 5944 3552.

Nick Gamble

INVITATION

If you are aged under 5 years of age you are invited, (with parent) to ...



A Christmas party

Wednesday 15th
December
11 am at the
Community Hall

Santa will be there!

Crèche playground now complete

The new playground at the Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre Crèche has been getting a good work out by our children this term - and if time spent in the sandpit is any indication - the prognosis is good.

The highlight is the much bigger sandpit, but the level playing area, soft fall rubber, new turf and shade sails have made time spent at the crèche much enjoyable and safer for everyone.

The older children and staff are also taking a keen interest in the garden area and already there are a few vegetables growing - ably protected by the crèche scarecrow!

Our thanks must go to the Andrews Foundation and to the Cardinia Shire because without their generous support, this project would never have got started. Parents, staff and nearby residents have also been very generous with their toy donations, time and skill - thank you.

However, there is still a small amount of painting to be finished. A parents and friends working bee in October completed all the sanding and some of the painting but a second coat of paint is now required. Any assistance would be gratefully accepted. Unfortunately, the new playground has highlighted the poor state of our cubby house. If anyone has a timber cubby house in excellent condition they would like to see go to a good home then, the crèche would love it.

Contact the Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre on 5944 3484 if you can help.

Cathy Briant

Kids' Corner!

2J Newsflash headliners

Girl woken up by kiss of life

A girl who was cast asleep by a wicked rotten witch was woken up by the kiss of life. With some 'whooping', the prince approached and destroyed the witch. As soon as he heard the story from the forest fairies he went to find his true love. **Joshua**

Three mice attacked by crazed woman

Three scared mice sneaked carefully into a house. Hearing a loud noise, they looked behind them and saw a woman holding a butcher's knife. The angry woman chased the mice who were running speedily to their home. Luckily for the mice they were unharmed. **Blake**

Giant beanstalk found in garden

Very early this morning a very astonished boy woke up to find his very cracked house was completely covered with a beanstalk. When Jack raced outside, a humongous, gigantic, huge, marvellous beanstalk was high up in the clouds. Jack's mother came racing out still in her night gown and night hat. She was shocked as Jack started to climb the beanstalk. Jack took four hours till he returned. When he did he brought back 20 bags of gold coins. His mother wants to buy a new house and have a family party.

Georgia

Black sheep gives wool away

Yesterday a black sheep gave some wool to an old woman so she could knit four sweaters and four beanies. **Lachlan**

Giant beanstalk found in garden

Last week Jack went to get some beans. He dropped some. The beans grew into an enormous bean stalk. Jack was so excited. All of the kids wanted to play with him. His mum is so impressed with him.

Maddison

Three mice attacked by crazed woman

Yesterday three mice were teasing Aqua about her dress. She had a sneaky intelligent cat that she sent to get the mice. The mice were too quick for Aqua and her cat. The mice scattered to stop getting caught. The mice have escaped unhurt. **Ella**

Success in history competition



The National History Challenge is a research based national competition open to all students from grade 5 to year 12, run by the History Teachers Association of Australia.

The theme this year was "Celebrations in Australia's History", and entries could be made in a number of different categories. Local student James Randall, who is in Grade 6 at Wattleview Primary School, and his partner Jake who is in Grade 5, entered in the category "Celebrating the Nation Using a 3D Display" with their model which includes display boards showing the history of celebrations held on the Sydney Harbour Bridge and a balsa wood 3D model of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

James and Jake competed at the regional finals in August, then proceeded to the state final in September. At each of the finals they had to present their model to a panel of judges, and answer extensive questions about how they conducted their research. They were thrilled to win the state final in their category, which was open to students up to year 12. Their entry will now go to be judged in the national finals.

Why are the Olympics good for the world?

