

# LIVING TODAY

in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges NO. 60 SEPTEMBER 2017



**Sarah Stone**  
Local support for *The Voice*  
contestant

Good news stories from your local community



# A Beautiful Voice



Television talent competitions like to use dramatic language that indicates a life-and death battle to the finish, whether it's cooking a masterful entrée or surviving elimination from a deserted island. When Sarah Grimstone stood in front of the judges of *The Voice* for her first televised audition several months ago, she knew that despite the hype she certainly wasn't 'singing for her life'. However, as she stood under the bright lights of that stage for the first time, she realised that the moment represented years of dedication to her craft and, quite possibly, a turning point in her life.

Sarah, known professionally as Sarah Stone, was a contestant on the 2017 season of *The Voice*, a program which uses the concept of 'blind auditions' in the initial stages of the competition. The four judges—who are all well-known musicians—sit in large armchairs facing away from the performer. While the studio and TV audiences can both see and hear the performers, the judges are relying on their hearing only. The judges listen carefully, evaluating each performance on sound alone—unable to be influenced by the contestant's physical appearance—before they decide whether they would like to vie for the role of the performer's mentor in the competition. Such an approach is unique in an industry that is often criticised for placing too much value on the personal appearance of those it makes into stars.

To Sarah's delight, all four judges swivelled their chairs to face her, indicating that they would like to work with her throughout the season. Sarah chose to be mentored by British singer songwriter Boy George. All the judges were impressed not only with Sarah's voice but also with the depth of emotion she brought to her rendition of Paolo Nutini's *Autumn*, which she dedicated to her father Stephen.

Performing *Autumn* makes Sarah think of her mother Linda Grimstone, who hasn't been seen since she dropped her two children off at school 17 years ago, when Sarah was six years old. The next day her mother's abandoned vehicle was found in bushland nearby, but Linda was never found. The disappearance of her mother has, understandably, had ongoing effects on the lives of Sarah's family, and it was important to Sarah that she express genuine feeling when singing the song. "People are so afraid to show emotion and so afraid to be vulnerable because they are scared of being judged," she said.

Sarah is aware that TV programs like *The Voice* are sometimes criticised for sharing the deeply personal stories of contestants. However, she believes that each person's unique story should be told. "It's the one defining thing that makes you different from the person next to you," she said, "and if you don't tell that with honesty then you are doing an injustice to yourself and to the people who raised you."

Getting her dad's blessing to share the story of her mother's disappearance was essential to Sarah, as "it's more his story than mine." Sarah understands, though, that not having her mother around shaped her into who she is today. "It made me mature very quickly. It made me choose who I wanted to be, it affected my relationships with my family, and it got me to this point. I wanted to share how that has fuelled my passion and drive."

That passion and drive was evident as Sarah's heartfelt performances kept her in the show week after week while other contestants were eliminated. She was supported by her brother Alex and also by her father Stephen, who made it his mission to be at every taping of the show.

Twenty-three-year-old Sarah's interest in singing was no surprise to the family: she has loved singing from an early age. She was in the school choir, and as a teenager she attended a weekly after-school musical performance workshop for several years. After leaving school she initially studied media, but soon became interested in songwriting after listening to the music of singer songwriters like



Amy Winehouse, Ed Sheeran and Adele. "I started writing after listening to music like that. I decided: I can see myself doing this," she said.

Sarah began unloading videos of her performances to the video-hosting site YouTube about six years ago, singing both her own compositions and those of other writers. She quickly gained a following of fans, both local and overseas. Sarah realised the full impact of what she was doing after a friend phoned her from Brazil to tell her that one of her songs was playing on the radio in the taxi she was in. "That's when I understood the power of the internet," said Sarah. "I went from 500 YouTube subscribers to 150,000 in a year, and my Facebook page went from 1,000 likes to 20,000 likes. It happened so quickly and I didn't know how to market that volume and what to do next. So I just kept on doing what I was doing, and people enjoyed it."

With a personal YouTube subscribership that is now almost 300,000 people, Sarah sees YouTube as the path ahead for her. She doesn't often perform live any more, due to the costs involved with travelling and hiring sound technicians. "You're playing to an audience of fifteen people at a pub, if you're lucky," she explained. "Compare that to me sitting at home filming a YouTube video—something that I really enjoy—and potentially reaching thousands of people." She also gets a wider audience on YouTube: people who might not necessarily be able to come to a show, like young teenagers or mothers with small children.

Being part of *The Voice* brought Sarah to the attention of even more people. She was grateful for the support of her fans, who voted to keep her on the show each week. Although *The Voice* was filmed in Sydney, Sarah lives near Mooroolbark and has met many of her local supporters. "I get a lot of people coming up to say hi, which is really lovely," she said. Mooroolbark's Rusty Owl Café wrote messages supporting Sarah on the chalkboard outside the restaurant while the show was in progress. Sarah also discovered when doing media interviews that Melbourne publications were very happy to promote the profile of a Melbourne-based artist.

Sarah's journey on *The Voice* was impressive. She gave increasingly accomplished performances, wowing the judges and adding to her already large fan base. In June, she excitedly told her Facebook fans that the recording of her performance *Gravity* had made it to number 63 worldwide on iTunes' charts.

Sarah was one of the last six contestants on the show, making it to the semi-finals. She has great respect for all who worked on the program, both behind the scenes and in front of the camera. "They're like family to me," she said. "It's an amazing feeling to walk away and have the same respect as on day one, knowing that they did everything they could for me to have the best experience possible." Sarah has especially kind words for her show mentor Boy George, who she described as "extremely genuine. There wasn't one thing that he said to me that I honestly didn't believe," she said, "and he invested a lot into us." She and the other contestants also developed strong friendships. "Everyone genuinely was there to support and care for each other."

Now that her contractual obligations with *The Voice* have finished, Sarah is back onto YouTube, writing songs and creating videos. She is looking forward to releasing more of her original songs, and producing an album is one of her top priorities.

Distributing her music through YouTube gives Sarah the ability to retain creative control, rather than having to follow a path set by someone else. "I think there's a misconception among those who aren't in the industry that you need to have a record deal to make it. But I can safely say that these days, with the power of social media and the power to be your own manager, your own marketer, your own PR person, to do your own touring, you don't need a label."

Sarah believes that for artists like her, YouTube is the future. "The majority of eyes that companies are marketing to are not watching television any more—they're watching YouTube," said Sarah. "It's becoming extremely powerful."

However, musicians can find it very difficult to earn money on the site, unlike those who post other types of videos. For those musicians whose main work is 'covers'—performing a song previously recorded and commercially released by another artist—it can be hard to monetise a career on YouTube because of strict copyright laws regarding music released by recording labels.

Record companies believe that covers take the focus—and money—away from the original artist. Sarah disagrees, believing that successful YouTube covers bring attention to the original song. One of Sarah's most popular covers—with nearly 13 million views—is an acoustic version of Lorde's *Royals*, which Sarah performs using her hands and a plastic cup to create percussion accompaniment for the song. When the clip was first released, many of the millions of viewers had never heard the song, and some of Sarah's fans have commented that it has prompted them to buy the original song by Lorde.

Recently, Sarah became one of a limited number of musicians who have been invited into a special YouTube program which allows her to earn money from her YouTube performances. The video platform has created an algorithm which works out who owns each song that is performed. As a result there is a split revenue share of money earned from advertising, with the artist receiving a percentage and the label receiving a percentage.

