



BRMC Inc.

Your Newsletter

Vol. 2, 1st April 2010

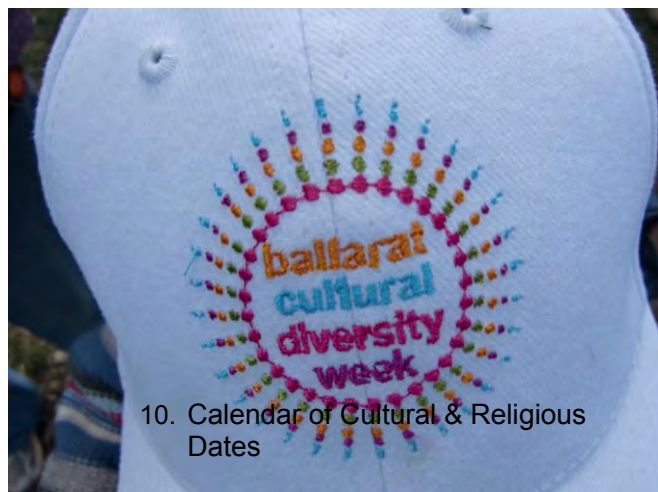
*W*elcome to your community notice board!

This BRMC newsletter provides a forum for you to access information, to share ideas and to add to your enjoyment of life in Ballarat. All BRMC members are welcome to participate by sharing thoughts, feelings, inspiration, motivation and enthusiasm.



Contents

1. Chair's Report
2. BRMC Staff Members
3. 2010 General Meeting Dates
4. Reports on past events
5. Masako's Column
6. Coming events
7. Noticeboard
8. Useful information
9. World Cultural Events



10. Calendar of Cultural & Religious Dates

Chair's Report-Talia Barrett

BRMC Strategic meeting on 25th & 26th March 2010



“Planning is a very messy process” were the initial words of our facilitator, Wayne Strong (see photo), to the majority of BRMC executive committee members and staff present at our first planning night. This can be true where there is a room of people with very diverse ideas and opinions. However, in our case the two nights progressed well with the first session focusing on our past and where we’d come from as an organisation, and the second night looking at where we are going now.

Council representatives Carolyn Barrie, Director of Community Wellbeing, and Frances Salenga, Cultural Diversity Coordinator, also attended on the first night and gave a presentation on the City of Ballarat’s strategic direction for cultural diversity in the region, which gave us an understanding of where and how BRMC should fit.

What came out of the two nights of discussion was that, generally, the committee members and the staff are united in the direction BRMC should take, which is to become a „hub“ for multiculturalism in Ballarat. What also became clear was that BRMC currently functions with two areas of focus as an organisation: one aspect is our community service provision and the other is the multicultural events and education component. Balancing these two areas is the challenge we face in the future...

Changes to BRMC’s Settlement Program

From the beginning of April, we are facing the loss of a valuable member of our BRMC team. Litsa Chung, who started in the role of Settlement Officer since it was created at BRMC in 2002, devoted huge amounts of time and energy to helping settle and support our migrant communities. She gained great respect from those she assisted and made a considerable impact on the lives of many of our new arrivals and longer-term migrants. Her experience and energy will be missed at BRMC and we wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

Until our funding for the Settlement program is confirmed for the coming year and can advertise for a replacement for Litsa, we are very fortunate to have the support of Child and Family Services to step into the breach. Evie Dichiera and Shirley Liddy will be bringing extensive experience in community development and welfare to ensure our Settlement program continues and our clients’ needs are met. We welcome them onto our team and look forward to expanding our own links with other service providers in the region through Evie and Shirley’s existing networks and experience.

BRMC Staff Members

Kim Romeo

Community
Partners Program



Aileen Alder
Administrator



Jason Shorter

HACC Cultural
Diversity Project



**Shiggy
Yamawaki**
CEO

Kathryn Miller
Volunteers
Coordinator

Judy Brumby
Volunteer
Tutor Program
(absent)



Virgie Hocking
Telelink
Friendly Visiting



Jenny Boag
Human
Resources &
Finance

2010 General Meeting Dates

All general meetings are on the third Tuesday of every second month and begin at

7:30pm. The next meeting is on the **20th April**

Future meetings for 2010 will be held on

15th June, 17th August, October (date to be announced)

Reports on Past Events

General Meeting on 16th Feb 2010

Some of our members...



Happy to become an Australian Citizen
Congratulations Mr. Lucien Assogba,
Vice President of Togolese Association



Smile!

Senior Sergeant Gary Pilmore
(back)
Ugo Loiacono, Roman Skrypko,
Teresa Skrypko, Elisabeth Gerken



Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence

Sherley Hart, Filipino/ Australian Association of Ballarat

Ballarat Begonia Parade on 8th March 2010

By Talia Barrett



This year, BRMC had a fantastic turn out on Monday March 8th despite the weather. Our particular section of the parade included members of the Thai, Sudanese, Polish, Iranian and Indian communities, as well as a number of international students from the University of Ballarat from China, India and the Caribbean. However, we were clearly outdone by the Filipino community behind us who arrived with the most amazingly floral decorated bright red car and a fabulous turn out of women in traditional dress! It was a memorable experience, mainly because the downpour of rain at the beginning of the march seemed to create a strong sense of solidarity...