Motivates children to play sport Brings countries together

The Olympics highlight the importance of world peace

Provides entertainment for people of all ages

That people can achieve their dreams

The Olympians are great role models for other people

The Olympics represents different sports and the skills involved

To show the importance of being fit and healthy and the need for regular exercise

Gives people the chance to learn different languages So athletes can be proud of their country by representing it at an international level

It reflects our 4 keys to achieving success - persistence, confidence, organisation and getting along Is good for tourism and travel

People get to find out a bit more about different countries Learn about history



During October eight members of the Berwick/Upper Beaconsfield Red Cross Unit attended the Annual General Meeting of Australian Red Cross, Victoria, at the Melbourne Town Hall. The theme of the day was celebrating 90 years of service to the community by looking back to 1914 with historic and contemporary displays of Australian Red Cross artifacts, photos and memorabilia and forward to the next generation of volunteers via a forum facilitated by Rod Quantock.

The morning forum was very interesting with representatives from business, voluntary organizations and several politicians, both Federal and State. Contributors to the discussion ranged from John Dalziel of the Salvation Army, to a most impressive 15 year old Chris Varney, Youth Ambassador, World Vision Australia and Amy Caughey the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Project Officer.

Other organisations represented were the Smith Family, Heart Foundation, Inspire Foundation, Australian Volunteers International, Wesley Mission Melbourne, Starlight Children's Foundation, Very Special Kids Family Support, Pro Bono lawyers, Friends of Victorian National Parks and the RSPCA. Red Cross representatives covered both general volunteering and youth programs.

There is a changing face to volunteering with business corporations allowing staff to take part in community programs, such as the Red Cross/Sanitarium Foods Good Start Breakfast Clubs giving children a nutritious start to the day, in eleven Melbourne schools.

The early "baby boomers" are reaching retirement and are looking for a meaningful way to use some of their spare time. All organisations are hoping to tap into this supply of potential volunteers.

The formal Annual General Meeting was held during the afternoon. 90th Anniversary presentations were made by Mrs Lynne Landy President of Red Cross Victoria to 27 Units which were formed in 1914. Chairman Helen Fyfe accepted the plaque on behalf of the Berwick/Upper Beaconsfield Unit.

Members of Units who were born in 1914 received recognition. Several were present at the AGM to receive a certificate and memento, but unfortunately Berwick/Upper Beaconsfield Unit member Dorothy White was not able to travel to the city and will receive her presentation at the Regional Meeting in November.

Congratulations to Upper Beaconsfield resident John Patterson and his brother Donald who received Meritorious Service Awards for their work in setting up the sophisticated Red Cross Communications system (RECOM).

The contribution of Red Cross Been Around Before Shops was mentioned in the Annual Report. The 37 shops throughout Victoria contributed over \$1,000,000 net return for year ending 30 June. The Pakenham shop, after deducting expenses of rent, electricity etc raised \$36,859. The support of local residents is very much appreciated by Red Cross.

The summary of fund raising by Units listed in the Annual Report showed that the Berwick/Upper Beaconsfield Unit had forwarded \$20,057.18 over the 12 month period. This included approximately \$12,000 raised by the Unit during March Red Cross Calling.

Planning for the 2005 Red Cross Calling is already underway. Each year new volunteer callers are needed to cover the local area. With so many new estates opening up, Red Cross would welcome any assistance from residents or groups willing to give a few hours of their time. Calling can be done at any time during March. Enquiries: Upper Beaconsfield area Barbara Jackson 5944 3554, Berwick area Norma McCausland 9707 1576.

Tickets will be on sale shortly for the Unit's Christmas raffle, which will be drawn on Friday 10 December. Excellent prizes have been donated.

Red Cross Christmas cards, calendars and diaries are on sale at the Berwick Mechanics Institute Library or from Barbara Jackson, phone number above. Native birds, animals and flora are featured on several items. Used stamps from Christmas mail and also throughout the year can be left in the Red Cross box at the Library.

The Red Cross Murray Marathon is the longest, annual, flat water canoe race in the world. In 2003 the event raised a net revenue of \$80,463, excluding raffle ticket sales. The Beaconhills Christian College has been a great supporter and successful competitor at this event over many years. The Unit wishes them success again this summer.