While the money earned from each view of a YouTube video is very small—a few cents—it adds up for those who, like Sarah, have hundreds of thousands of followers and millions of views of each video. For those in that position, it is becoming more possible to earn a living from YouTube, although there is still a long way to go.

Although Sarah is not exactly sure where the road ahead will take her, she does know that being a part of *The Voice* has helped her along her life and career path. For a short space in time, she lived the dream. "Doing this has taught me to appreciate the moment and to understand the magnitude of that moment," she said. "I loved it—I just enjoyed every single second of it."

Janet Van Dijk

Photos by Nicole Squelch





# It's Our Festival...Let's Make It Happen **2018** Saturday March 24



celebrate  
mooroolbark  
inc.

Celebrate Mooroolbark is our annual family gathering for the people of Mooroolbark and surrounding suburbs. For many years, this day of fun and family entertainment has been part of the Mooroolbark landscape. Although it's six months away, the committee is already hard at work on the next festival, exploring different options to make the 2018 event bigger and better than ever.

The guiding principle of the festival is to provide a low-cost day out for families. Our sponsors help us to keep costs on the day to a minimum and participating groups put on free or low-cost activities for children and families. Local businesses and organisations provide both cash and 'in kind' sponsorship. I would love to mention them all, but there are around 200 that help make the day possible. On behalf of the community, I say thank you. Celebrate Mooroolbark is an opportunity to showcase our local organisations and businesses and to promote the community and ourselves.

Each year, more groups have come on board and we are pleased to say that as the festival grows, we have more opportunities for volunteer groups to supply food on the day. If you are part of a group, why not consider how you can use the festival to gain new recruits or more exposure on the local scene? If you are short of ideas, talk to us and we can show you ways to get involved. Let's aim for 240 groups to be involved in the

2018 event!

We are building the festival around the idea "No Barriers—Future Possibilities". Building on our environmental progress, we are looking at extending accessibility to all parts of our community. We would love groups who care for differently abled individuals to come on board to educate and encourage us to discover better ways to build inclusion within our community. We are also looking at the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical (STEM) disciplines as these will open up future possibilities and break down the barriers.

We need new people to come on board and join our successful team. Several key people have changing circumstances and will be moving on and as the festival grows we need new people to help it happen. We have a job with your name on it!

The festival begins on the evening of 23 March with a celebration of the talents of our community with Red Earth Unearthed. We will be looking for acts to make it a great night out.

We are looking for sponsors, people and groups to get involved both on the day and to help organise the festival. Contact us on [celebratemooroolbark@gmail.com](mailto:celebratemooroolbark@gmail.com) or through our Facebook page: Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival.

**Andrew Lang**  
Festival Chairperson

## Cricket—a Game For Young and Old

Mooroolbark Cricket Club has a long and proud history of being firmly focused on promoting family values and seeking to provide the best possible community environment for aspiring cricketers—especially from the younger generation.

Club President Ken Trollope said, "Over the years, MCC has enjoyed a strong family tradition. Some of our families have seen two and even three generations from the one family participating together in the life of the club." He pointed out, however, that with a wide variety of sporting opportunities and with many young people turning to other social activities instead of sport, it is a significant challenge attracting younger players.

"Growing the youth participation in our club has been our major focus in recent years," said Ken. "For the coming season, our First Eleven will be a strong team with the majority of the players being under 21 years of age. This team is very keen and enthusiastic and will be pressing hard for a place in the top level of our local competition, the Lindsay Trollope Shield [named in honour of Ken's father Lindsay]."

In recent years, the youth membership has grown to the point that there is now a very strong Under 16s team, and several Boys' Under 12s and Under 14s teams. This season, MCC hopes to enter its first team in the new Junior Girls' competition. In addition,

children aged 6-10 are invited to join the MILO in2CRICKET program, held on Friday evenings during the season. The program is designed to introduce and develop cricketing skills, help form friendships, and promote physical fitness in a safe and structured environment.

At the other end of the scale, there is the ever-popular Veterans team.

Training is held at the Mooroolbark Heights Recreation Reserve where senior players, under the leadership of coach Linton Grigg, are encouraged to help guide and train younger team members and assist in building and maintaining the club spirit. Coaches for the junior teams are drawn from trained parent volunteers. Matches are usually played on the home ground on a Saturday, with the Under 12s playing on Friday evenings and Veterans on Sundays.

The social atmosphere is very much a part of the life of Mooroolbark's cricketing community. Regular club presentation nights and other social activities are conducted at the excellent facilities at Mooroolbark Heights Reserve, where families and supporters are always welcome. MCC is very grateful for the generous contributions of its main sponsors, Mooroolbark Community Bank, Mooroolbark Professionals and Australian Traffic Control. This valuable support ensures that the club remains viable.

**Doug Lewis**



**THE BARKERS**



Club members Jaiden Ross and Jordan Trollope

Pre-season training runs until early October (Seniors on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with Juniors' training dates to be decided). Those interested in playing for or supporting the club can contact Bryn Griffiths (Seniors and Veterans) on 0429 925 242 or Wayne Ross (Juniors) on 0429 510 060.



PHOTO: PETER NAKMELS

## ■ *A Bed for the Night*

In the Yarra Ranges, where night-time winter temperatures can drop below freezing, being without a roof over your head at night is a frightening prospect. For those who don't have somewhere to call home, on cold winter nights there's nowhere to sleep except on a park bench, in the street, or in their cars. Many of them feel alone and worried throughout the endless dark nights, too scared to go to the only place they might be able to afford—a cheap boarding house where they risk being at the mercy of others who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

It was with these vulnerable people in mind that a group of people from various churches came together to pray about homelessness in the Lilydale and Mount Evelyn communities. They realised that despite the many support services offered by various organisations, accommodation needs were not always being met. With housing costs out of reach, long waiting lists for government housing assistance, and not enough crisis accommodation available, increasing numbers of people no longer have a home.

And so the registered charity Stable One was born—a quietly effective work that created hundreds of sleeping places for those in need of shelter during the cold nights. While the initial goal was providing beds to people experiencing homelessness, it soon became about much more than that.

Stable One's first project was to manage a 13-week pilot project named Winter Night Shelter, which began at the beginning of June. The project was modelled on successful overseas programs in which local churches unite to provide their church buildings as temporary overnight accommodation for the homeless. Stable One partnered with several local churches, including Baptist, Catholic, and Uniting congregations. To ensure that costs were kept low, the program was run solely by volunteers. Funds were raised to provide beds and bedding, towels, toiletries,

food, and laundry supplies.

Over 160 vetted and trained volunteers from more than 30 participating churches came forward to help wherever they could. The volunteers—aged between 18 and 84—contributed to making the guests feel welcome by undertaking tasks such as cooking, bed making, doing laundry, and being rostered on overnight shifts. There was even a team of volunteers rostered to provide fresh home-baked treats each night.

In order to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for everyone, all guests underwent risk assessment before being invited to the shelter for the night, and alcohol and illegal drugs were not permitted. From the beginning, Stable One said the project would be worth doing even if they were only able to help one person—hence the “One” in the name of the project. That was indeed the case on the first night, when just one guest was given a place. As the word spread, more beds were occupied. There was room for about ten men and women each night, with the location rotating between seven of the participating churches. Once invited, guests were able to book in for the shelter at breakfast each morning. By the close of the trial period, more than 500 overnight placements had been provided.