International Women's Day Dinner 9th March

By Georgina Vagg



It gives me great pleasure to report on our International Ladies Night at the Inn of Khong restaurant. Our guest speaker on this great night was Margaret Smith, CEO of Children First Foundation. The foundation was the support behind the conjoined twins, Trishna and Krishna, who underwent successful surgery in Melbourne under the care of Moira Kelly.

Margaret explained the foundation's work in a great power point presentation. The cheque of nearly \$2000 which was presented to her will help to fly another child out for surgery.

The event at the restaurant was enjoyed by a great group of ladies. The fantastic food just kept coming out to tables decorated with beautiful green and purple carnations and white foliage.

Among the guests were our Mayor, Judy Verlin, Councillor Samantha McIntosh, BRMC Chairperson Talia Barrett, Frances Salenga from the City of Ballarat, members and presidents of cultural groups and Ballarat visitors.

Frances Khong donated a meal for two, a bottle of wine and a Chinese decoration of lucky charms for the night's raffle.

International Women's Day is an occasion when women around the world come together to celebrate the economic, political and social achievements of women. This date is commemorated at the United Nations and in many countries is a national holiday.

Ballarat Interfaith Network on 20th March

By Margaret Lenan Ellis, Public Relations, Ballarat Interfaith Network

As part of Cultural Diversity Week, Ballarat Interfaith Network ran a highly successful Interfaith Forum at GPlace, on *Saturday 20th March*. Approximately forty people were in attendance. A panel of four speakers presented their views on the topic: How do we address Spiritual Poverty in the World? Each speaker brought to the topic thoughts coloured by their religious, cultural and professional backgrounds.

First to speak was Jeanette Morris, a Buanditj woman who grew up within many Aboriginal communities across Australia, now working at the Ballarat Catholic Education Office as Indigenous Education Officer.

Jeanette was followed by Billy Todd, a Parsee Indian who migrated to Australia as a boy, became a Bahá'í at the age of 15 and who is now Professor and Deputy Director of the Centre for Molecular Simulation at Swinburne University.

The third speaker was Abhay Anand Awasthi, Pandit – Minister of Religion, who arrived in Australia from Fiji in 1974. Among other things he is Executive Director of the Hindu Foundation of Australia and President of the Hindu Community Council of Victoria.

And finally, Wilbert Mapombere closed the panel presentation. Wilbert first arrived in Australia from Zimbabwe in 2003 seeking political asylum. He is a lawyer, a citizen of Australia, a man driven by his faith as a born again Christian, and who is currently studying for a Bachelor of Theology degree as well as teaching law at Deakin University.

Following a wonderfully broad and deep insight into the topic presented by this panel, everyone in attendance then engaged in table discussions of their own, further discussing an even broader range of views, as each person shared their own thoughts on how to address spiritual poverty in the world today.

It is hard to encapsulate in a single sentence just what the general response to this issue was, but filtering back through the summation reports from each table came the common agreement that action is required to address spiritual poverty. It is critical that children be allowed to be taught religion at an early age; and that from faith must come action, founded on the principles of knowing God, loving our fellow man, and promoting unity and justice.

BRMC Harmony BBQ on 21st March

By Talia Barrett



Another of BRMC's contribution to Cultural Diversity Week was the **Harmony BBQ** and infamous **cricket match** between the Indian Community and Victoria Police. It turned out to be an extremely closely matched game as the Police „scraped in“ by 1 run! I would like to say thank you to Shiggy, our CEO, and Senior Sergeant Gary Pilmore for organising this event and involving the Lion's Club, who donated a sausage sizzle, Koji Tamagawa, Managing Director of Hakubaku for donating noodle dishes and, also importantly, Khushi Maharaj for not only pulling the Indian team together, but also providing an array of hot Indian food from Saffron on the day. We hope to attempt another game next year between these two teams, but perhaps another sport next time...

Norouz Persian New Year Celebration 27th March 2010



Masako's Column

My culture? Your culture?

Cultural Diversity Week

By Masako Kennedy



Ballarat has been changing. You can buy more international food at your local supermarkets and grocery stores. For example, my favourite Japanese *Kewpie mayonnaise* was not available in Ballarat for many years. I was so excited when I found it in Ballarat. At the same time, it was a big relief, “not to have to go to Melbourne and carry it home on the train”.

In Melbourne, more than 40,000 people flocked to Federation Square on 14 March to celebrate Victoria’s multiculturalism at the Viva Victoria Festival and to kick off Cultural Diversity Week.