Barbara Jackson 5944 3554

Berwick/Upper Beaconsfield Red Cross Unit

RSL connection



In a previous copy of the Bell, a photo of the people at the Cenotaph showed a young sailor. His name is Steve Densmore and shortly after the Anzac Day service, he sailed to the Gulf on the missile frigate HMAS Newcastle. After his term of duty, Steve has returned and on Friday 22 October was married to Kate Matthews. Kate has lived with her family in St Georges Road, Upper Beaconsfield for many years. Kate attended the local primary school and Berwick Secondary. The happy couple were married at Butleigh Wootton in Kew, and Elinor Hansen, Kate's school friend for many years, was the bridesmaid. Steve has been a welcome attendee at the RSL clubrooms and remembrance services when he not on active duty with the RAN. RSL members wish Kate and Steve a long and happy life together.

Jo Carter

Our changing community



Upper Beaconsfield has for decades had quite a high rate of movement of people in and out of the community. The trend continues, and right now the community is experiencing a significant growth phase. The Upper Beaconsfield

Community is growing, and changing.

People are moving to the area - new residents making a new start in a new setting. For some there will be challenges in settling in and making the town their home. Some will be unfamiliar with the area and its amenities. They may appreciate a welcoming greeting or visit; they may appreciate information about groups and services in the town.

The Care Group provides all new residents with a folder of information about groups active in the community. These folders are usually distributed from the Post Office. New residents are also invited to make contact with the Care Group through the Coordinator or the Community Centre.

Community Week takes place in February each year and is sponsored by the Care Group Committee. During Community Week many neighbourhoods hold a gathering and barbecue to bring people together.

The Care Group has about fifty members of the community who volunteer to provide assistance in a variety of ways - with friendly visits, emergency transport and practical tasks. Emergency financial relief is available in special circumstances.

The Care Group invites residents to share in the work of providing care for those in need, and so contributing to the vitality and coherence of our community. New residents are welcome to become volunteers themselves.

In 2004 the Care Group has maintained a steady level of services to individuals and families. The group received 45 requests or referrals, resulting in 87 instances of help provided, plus the issue of a small number of vouchers for emergency relief.

President of the Care Group Committee is Barry Medwin (5944 3551) and the Coordinator is Annette Walker (5944 3574).

Matt McDonald

Upper Beaconsfield Care Group

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Wildlife Watch

Now is a busy time in my patch of bush. Indigenous plants are coming into glory. Weeds, particularly pasture plants, are trying to hustle them out of existence. Lots of work is ahead to make even a small dent in the numbers of uninvited plants.

On my recent walk around my patch of bush I found a new group of mayfly orchids and one of hare orchids. I got all excited about the hare orchid because the pink and white flowers with wine coloured 'ears' were there for the first time since 1988. Other orchid species flowering were green-comb spider, white caladenia, yellow donkey, mauve wax-lip, brown-beaks, nodding greenhoods, maroon-



hoods, tall greenhood, alpine greenhood, blunt greenhood and mosquito orchid.

Plants with yellow or yellow and red pea flowers were also brightening the scene - grey parrot pea, leafless globe pea and dillwynias, and stems of cream flowers on the many-flowered mat rush were more robust than I

have seen them before. Bluebells and blue-stars and pure white prickly tea-tree provide contrasting accent.

Yellow robins had already reared a first brood by early October, magpies and butcherbirds were nesting. Bronzewings have been communicating night and day, mopokes are calling and I've heard a passing olive-backed oriole. A young wedgetail swooped low over a visitor's head. Moths and butterflies will continue to emerge, from cocoons that have been underground or among litter, stretching their wings on grass stems or sun-warmed rocks.

Common flatworms were less visible during wet weeks in September but I spotted one of the bright yellow species devouring a caterpillar. Two days later an olive green, cream-striped species was having a share of another caterpillar that ants had attacked. A paper written in 1890 acknowledges that their diet includes small insects and I have seen the yellow species make short work of an olive green one.

When the temperature reaches at least 26 degrees in October and November the plentiful sun orchids should open their pink or blue flowers. If the temperature does not coincide with the maturing of the flower bud they will self-pollinate. Tongue orchids and hyacinth orchids, prickly geebung, small daisies, fringe lilies and many other species will flower until the cycle starts again with the first gnat orchids about March. Eucalypts can have erratic flowering times, but when they do, honey eaters flock to them. Bullants compete for the nectar that is their chief food.