As well as being brought in out of the cold and given a comfortable bed in the church hall, guests were able to wash or shower, have a delicious and nutritious evening meal and enjoy conversation and laughter with other guests and the volunteers. In the morning, participants were given a light breakfast and information about other support services.

The winter shelter met important physical needs for those who needed it during the coldest months of the year, but it also provided something else—a journey toward hope. The idea of people journeying together is depicted in Stable One's logo, and it was put into action as

volunteers spent time talking and laughing with the participants, playing games, and sharing skills, as well as caring for and helping the guests during the day. The effect of the program on the guests was significant. “Since coming here, everything has started to go better in my life,” said one. “Now I've got hope.”

During the day, some of the guests had appointments, or part time or volunteer jobs to go to. Those who had no plans showed their appreciation to the churches by helping out with small maintenance and cleaning projects

As well as providing a way for churches to work together, Stable One aimed to raise community awareness of the issues surrounding homelessness. They were grateful and encouraged to see contributions from local businesses and organisations: Lilydale and Wandin Netball and Football clubs both provided the use of their showers, Simba Factory Outlet donated towels, Bunnings donated heaters and plastic storage boxes, and local cafés provided hot cups of coffee to some of the volunteers on laundry duty.

As the end of the trial period drew near, the focus of Stable One shifted to ways they could provide long term help—the ‘Stable’ in the name. Future projects will include pursuing options for supported long-term accommodation, and the group is currently looking for suitable rental properties for some of the people they have served during the Winter Night Shelter. If you are interested in becoming involved, information and contact details can be found on the website: [stableone.org](http://stableone.org).

While there is undoubtedly a great deal of planning and work involved in the Winter Night Shelter, volunteers must feel that it is more than worth it to know that they are making a difference. In the words of one guest, “This is the best thing that has happened to me in the last 20 years.”

■ Janet Van Dijk



## Mooroolbark Dry Cleaners

Muhammed Zahid, former public servant and the new owner of Mooroolbark Drycleaners since the beginning of this year, gives a friendly smile as he talks about his family. They came from Pakistan to Canberra in 2009 to learn the family dry cleaning business before starting their own business in Mooroolbark. Muhammed and his wife Farida have three children, two of whom are at university and one who is still in secondary school. Before opening the dry cleaning service in Mooroolbark, they had an import business.

The family lives in Glen Waverley, and each work day Muhammed travels to Mooroolbark to open up the shop. On weekends the Zahids enjoy family time, going for long walks and outings or socialising and eating out. Muhammed is a keen Carlton supporter and although disappointed that the team is not doing well this year, he is looking forward to more wins next year.

During our interview, customers are coming and going. Muhammed attends to them all

quietly but pleasantly—it is the interaction with people that he enjoys most about his job. He comments favourably on the friendliness of the locals and how accommodating they are.

While working in Canberra, Muhammed earned his diploma in dry cleaning, learning the correct garment cleaning processes including what chemicals should be used for different materials. He currently has three people working for him, and because the risk of injury is quite high, employees are only allowed to operate the boilers or cleaning and pressing equipment once they have received the necessary training. Ceiling fans are constantly going in the work area to keep the air clear of chemicals and steam.

When asked whether as many people use the dry cleaning service today as perhaps ten or twenty years ago, Muhammed is non-



Muhammed enjoys interacting with Mooroolbark's friendly residents

committal. However, he has noticed that older customers are often more prepared to wait a day or so for their garments, while younger customers are more likely to want their article on the same day or in an hour or two. A sign of the times, perhaps.

**Barbara Austin**

Mooroolbark Drycleaners is located at 69 Brice Avenue and is open from 8 am-5:30 pm Monday to Friday, and 8 am-12 pm Saturday. Enquiries: 9726 7191.

## Lai Dawr—Chin Grocery Store

The Chin Grocery Store in Manchester Road Mooroolbark sells Burmese groceries, but it is also a place for the family who owns the business to meet and socialise when they have finished their work as interpreters. Flexi hours are the order of the day, so if you see the "open" sign flashing in the window you know that the store is open. If the sign is not flashing, then—you guessed it—the store is closed. The name above the English wording outside the shop is *Lai Dawr*, which is the Chin translation of Chin Grocery Shop.

Mang, the eldest of seven siblings in the family, said that everyone contributes financially, as well as working in the store itself—it is very much a family concern. The parents and seven children all live together in a large house in the western suburbs. One of the siblings drives their parents to the shop one day a week so that they can do their part too.

The family came from Burma to India and then to Australia, arriving as refugees with the assistance of the United Nations Refugee Agency, a process which took many years.

In 2007 the family finally arrived in Launceston, Tasmania, where they stayed for two weeks. While there they heard that a large Chin community lived in Melbourne. With the support of their family they moved to Victoria, where they completed their schooling and eventually began working as interpreters in the eastern suburbs. Mang and her siblings work for several interpreting agencies and go to hospitals, welfare clinics, law courts and other places where an interpreter is needed.

It was through this work that the family learned that there are many Chin families living in Mooroolbark, and decided to open a grocery

shop here. The shop opened in April 2016 and although in monetary terms it is not a viable business, it has its benefits as a meeting place for the family.

There is a lift to Mang's voice when she is asked what she thinks of Australia. She is aware that in some places there is a lot of discrimination toward refugees and that it can be like living as an alien. In Australia, although the family is aware of some antagonism, they find that most people are friendly and accepting. It is the land of opportunity.

**Barbara Austin**

The Chin Grocery Store is located at 49 Manchester Road in Mooroolbark. Enquiries: 0402 727 161.



Mang behind the counter at the family store



## Tree-Planting at Selina Avenue Reserve

A very enthusiastic gathering of approximately 80 community members, representing all age groups, came together on Sunday 30 July for Mooroolbark's 14<sup>th</sup> annual tree-planting day. Three shire employees—Matt, Paul and Aaron—supplied all of the plants and the equipment required to plant and stake 650 trees and shrubs along the railway line at Selina Avenue Reserve, Mooroolbark. The busy workers had the job done in less than two hours and were able to enjoy some time for a chat over a delicious afternoon tea provided by volunteers from Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship.

Workers on the day represented several community groups including a significant number from Mooroolbark and Mount Evelyn Scouts and Mooroolbark Guides. Also contributing were members of the Lions Club, the Country Women's Association, Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship, and several family groups. Councillor Terry Avery (Melba Ward) represented our elected leaders, who are always very supportive of this annual event.

Thank you, once again, to all who gave their time to help further enhance our beautiful local environment.

Doug Lewis



Daniel and Lyndle Flewellen enjoy the planting with their children James and Sarah.

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## Montrose Town Centre's Striking New Look

On Saturday 27 May the Montrose Town Centre was officially reopened after a \$1.7 million redevelopment. The redevelopment connects the existing library and cultural buildings via a new foyer, and brings the entire centre under one roof.

"It was lovely to see the Montrose community come together and celebrate the reopening of the hub of their community," said Roxann Jenkins, Functions and Events Coordinator for the Yarra Ranges Council.

The Town Centre now includes a new Maternal and Child Health service for mothers and families in Montrose and the surrounding areas. An updated outdoor space is available for the community to use and enjoy, and there is a new community meeting space indoors.

Visitors will also notice new artwork featuring bells standing at the entrance to the building. The artwork was created by well-known Australian sculptor Anton

Hassell, who has created a number of public artworks throughout Victoria.

A significant factor in the redevelopment was the enhancement of the Town Centre's accessibility for all community members. In addition to new accessible car parking spaces, the redevelopment features wider automatic doors and a wider corridor, as well as an external access ramp to the stage in the hall. The Town Centre has family room toilet facilities, and baby change facilities for families visiting the space.

The reopening of the community space comes just over 30 years after the original Montrose community building and library were officially opened on 3 May 1986. The updated Montrose Town Centre seems likely to remain at the heart of the community for many years to come.

Carissa Sianidis





# You've Got Talent

No matter who you are, where you live or how old you are, there's no doubt that you are good at something—you may even be extraordinarily good at something. We all have at least one talent or gift that is uniquely ours.

When you have an ability that is exceptional and distinctive to you—something that no one else has in quite the same way—you can use it to make a difference to the place you live and the people you mix with.

With the technical, hands-on tasks, I had the edge!

An increasingly common thread in current psychology and team building is to focus on our strengths rather than our weaknesses. When we focus on our weaknesses—and it may be a long list—we feel wearied and stressed. This type of negative thinking can have a spiral effect, leading to frustration and



does best! It was made a certain way, to perform a specific task or role, and it does it easily.

It is similar for us. We can't all be perfect at everything—most of us can only claim a few things that we are good at. Instead of thinking too much about all the things we need to improve or fix in our lives, there are many benefits to concentrating on what we are naturally good at. Although there will always be areas where we can improve, if we tackle these from a position of strength, things will come much more easily and we will be less likely to become discouraged.

Some people may find it hard to believe that they have any areas of natural ability. Trying to uncover where their talents lie could be seen as a formidable task. While they may be able to see areas of ability in others,

some people find it very difficult to identify what they themselves are naturally good at.

Why is it important to identify our talents and abilities?

Just imagine what the world would be like if everyone with special abilities simply kept them hidden. The performers, the musicians, the sports players and coaches, the teachers, listeners, story-tellers, encouragers, dreamers, planners and designers, mathematicians, artists and writers, astronauts and pilots, stuntmen, movie directors and actors, nurses and doctors.

Every person, and every gift, fits somewhere.

Do you know what your gift is? I first discovered my own gift when I was at school. I remember struggling with some of my subjects. I wanted to do well and get better grades, but no matter how much I studied, I usually only just passed. However, there were some subjects I could do easily. I discovered early on that I was good with mechanical and technical things. Using this ability gave me energy, a deep sense of accomplishment and a desire to keep working in this area. The other subjects were a drag, making me feel bored and discouraged. I wanted to be good at sport, but I just didn't have the edge that others did.

demotivation, which makes it hard for us to move forward.

Imagine trying to drive a thoroughbred race car to the local shopping centre. Although it may be an elite sports car, it doesn't perform at its best in suburban driving. We might find plenty of things to complain about: the way it idles, the heavy steering, the low ground clearance and lack of cup holders. Race cars aren't really designed for the real world. But rather than complaining, we could instead take the car for a few laps around the race track and enjoy experiencing why it was made the way it was, and appreciate how well it does what it





There is a place made for you—and if you're not in it, there will be a *hole* instead of a *whole*.

So, how do we discover what our special gifts are? If you already know, then enjoy the journey of exploring more and better ways to use those talents. But if you are not so sure, below are some places to start:

- There are many online tests that can help you to explore your specific strengths. While they may have limited usefulness, they might perhaps provide you with an overview of what you are good at. Some of these tests may charge a fee, so look for those that have good reviews or have been recommended.
- Try new things. You may not like them, but at the very least this will tell you where you don't have natural ability—that's OK, it's a start. Keep looking and keep experimenting and, in time, you will begin to see areas where you are more naturally suited.
- Ask friends and family what they notice about you. What makes you happy and fun to be around? Also, let friends know which qualities you see in them—they

may be oblivious to their own areas of strength too.

- Write a list of 20 things you'd love to do if there were no limitations of experience, money, time, etc.
- Spend some quiet time away from daily distractions to think deeply about what matters to you, and what you feel you can offer that will benefit others. You may find journaling helps you to focus your thoughts: take simple notes about each day, your interactions with others, things you did and the way you felt about each experience. Look for clues such as:
  - What activities energise you?
  - Are there some chores you are less likely to procrastinate about?
  - Are you approached by other people to help with certain activities?
  - Where do you think you make the most difference to the lives of other people?

Discovering what we are naturally good at and enjoy is a worthwhile pursuit. It will not only enhance our own lives but can also benefit the lives of our families and friends, and our workplace.

When we work with our strengths, we are energised. Our brains are positively charged and ready for action, able to expand on those thoughts and develop new ways to live using our gifts and talents. When we are in a positive frame of mind, our body releases dopamine. This chemical enhances our thinking and functions in very positive and useful ways.

When we combine our gifts and talents with those of other people, we become a thriving and growing community, rich in accomplishment, future thinking and a sense of worth. Making the most of our individual abilities not only gives us a boost, but benefits others too!



● Steve Steel

## The best laid plans...



They say that "the best laid plans of mice and men often go awry"... but sometimes those plans going awry isn't such a bad thing!

In our December issue we announced that we would no longer be printing a full run each issue, and that the magazine would be mainly available in a digital format. This decision was made to keep costs low, and also to capitalise on the fact that many people are happy to receive their news digitally.

That decision has now been superseded by a new plan! Thanks to the continuing generous support of our sponsors and the availability of new print technology, we are now able to publish two full print issues each year, with the other two issues being digital. The availability of more paper copies will no doubt be welcomed by the many readers who expressed that they were sad to see the end of paper copies. The magazine will still be available digitally, either by email subscription or on the website. The remaining two issues each year will be primarily available in digital format, with a limited number of paper copies available from local outlets.

Our full print issues will be in September and March each year, and the digital issues will be in June and December.

What do you need to do to receive your copy of the magazine? If you are in the Mooroolbark area and previously received the magazine in your letterbox, you will continue to receive a copy each September and March. In December and June, residents who want a paper copy will be able to pick up an issue from one of several locations around Mooroolbark: the library, Mooroolbark Community Centre, the Professionals real estate office, churches, and some of the local businesses.

The digital copy will continue to be available each issue on our website: [livingtoday.org.au](http://livingtoday.org.au). You may also choose to receive a PDF of each issue by email. To be added to the subscription list, please email your request to [editor@livingtoday.org.au](mailto:editor@livingtoday.org.au).



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## Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For...

**2017** marked the 30th anniversary of the release of U2's classic *The Joshua Tree* album. If people hadn't heard of Bono, Edge and the rest of the band in early 1987, by 9 March they couldn't escape them. With hits like "Where the Streets Have No Name" and "With or Without You", the garage band from Ireland invaded the United States and rocketed its way up the charts. So began the journey to becoming the biggest rock band in the world. But there was one song on this album that caught my attention. It's titled "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" and it was written like a modern-day gospel song. In it, lead singer Bono laments that he's searched far and wide for something or someone to believe in—but he still hasn't found what he's looking for.