Laura Levens

Young stars perform



Congratulations to **Rebecca Woff** who has been selected to participate in the Horseland Young Rider of the Year Awards in 2004 from hundreds of riders who submit applications.

Katja Weimann (last years overall winner of the same competition) has had a year of successes. The annual VEA (Victorian Eventing Association) Victorian Event Horse of the Year Awards was recently presented at the annual Combined Training Day

in Werribee. These awards are based on results in official classes at all Victorian events. Novice Horse of the Year went to Triathlete. Intermediate Horse of the Year went to Romper Stomper.

Upper Beaconsfield Pony Club wishes Katja the best as she has now reached the age where Pony club is behind her.

"National Prince Phillip Junior Mounted Games"

Upper Beaconsfield Pony Club has had long standing success in the area of mounted games - a variety of team relays on horseback. The club has been well represented over recent years with several Upper Beaconsfield riders in the VIC State Squads. In 2004 **Jillian Fitzgerald** was the 4th Upper Beac rider to be successfully selected into the Victorian Junior (under 16) Mounted Games Team.

Jill has recently travelled to Caboolture, Queensland to ride for Victoria with 4 other team members in the National Mounted Games Competition. Jill rode exceptionally well in a 21 game competition, and had a wonderful experience meeting other riders from throughout Australia. The national competition provides endless challenges for the riders because they all have to ride a large variety of different horses that they have never ridden before. The competition completed a rigorous training program that incorporated endless mounted games practices as well as extensive fitness training. Congratulations Jill and it is great to see many more Upper Beacy riders honing their games skills and hopefully following in her footsteps!

Closer to home UBPC members have been competing successfully at local competitions. Jesse Andrewartha has placed in all the events she has competed in recently including a first. **Sasha Henstock** has been successful with two firsts and Steffan Weimann has placed in his entries. **Victoria Ling** placed at Werribee and many more have successfully competed in the UBPC Berwick Chrysler show-jumping competition on cup-day. We welcome many new younger members. Great to have you on board guys! Also well done all riders for having a go! It has been a great year of fun and friends!

Finally as we see the year coming to a close we thank all those in the local community who have supported the riding members in their own way it has made a great difference to the healthy lifestyle we are able to pursue here in Upper Beaconsfield.

Alannah Dore
Upper Beaconsfield Pony Club

"OUTLOOK" *Minibah's new name*

Recently, Minibah Services changed its name to OUTLOOK - signalling an exciting new branding and image for the organisation.

The name Minibah has served the organization well in the past, and had significant meaning when Minibah started as a special school thirty years ago. It is an indigenous word for "home of the teacher". Times have changed and to better reflect the essence of the organization today and its activities, a name change was necessary.

Today, Outlook provides services that support & empower over 220 people with a disability to be included within their local community, accessing services and businesses to achieve further learning opportunities and develop pathways to employment & volunteering.

Outlook is a quality assured, ISO 9001 accredited service that operates 4 recycling business centres around Melbourne, a commercial nursery in Pakenham, an employment personnel service, respite care, community-inclusive programs, pre-vocational training and variety of other specialist support services.

For more information on Outlook phone 5941 1535.

Anne McCormick

Stimulation and fun

Are you interested in stimulating discussions? Learning more about the great minds of both past and contemporary philosophers without the pressure of exams?

If so, the Emerald U3A Philosophy Group could be just what you are looking for, where learning is fun!

Subjects are initiated by members in a friendly laid back and supportive environment. There is no restriction on topics and you can choose to be a silent observer or as verbal as you like (that is when you can get a word in)!

The course began along the lines of ancient and middle age philosophy in the traditional form and has moved into more contemporary subjects.

Recent topics have included: international inequality, business ethics, immigration and refugees, human rights, capital punishment and should Australia become a republic?

The group meets at the Emerald Museum, Crichton Road, Emerald every Tuesday between 9:15am and 11am. For further details contact:

- Neil McDonald 5944 3782 or email neilmcd@cyberspace.com.au
- Michael Allery on 59682241 or email eringlover@telstra.com.au

Howzat!