I know for many of us that sentiment can feel familiar.

So many times it can feel like the burden is on *us* to go out and search for God, and we see this reflected in so many religions and denominations around the world. Somehow, we're the ones who have to go find God. And



while we know we are called to pray to Him and seek Him, what's really great about the character of our God is that *He* seeks *us* out. He's the one who is literally moving heaven and earth to connect and to live with us. A famous Swiss Protestant teacher, Emil Brunner, put it like this: "In the Bible it is not we who find a way to God; it is God who comes to us."

I think a lot of us know that even when we think we're pursuing God we can sometimes find ourselves on the wrong track. We might have made a wrong turn somewhere and we're going nowhere. But God doesn't just sit back

and wait for us to find Him. Our God is actively scaling city walls, checking every mountain path, and leading the search and rescue team to find us wherever we are—and to bring us back to safety in Him.

So the next time you hear Bono singing that he "still hasn't found what he's looking for", remind yourself that God knows exactly where to find us—and that we, His beautifully created children, are exactly who He's looking for. And only in our relationship with Him will we ever truly find what we are looking for.

**Joseph Tkach**  
from *Speaking of Life*

**M**ore than 200 people gathered at the Foothills Conference Centre in Mooroolbark on 27 May to join in the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Mayoral Breakfast, which celebrates Australia's National Day of Thanks.

In welcoming participants, Mayor Noel Cliff expressed his deep personal gratitude for the extensive work of the huge number of volunteers who make such a difference in our local community, enriching it in many ways. He also complimented and congratulated the combined group of churches who each year arrange and sponsor this annual breakfast as an opportunity to publicly acknowledge the special debt owed to our many volunteers.

Master of Ceremonies Randall Bouchier related the personal stories of the life and work of ten representatives of the thousands of volunteers who support our community: Sue Thompson, Grant and Judy Morris, Gavin Smith, Janet Wilson, Glenn Barber, Barbara McFarlane, Freda Emini, Deb Marks and Richard Leith. Many inspiring and encouraging moments were enjoyed by the audience as the stories unfolded.

The guest speaker for the morning was Craig Wetjen, who was featured in the December 2016 *Living Today*. Craig is a Beyond

## National Day of Thanks

Thanking God . . . thanking each other



Blue ambassador, professional photographer, and author of a 2016 bestselling book, *Men and Their Sheds*.

Craig spoke of his own personal journey, beginning with his initial aim to produce a book purely as a financial venture. Through the process of recording the stories of the men he met, and connecting with their lives, Craig came to deeply appreciate the value of 'life in community' and the importance of making and sustaining connections. He said, "Growing in understanding of the critical importance of a 'sense of community' has

left a strong mark on my life. Learning how to deal with my own disconnectedness and to help others learn to communicate with those around them has been a life-changing experience for me."

The Oxley College Vocal Ensemble contributed its talents for the enjoyment of the audience, performing two items and also leading everyone in singing the national anthem.

As in previous years, the breakfast provided an opportunity for us to once again thank those who contribute their time and skills for the betterment of the community, and was an enjoyable and timely reminder of the rich blessings of our country.

**Doug Lewis**





# Passing the Baton

24 June was a significant date for Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship, as the congregation marked the transfer of the leadership baton from Randall Bouchier to Matthew Gudze. Matthew, already a member of the pastoral team, will take on the role of lead pastor while Randall eases into the retirement lifestyle.

Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship, a congregation of Grace Communion International, welcomed several guests from community organisations and other churches to witness this congregational milestone. John McLean, GCI National Director and Missions Director for Australia, came from interstate for the occasion.

John emphasised the importance of churches connecting with the community in which they dwell. He thanked Randall and his wife Mary for their more than 15 years of official service to both the church and community, noting that they “sought ways to serve with no ulterior motive, no agenda, nothing else but just to serve and to express the love of God and the kindness of God.”

“We never retire from being a Christian,” John continued. “We never retire from serving one another, we never retire from serving our fellow man and our community, but we do transition from roles and responsibilities and offices.”

The Bouchiers will take a well-earned break, visiting their favourite rural holiday spot as well as enjoying a trip overseas. On their return, they will have more time to spend with their three adult children and two grandchildren, while still being active contributors to the congregation and to Mooroolbark. Randall will continue his many community roles and as a member of the MCF pastoral team, while Matthew takes the lead role in pastoring the church. Randall told the congregation that his role as senior pastor had been a joy for both him and Mary. “This is a milestone, a very encouraging milestone, and we look forward to continuing to share your lives,” he said.

Matthew joked about the change in name of the role from ‘senior pastor’ to ‘lead pastor’. “I was to be called the senior pastor but we soon realised that I was next to the youngest in the pastoral team,” he said. “So ‘lead pastor’ sounded better.”

Matt will be assisted in his new role by his wife of nearly seven years, Sandra. Together, they are parents to two young sons, Jervis and Keiran. John McLean asked the congregation to encourage and support the Gudze family in their new roles. “Pastoring is hard on family—it’s hard on wives, it’s hard on kids,” he said.

John mentioned that ‘passing the baton’ is a well-known metaphor for transferring responsibility from one person to another. “Usually it’s done with a relay baton,” he said. “That has its point, but it’s not as if one person finishes the race by himself and the other collapses on the sideline. This is something we do together. So if we are going to pass the baton, this is what I suggest the baton should be,” said John, holding up a conductor’s baton. After Randall symbolically passed the conductor’s baton to Matthew, the pastoral team formally commissioned Matt as pastor by the laying on of hands and prayer.

The passing of a musical baton has extra significance as Matt’s wife Sandra is a gifted musician who, like both Randall and Mary, serves the congregation by providing music for worship services.

Matt, who like Sandra is originally from NSW, has lived in Melbourne for over 20 years. “I have always felt at home in this congregation,” he said. “I never thought—never planned—to be a pastor, but it’s wonderful that my plans don’t work and God’s plans do.”

MCF looks forward to seeing Matthew settle into his role as lead pastor while Randall enjoys some of his newfound free time going fishing, listening to Bob Dylan and supporting his beloved Bombers!



Randall and Mary Bouchier



Sandra and Matthew Gudze

## Free Family Movie Night

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

**27 September 2017**

7:30 pm, Mooroolbark Community Centre

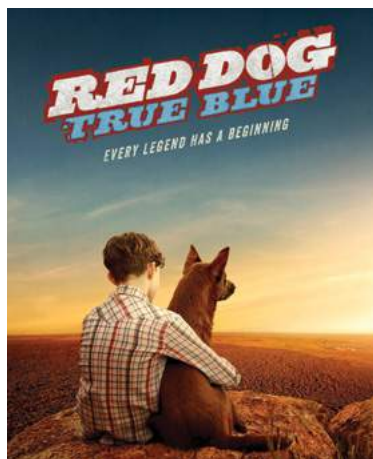
Free ice-cream, tea & coffee available

To reserve your tickets phone 1300 368 333

or book online at [www.culturetracks.info](http://www.culturetracks.info)

Bookings commence from 13 September 2017\*

\* If you have not made a booking, please come anyway, as uncollected tickets may be reissued at 7:15 pm.



When 11-year-old Mick is sent to his grandfather’s cattle station in remote Western Australia, he prepares himself for a life of dull hardship, but instead finds myth, adventure and friendship. This story of the friendship between a young boy and a scrappy one-of-a-kind dog shows the events leading up to Red Dog’s discovery on the road to Dampier, and his ultimate rise from ordinary dog to Australian legend.

89 minutes – Rated PG





# Empowering Education at Treak Village

For many of us, the word “schoolies” conjures up images of school leavers partying at a beachside location to celebrate the end of their secondary school journey. For a group of Year 12 students from Mooroolbark College, though, that time of relaxation at the end of their studies will be spent thinking of others—volunteering with a local community in Cambodia.

John Nichol, Student Welfare Coordinator at Mooroolbark College, said that the idea began with a choice his son Ben made in 2014. “My son decided when he was in Year 12 that, instead of going to schoolies with all his mates, he wanted to backpack through East Timor,” said John. “I had seen that some companies offered end-of-Year-12 trips, so

Treak Village Community Centre, which provides programs and support services to give villagers increased confidence and skills to improve their future prospects and help break the cycle of poverty that affects much of rural Cambodia. Education and training programs help members of the village in their quest to gain employment, especially in the tourism industry. There is particular emphasis on improving the lives and learning opportunities of the hundreds of children in the village. Mooroolbark College students will spend some time in the classroom, assisting students with their English, as well as helping with whatever else is required. Last year, the group made bricks out of recycled plastic bags, to be used in both the school and village.

nation’s capital, learning about Cambodia’s ancient culture and the genocide of the late ’70s and early ’80s. Before heading home, they will spend a couple of days at the beach. “We want it to be a really strong personal growth experience,” explained John. “So we will keep control of what they do and make sure that the personal growth opportunities are maximised.” It’s for that reason that the students will be accompanied by four teachers, even though their secondary education will be over and they will no longer be officially part of Mooroolbark College.

“The life learning that takes place is as important as anything else we do,” said John. “They’re in that twilight zone where they are no longer students and are thinking about what to do with their



we contacted one of them and asked if they could set one up specifically for our school.”

At the time, about 20 students expressed interest in helping those less fortunate than themselves by volunteering overseas. The trip became an annual event organised by John Nichol, and is now in its fourth year.

This year, a group of 34 students—about 20 percent of the Year 12 class—will set off in late November to volunteer again in the Cambodian community of Treak Village, near Seim Reap. The village of 1800 people, located near the famous temples of Angkor Wat, is made up of more than 300 families who are on the Cambodian government’s poverty list. Some of those families are classified as living in extreme poverty, which means that they have no job, land, savings, or support from family.

The students will assist in the work of

Students pay all their own expenses for the trip, and are also raising additional funds to be contributed directly to the Treak Village Community Centre to provide valuable resources such as educational supplies, sporting equipment, and materials for classroom renovations. Students have been busy with bake sales, barbecues and other events to raise the money, all of which will be given to the village. While the minimum fundraising goal is \$2500, the group is hoping to raise \$4,000, which will cover the cost of one teacher for a year. “We are keen to develop an ongoing relationship with Treak Village,” said John. “It would be nice to be able to cover the cost of a teacher for a year, so that is what we are aiming to do each year from now on.”

Time spent volunteering in the village is only part of the trip for the students. The group will also visit museums in the

lives. So we’re taking them into an adult experience where they see the world and develop a sense that they have some power and influence in that world, and that’s what kick starts them into adult life.”

John summed up the value of the trip: “It’s such an important learning experience for the kids in our community to see the world outside of Mooroolbark, and for them to do something where they can actually make a difference will empower them to try to make a difference in other areas of the world.”

**Janet Van Dijk**

If you would like to help Mooroolbark College raise funds to pay a teacher’s annual salary at Treak Village, your donation would be greatly appreciated. Please contact John Nichols at Mooroolbark College on 9727 8100 or nichol.john.j@edumail.vic.gov.au.





# A New Era for Bimbadeen Heights

**B**imbadeen Heights Primary

School in Hayrick Lane was built forty years ago to meet Mooroolbark's growing education needs. Like many Victorian schools built between the 1950s and 1970s, it was a 'Light Timber Construction' design with a long corridor and rooms on each side. With ten classrooms, an art room, music room, staff room and office, the school was officially opened on 12 September 1977.

Over the years the school has grown and now caters for over 500 students in the original main building as well as portable classrooms, the 'Building the Education Revolution' classroom block, a library and a multi-purpose hall. In 2012 the Department of Education and Training identified the need to replace the original main building, and \$6 million was made available in 2016 to design and construct new buildings.

The new design will see two new permanent buildings constructed facing Hayrick Lane in the north-west corner of the school grounds. A new administration and classroom block will be built first, followed by construction of a new specialist building to accommodate classrooms for art, music and Chinese, along with four regular classrooms.

The first part of the work, the demolition of the original school building, began in July and the children have been fascinated to watch the machines and workers carefully demolishing

their old classrooms and separating the bricks, timber and metal.

In addition to their wide-eyed wonder there has been some sadness at the demolition of the classrooms where the children have many happy memories of wonderful learning experiences. Lucinda from Year 3 said, "I'm a little bit sad that our old building is going, but I like watching the builders at work". Eloise in Year 4 said, "I loved the old building but now it's time to move on". Callum from Year 3 is hoping for "a new happy building" while Ruby from Year 4 hopes that the new building "might smell beautiful". Jasmyn from Year 2 is "so excited that they're building a new school. I am so happy they are doing this for us". Riley, also in Year 2, thinks "it is cool to watch the machines".

Construction of the first of the new buildings—the administration and classroom block—is expected to begin in October and be finished in mid-2018 when our Foundation students will be the first classes to move in. Construction of the second stage will follow immediately after and the school is hoping for the entire project to be completed some time in 2019.

The new school design and buildings will support 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning that we are confident will serve our children and the Mooroolbark community for another 40 years.

**Leigh Johansen**  
Principal



Construction of Bimbadeen Heights Primary School in 1976 (above) and demolition work underway in July this year (below).



## Yarra Hills Welcomes a New Learning Space



Advance students designed and built an outdoor garden and learning space to enhance their classroom experience.

The Outdoor Classroom and Garden at the Mooroolbark campus was officially opened in June by Peter Giddings, president of Mooroolbark Lions Club, valued members of the club and campus Principal Greg Cowan. In attendance were Year 9 Advance students, teaching staff and maintenance staff Mark Dunn and Robert Kuipers, who were thanked for their tireless effort in putting the garden together. The school also expressed its thanks and gratitude to the Lions Club of Mooroolbark for its generous financial contribution in supporting the college and the local community.

The Advance program is a school-based program which encourages young people to volunteer in their community. Through the program, young people, schools and community organisations develop networks of relationships while achieving shared goals. The program encourages communities to support and recognise young people's participation and positive role in society. It gives young people a chance to do something great in their community, and they are able to plan projects, build skills and make a difference in their community. The partnership with the Lions Club

**Y**arra Hills Secondary College students are now enjoying some of their classes outdoors! In partnership with the Mooroolbark Lions Club, Yarra Hills Secondary College Year 9

of Mooroolbark has enabled the Advance group to achieve this.