We are already into the fourth round of the season and all the senior sides have had at least one win with the seconds 'C' Grade sitting in the four with two wins and a draw.

'A' Grade started the season in fine form beating the highly fancied Officer side in a round I one-day game. Unfortunately they have not been able to back it up losing a very close game to Clyde and also being beaten by Catani. Last week they did bat much better and posted a reasonable score of 183 against last years premiers Cardinia and had them 1/18 at stumps but unfortunately the second day was washed out. Scott Pitcher has been the stand out performer so far taking 17 wickets in three innings, which has earned him a place in the WGCA country week squad. The best of the batsmen has been Luke Pitcher who has had three good innings and made over 100 runs so far. James Haupt was also selected to play in the U21 divisional trial game (combined WGCA & Mornington Peninsula)

'C' Grade lost the first game but then won the next two and were well placed in the third until the rain intervened. Luke Williams has batted well in all four games, we had a great performance from our international jet setter John Kett who flew in for one game and made 75 and had a big partnership with Julian Bayard 40 to help win the third game. He also deposited \$500.00 sponsorship money in the clubs account, which is greatly appreciated. Richard Edwards has seven wickets so far with a little help from Paul Halfpenny behind the stumps (two sensational stumpings while standing up to the wicket against the old blokes extreme pace). This is the truly international side in the club because Dan Causley from Wales has played a couple of games while he is out working on water projects in the city with Rohan Escreet. He made a fine 36 n.o. last Saturday. Then we have Shri Gullipali from India who rides up on his lime-green motorbike and even ran out of fuel going home one night and had to call out the president with the tin of mower fuel to get him home. Shri picked up a couple of wickets in 'E' Grade last Saturday to open his account.

'E' Grade players are being led by Marty Oke who has also been the standout performer taking numerous wickets and making valuable runs. They won their second game and as the season progresses we hope they will be strengthened by more players returning to play. A number of players playing in 'E' Grade have returned to play including Michael Pope and Stewie Bryen who have played before at Upper Beaconsfield.

The buddy system with the juniors has been re-introduced and a BBQ night was held in the last week of October to organise the pairings with all the juniors and a large number of parents attending as well as most of the senior players. At the time of writing the Scott Pitcher/James Andrewartha pairing is leading the competition for the prized slab of coca cola at the end of the season as well as the honour and glory of winning.

Speaking of the juniors the efforts by Simon Conn, Tony Joyce and Grant Andrewartha have been first class in getting numbers, sponsorship and parents involved. The U12s have a full side and had their first win against the Beacy Tigers in the first round and were well placed in the second round against the same side (such are the vagaries of the U12 competition in the WGCA that out of about 16 sides in the competition we play the same side twice at the start of the season)

The U14 could do with a couple of players but have progressed to 8 players and with the chance to play at different stages of the weekend (Fri night, Sat am or Sunday am if the opposition sides are willing to cooperate as we hope most are we can usually fill up with enthusiastic U12



An exciting development

A recent inspection discovered an impressive crop of native orchids and other indigenous species of flora to be flourishing in the Recreation Reserve next to Burton Road within the low post and rail fence area. No doubt this is due to the good rains experienced over the last several months.

The Committee of Management has contacted several people to help identify the species and Kim Soo and Lorraine Marshall, from Department Sustainability and Environment, and Margaret Cromb, of the Upper Beaconsfield Indigenous Nursery, have produced two lists of plants with 10 orchids and approximately 30 other species being identified. Indigenous plant enthusiasts Robyn Allison and Fred Elliot from Berwick have also looked over the area and were quite impressed at the diversity of plants.

Cardinia Shire Council Parks and Gardens Officer Wendy Abbott inspected the area recently and is most excited by what she saw, as there aren't many natural areas within recreation reserves in the shire. Wendy is keen to have the area signposted to ensure no damage is inflicted to the plants and a management plan is to be developed to protect the area. She advised that any mowing (high cut only) should be done in late summer to avoid damage to plants and seedlings. Introduced grasses etc will be carefully removed to protect the indigenous species. Members of the public are invited to look at this area but be careful where you walk; there are still some orchids that are quite small and delicate. Contact Secretary Barry Smith 5944 3219 for details.

players)

Training night for the juniors is Wednesday nights at 4.30pm. The seniors train Tuesday night and Thursday night at 5.00pm.

This year we have had a fairly big sponsorship drive with players getting individual sponsors and the club also having a number of major sponsors and I would like to acknowledge the support of these people and businesses towards the Upper Beaconsfield Cricket Club:

The Pine Grove Hotel, Beaconhills On Course Pro Shop, Narre Warren Chemmart Pharmacies, The Upper Beaconsfield General Store, Flexilift Forklift Sales & Service, Elders Real Estate in Berwick and John Kett.

All of the above also helped with the auction night held on the 19th November as well as Williams the butchers (who always give us a great deal on our Thursday & Saturday night BBQ food) the Hind Quarter Steak House donated a voucher as did the Beacon Hills bistro (Andrew Conn) and the Upper Beaconsfield Supermarket also lent support. So to all of these people we say a heartfelt thank-you for your support and ask that players, parents & supporters support these businesses.

For more information on cricketing matters in Upper Beaconsfield contact Richard Edwards on 5944 3463 or write to PO Box 37 Upper Beaconsfield 3808.

Richard Edwards

Finding my way

A personal journey

If there's one thing that exhausts me spiritually, it's the never-ending noise level of the city and its residents. I don't think I'm prudish by any account, but when you're woken every night by the amorous antics of neighbours performing frantically till four in the morning, one has to make a conscious choice.

My fiancé and I chose to retreat to the country, a decision made only months before our intended wedding. While we drove through countryside with such diversity and amazing colour, our natural curiosity awakened. On reaching our final destination, we were immediately captivated by nature's wondrous creation. Upper Beaconsfield is to us, a locale we now lovingly call home.

Being a crossbreed of city and country backgrounds, my transition here was meant to be seemingly effortless. It was however filled with fear. One of the fanciful games my own consciousness bestows upon me from time to time are the memories of rejection from my early adulthood, stored for future reference, choosing to unravel at any given time and govern my life. I was often blanketed in self-doubt that paralysed me against my will, leaving me convinced I was completely incompatible to other people around me.

In an attempt to find my 'place', I joined the local Community Centre's committee, hoping it would cure me of my negativity. Needless to say I failed miserably. Working vigorously as a fundraiser and the organiser for the Ladies Oaks Day two years running, may have benefited the centre tremendously, but it did nothing to help or improve the status of my depression. I still struggled through my days, loathing the inconsistency almost as much as the superficiality. Avoiding the toy library or not wanting to take classes, neglecting to join the babysitting club or not taking

my son to the mother craft nurse, were all issues I put down to my own laziness, but instead it was a case of withdrawing socially from others. Why hasn't anyone ever written a manual to help us capture the inner peace and tranquillity of our emotions?

With desperation influencing my decisions and actions, I persuaded my husband to look for another place to live, convinced that happiness was not actually a manner of travelling but a destination one has to reach.

Then by pure chance as I was leaving the only class I was attending at the centre, I met an angel (figuratively speaking). She happens to live in Rosebank Lane. Through her friendship I found the comfort and solace within myself for stronger character building and found that 'happy medium' we all so richly seek. No longer did I have to hide behind the facade I built for myself, concealing emotions I have so cleverly disguised during the course of my life.

I want to make mention however that it was not all her doing. The staff from the community centre and crèche, have all played their part in helping me believe I am deserving of happiness. A precious commodity I have always believed myself unworthy of.

Why am I writing the article you ask? Because I believe that you can always learn from others and I've had the privilege of learning from the best. Take the time to break from your hectic routines and enjoy the friendship of your neighbours. Treat yourself to a meal locally and stop long enough to say hello to the person serving you. They could well become your very dear friend. Or visit the Community Centre and enjoy their facilities. Find out first hand the incredible people that interact in your daily life. You need not tell these people your life history, simply start by saying hello and let the angels do the rest...

Anne Bragagnolo

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