The Mooroolbark Lions Club is active in providing for the local community, assisting in many projects with their volunteers. Since being chartered in 1968 the club has donated over \$1,250,000 to Lions' projects and the local community. This joint project commemorates 100 years of Lion Clubs' worldwide community service, 70 years of service in Australia and 50 years of service by the Mooroolbark Lions Club. The club has made significant contributions to local events such as Celebrate Mooroolbark, Christmas carols in the park, World Service Day, and planting and cleaning days. The Lions have also constructed a home for low-income residents, a rotunda in a local park, children's playgrounds, and extensions for a local child care centre.

The Garden and Outdoor classroom will be well utilised by the Yarra Hills Food and Science classes and maintained by the Year 9 Advance students. The initial planting of the herbs and vegetables has generated much interest throughout the school and the seating in the garden has become quite a student hub during lunchtime. Food technology students will be able to use the food plants grown in their cooking.

Group activities will be embraced through a multi-sensory experience with students realising their efforts when harvesting will occur. The outdoor garden connects the school to the community and the environment. Through learning activities, science students will come to understand environment issues such as water conservation.

The outdoor garden has transformed the humble schoolyard into a dynamic centre for teaching and learning and will foster an active, hands-on approach to education.

**David Audesho**







Nothing demonstrates a positive body image better than a three year old, still pink from the bath, dancing a jig in the kitchen to the delight of the family. Young children are blissfully unaware of how other people perceive them—they enjoy what their bodies can do, and love to share this with the world around them.

It would be wonderful if we could bottle this confidence so that as children grow they could remain happy and comfortable with how they look instead of comparing themselves to others.

Unfortunately, concern about appearance is becoming increasingly common, with Mission Australia identifying it as one of the top three concerns for Australia's youth. Children notice how they compare at a very early age. Research indicates that issues with body image can start as young as three, and 37% of three year olds would like to have a different body size.<sup>1</sup>

Instead of enjoying the freedom of childhood, our children may be wondering if they will ever be the right weight, colour, height or size. Unrealistic standards are emphasised by toys and the heroes of television programs and computer games, whose appearance often underlines the importance of looking and dressing a certain way. Children who don't fit the ideal (and even those who do) can become discouraged or concerned that they don't look quite right. For children with physical flaws or a disability, these standards may seem even more out of reach.

During August, the not-for-profit organisation Pretty Foundation urges parents to consider the effect of words on how our children think about their bodies. The foundation's mission is to build body resilience in girls aged two to six so that they will feel okay about their appearance and see it in the context of other important qualities. The foundation's website offers a free Body Image Parents' Guide, which teaches parents ways to boost their daughters' self-esteem and counter the negative effects of the media and peer groups.

Boys can also be affected by body image issues. They may want to be taller, more solid or muscle-bound, and they too can be concerned about their weight. Sometimes adults expect boys to shrug off criticisms about their appearance more than girls do, which can make it harder for boys to share their insecurities with others.

The foundations for a positive body image are formed in childhood. Although we can feel anxious about the increasing influence of the media, it is important to also realise the profound impact that the family can have on shaping our children's opinions about themselves and their world. There are many ways that we can support our children to feel comfortable in their skin and develop a balanced perspective about appearance:

- Focus on what is important. Enjoy your children for who they are and what they do, not just how they look. Notice and praise a range of attributes, especially enduring personal qualities that aren't related to size, shape or other aspects of their appearance.
- Talk positively about your own appearance. Children take cues from their parents in forming attitudes about their bodies. Don't critique your flaws. Avoid putting yourself down about your weight. Express gratitude for the things your body can do.
- Speak respectfully about the appearance of others. Avoid commenting on other people's weight, dress sense or other aspects of their appearance.
- Children listen to what we say and often pick up on subtleties that we might expect to be over their heads. Be firm about rules regarding teasing and bullying in your family.
- If children express concern about how they look, take time to listen and acknowledge their feelings. This could be a prime time to explore different ways of thinking which could influence how they judge themselves and others. Draw their attention to truths such as 'everyone comes in different shapes and sizes' and 'how you look is a small part of the wonderful person that is you'.

• Children are observant. Consider the images that your child is seeing at home—things like toys, TV programs, computer games, movies and books. What messages about body image are they sending? Explore options that promote acceptance of different shapes, sizes and abilities.

• Avoid talk about weight loss. Instead, eat well as a family. Enjoy occasional treats but recognise that these are 'sometimes' foods (rather than 'bad' foods). Play together—a walk in the park, flying kites or playing tag. Focus on healthy eating, feeling energetic and enjoying life.

• Celebrate diversity. Talk positively about the range of cultures, body shapes and abilities in our community. Help your children to see that all body shapes and sizes have value, beauty and can be healthy. Watch some of the Paralympics as well as the Olympics.

• Carefully consider the subtle messages portrayed by sporting, dance and other extracurricular activities. How are children treated if they don't have the accepted build for a particular sport? Some sporting groups do a better job of promoting a positive and healthy attitude than others. Children will quickly learn if they don't fit the body shape, and this can be discouraging.

Our words are powerful. When we talk respectfully about our appearance and that of others, our children notice. We convey an important truth: that someone's appearance is less important than who that person is and what they do. Taking care with our words and actions will help young people to be happy with their appearance, knowing also that it is really only a small part of who they are.

#### Kate Chivers

Kate is a registered psychologist who works with children and families

**More reading:** [raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au), [prettyfoundation.org](http://prettyfoundation.org), [thebutterflyfoundation.org.au](http://thebutterflyfoundation.org.au)

<sup>1</sup> Damiano, S.D., Hart, L.M., Cornell, C., Sutherland, F., & Paxton, S.J. *Confident Body, Confident Child Parent Book: A parent's guide to helping young children grow up feeling good about their body*. Edition 2, Melbourne, La Trobe University, 2015.



# Free Community Skill-Building Workshops

Community groups and clubs across the Yarra Ranges play an invaluable role in providing services and creating community experiences. Yarra Ranges Council not only provides grants for several community groups, but continues to help such groups through a series of free skill-building workshops.

Individuals and groups from community organisations can participate in these workshops to learn, network and share with other locals. The workshops will inspire groups to try fresh approaches to community programming and to experiment with new ideas.

Following previous feedback from community groups, these workshops have been refreshed to ensure they are meeting changing community needs. All workshops are free, but bookings must be made early, as places are limited.



Leah Marlowe, leader of the Rocky Road Choir, a low cost no-audition community choir based in Healesville. The choir is one of many community groups which benefit from a partnership with the Yarra Ranges Council.

## Upcoming Workshops

### Risky Business? Risk Assessment and Management for Your Group

Anyone running a public event or project has an obligation to keep people safe, while also protecting their own interests. Join us as Kristie Walker from Walker Abercrombie steps through the risk-management process and helps you put clear, user-friendly plans in place for your next project or event.

28 September, 6-9 pm.

### Safe Food Handling 101

This safe food-handling session will be run by the council's Environmental Health Team and will provide participants with a basic understanding of the requirements of the Food Act 1984. The session will cover the importance of safe food handling, how to meet legal obligations, and ways to reduce the risk of food poisoning at public events like school fetes and other fundraisers.

31 October, 6-8 pm

### Partner for Success

This practical and fun workshop will focus on identifying individual and collective resources and exploring ways to maximise these assets to build a strong, creative and connected community. Join social entrepreneur Debby Maziars as she shares her personal story of starting a community group using her network of influence and limited funds.

21 November, 6-9 pm.

The above council-sponsored workshops may be just what your community group needs! For more information or to book your place, please visit [yarraranges.vic.gov.au/skillbuilding](http://yarraranges.vic.gov.au/skillbuilding)



## What's on in the Yarra Ranges?

Sprightly spring is here with us once more! It's always with some relief that we feel the days grow longer and the sun grow ever-so-slightly warmer. There is more time available to take walks, catch up with friends and family after work, or simply explore your surrounds once more.

September provides a wonderful opportunity to view an unusual selection of Australian orchids that are truly unique. The 2017 Spring Show, presented by the Australian Native Orchid Society, will take place at the Montrose Town Centre on 16 September. Members of the society will be available to give information about the plants and how to grow them, and examples of the species will be judged.

The Australian Army Band will be visiting Mooroolbark on 6 October. This Friday afternoon event of terrific music played with skill and wonderful enthusiasm is perfect to take your dad or granddad along to. The repertoire dances across varied playlists, so there is something for everyone—there are definitely a few favourites there! Uplift the spirits and spark up the soul with this distinguished group of Army Reserve musicians. The Australian Army Band continues to maintain a high standard of performance in its primary role of providing support for ceremonial and military activities and promoting the image of the Australian Army.

If comedy is your style, then the show *Mystery in the Air!* starring Michael Veitch and Simon Oats will be a real 'save-the-date' for you. Michael is well known for his comedy work and his recent successful one-man show *Flak*, about the men who flew in the Second World War. *Mystery in the Air!* will be performed at Mooroolbark Community Centre on 13 October. Set in a 1940s live radio station, this entertaining play will take you back to the days of comedy on the airwaves and lounge-room listening rather than viewing. How the times have changed! Watch as Michael and Simon take us through the sometimes difficult relationship between a star who is fading and the up-and-coming man of the moment, while they both breathe fresh life into old radio plays. Two large egos, over 50 different voices and one very funny show! Presented by Yarra Ranges Council Healthy Ageing Team as part of the Seniors Festival 2017 celebrations, this event is sure to be hilarious.

We look forward to welcoming you to our venues for special events, shows and music throughout spring.

For more information or to book tickets:

Phone: 1300 368 333 Email: [boxoffice@yarraranges.vic.gov.au](mailto:boxoffice@yarraranges.vic.gov.au)  
CultureTracks: [yarraranges.vic.gov.au](http://yarraranges.vic.gov.au)

The Board of the Mooroolbark Community Bank branch of the Bendigo Bank recently celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Local Federal Member of Parliament Mr Tony Smith MP presented the bank's two founding and remaining active board members, Chairman Peter McGowan and Secretary/Treasurer Joan Drew, with a milestone gift and service certificate to recognise their voluntary work. Tony recognised the board's great efforts in returning over \$2M back into the local community via community grants, sponsorships and dividends. Tony thanked all board members for what they do to support over 50 local not-for-profit groups every year.





# Community Events Calendar

First Sunday of each month	<b>Farmers Market:</b> Bellbird Park, Swansea Road, next to Lillydale Lake. Combined Rotary Clubs. All proceeds to local and overseas projects. Contact Bill Sutherland: 9727 0037.
Friday nights during school term	<b>Fridays@Kids Domain:</b> Activities for primary school age kids. 4-6 pm. Oxley College stadium. Details: phone 9726 8111 or <a href="http://www.lmc.org.au">www.lmc.org.au</a>
Monday evenings each week	<b>Scottish Country Dancing:</b> Mondays 8 pm (except public holidays). Beginners and experienced. Minimal charges. St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. Enquiries: 9725 9074.
Second Monday of each month	<b>Mooroolbark Country Women's Association:</b> 1 pm at St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. New members always welcome. Contact Coral Cunningham: 9728 4479.
Tues, Wed & Thurs during school term	<b>GymbaROO:</b> Fun & Learning TOO. A formative, sensory, perceptual-motor program for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers. Enquiries : Marion 9726 8740.
Thursdays during school term	<b>Music Together Program:</b> 0-5 years. Run by trained music therapist. St Margaret's Uniting Church 9:45 am. Morning tea & playtime included. \$10 per session. Call Yvonne: 9726 9347.
Thursday evenings each week	<b>Maroondah TOWN Club:</b> (Take Off Weight Naturally). Weekly, starting at 6:30 pm. St Margaret's Uniting Church. Hull Road. For more information call Kaye: 0414 984 062.
Wednesdays during term time	<b>Kilsyth Primary School Playgroup:</b> Painting, story time, activities and games for children birth - 3½ years. 9:15 am. More info: 9725 4320 or <a href="http://www.kilsythps.vic.edu.au">www.kilsythps.vic.edu.au</a> .
Tuesdays & Thursdays	<b>Mooroolbark Men's Shed:</b> 9 am-3 pm. 91 Swansea Road, Montrose. More information: president Greg Andrews on 9728 4439, or secretary John Lowry on 9726 9970 or 0419 366 969.
9 September 14 October 11 November	<b>Urban Harvest:</b> Backyard fruit and vegetable growers—swap your excess produce. Red Earth Community Park, second Saturday each month, 10-11:30 am. Enquiries: Claire Coutts, 0425 700 280.
27 September	<b>FREE Family Movie Night:</b> <i>Red Dog True Blue</i> . Please arrive 7:15 for 7:30 pm start. Mooroolbark Community Centre. Free ice-cream, tea & coffee available. Bookings commence 13 September: 1300 368 333 or <a href="http://www.culturetracks.info">www.culturetracks.info</a>
11 November	<b>St Margaret's Uniting Church Annual Fete:</b> Commencing 9:00 am Saturday 11 November. Hull Road, Mooroolbark. Great buys for everyone.
9-12 November 16-19 November	<b>Mooroolbark Theatre Group</b> presents <i>The Savage Dilemma</i> by John Patrick. 9-11 November 7:30 pm; 12 November, matinee 1:30 pm. 7:30 pm 16-18 November, 19 November, matinee 1:30 pm. Mooroolbark Community Centre. Table seating, BYO. \$20/\$18 concession. Ring Arline 9726 4282 to book.
16 August-23 September	<b>Red Earth Gallery Exhibition:</b> The Road, Michelle Fountain. 16 August - 23 September. Free. Mooroolbark Community Centre
8 December	<b>Community Carols:</b> Picnic dinner from 6:30 pm, carols start 8 pm. 7:45 pm Croydon Citizen's Brass Band. 8:00 pm carols begin. BYO rug or chair; food & battery-operated candles for sale.

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

**To include entries for your group's community events in future issues please contact Doug Lewis on 9761 1121 or email [calendar@livingtoday.org.au](mailto:calendar@livingtoday.org.au)**

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

# LIVING TODAY in Mooroolbark

## Production

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## Like to contribute?

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

PDFs of this issue and all past issues

of *Living Today* can be accessed at  
[livingtoday.org.au](http://livingtoday.org.au)

To join the email distribution list please send a request  
to [editor@livingtoday.org.au](mailto:editor@livingtoday.org.au)

# MISSION STATEMENT

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

We seek to achieve this by:

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

## OUR SPONSORS

*Living Today* greatly appreciates the valuable contributions made by several businesses which partner with us in serving our local community through this magazine. Their financial sponsorship makes the magazine possible, and we gratefully acknowledge those partners in each issue.

Proudly supporting Living Today  
in Mooroolbark.

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