In Ballarat, 37 successful multicultural activities in one week, you can see the extent of the program below:

1. Cultural Diversity during the Gold Rushes
2. Understanding Chinese Culture
3. Ballarat Biggest Playgroup
4. Lead On Ballarat Documentary
5. Mothering through Art
6. Japanese Anime Family Film Night



- | | |
|---|---|
| 7. Chinese Traditional Craft Workshop | 24. Citizenship Ceremony |
| 8. Food and Culture | 25. Yoga and Meditation |
| 9. Taste of Harmony Flagship Event | 26. Henna Workshop |
| 10. Lady Finders DJs | 27. Chinese Exercise |
| 11. Taste Of Harmony | 28. Asphyxia Sign Language Workshop |
| 12. Step by Step | 29. The Grimstones- A Gothic Fairytale |
| 13. Henna Workshop | 30. Storytelling |
| 14. Book Buzz | 31. Mt Clear College Festival |
| 15. Cultural Diversity Week launch | 32. NESBLinks Harmony Dinner |
| 16. Multicultural Concert | 33. Interfaith Forum at GPlace |
| 17. Step by Step | 34. Music and Dance Expo |
| 18. Yoga and Meditation | 35. Sahrae-Africa- sharing recipes, stories and dishes from Sudan |
| 19. Chinese Traditional Craft Workshop | 36. BRMC Harmony "Sizzle" and Cricket Challenge |
| 20. Exhibits and Living Books | 37. Bocce, Petanque and Pasta (Italian/Croatian Clubs) |
| 21. Martial Funk- KITA Performing Arts Company | |
| 22. Film Night | |
| 23. Celebrating Life- Exploring spirituality in out times | |

I can still see the many smiling faces behind of the each program -not only smiling faces, but also the spirit of community. Sports, Cooking, Dancing, Playing.... our joy and happiness are common, no need for translation.

As an example of the success of the event, my friend who was on the waiting list for "*Sahrae-Africa- sharing recipes, stories and dishes from Sudan*", had nearly given up joining in on this activity, when she was told the day before that she did have a spot in it. She learned new skills and really appreciated having been given such a unique experience.

We are a multicultural and diverse people in Victoria, Australia. We come from over 200 countries, speak more than 230 languages and dialects and follow more than 120 different faiths. The Ballarat Cultural Diversity week was a highly successful celebration of our cultural differences and integration.

I often say, even after having lived in Australia for more than 10 years, "In my culture" and "in your Australian culture" when speak to friends. Honestly, I am a little confused and have no answer as to which is my culture today. Perhaps, I am lucky, I belong to two cultures. An example of this is when I was at Fukuoka Airport, which is on Kyusyu Island in southern Japan, A small airport, but an INTERNATIONAL one. One day in 2009, I was given a document in English by two different staff members (Japanese) when I landed in my home country. My reaction was, "Why in English?". I am clearly a Japanese girl who has just returned home, plus I look Japanese!. This had never happened before. I was very curious and tried to analyse why those airport staff members thought that I was not Japanese. Without being aware of it, perhaps I am in the process of transitioning from the Japanese culture to the Australian culture? You may be interested to look at the following table regarding cultural differences between societies such as Japan (Collectivist) and Australia (Individualist).

Reference:

Hofstede, G., Jonker, C. and Verwaart, T. (2008) Individualism and Collectivism in Trade Agents. Springer Berlin: Heidelberg (pp. 492- 501)

Table 1. Some distinctions between norms in collectivist and individualist societies

<i>Collectivist</i>	<i>Individualist</i>
Maintain Harmony, avoid confrontation	Speak your mind
High-context, implicit communication	Low- context, explicit communication
Use the word “we”	Use the word “I”
Show favour to in-group customers	Treat all customers equally
No Business without a personal relation	Task is more important than a good relation
A relation brings rights and obligations	Mutual advantage is the basis of relations
Relations are given	Build and maintain relations actively
Save face for in-group	Keep self-respect
Responsible for group interests	Responsible for personal interests

Coming Events

Ballarat Italian Association (BIA)



Sunday 18th April

"La Voce Della Luna
Performance & Kavisha
Mazella"

WHEN: Sunday 18th April
11.30am

WHERE: BALLARAT ITALIAN
ASSOCIATION HALL
19 Recreation Road, MOUNT CLEAR

COST: \$30.00 per adult (Children U16
\$10.00). ** Includes 2 Course Italian meal.
(Drinks at bar prices)

BOOKINGS / CONTACT:

Bookings are essential, contact Evie:
0438 290 751

The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

27th of May 2010 from 9am-2pm

The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
has released a host of seminars
occurring throughout the year.

The second seminar titled Sexual and
Reproductive Health for Young Immigrant
and Refugee Women.

Venue: Multicultural Centre for Women's
Health Suite 207 Carringbush Building
134 Cambridge Street, Collingwood.

For more information about this seminar and
how to register for this and future
seminars visit the Resource Centre.

Afro Fest

The 1st African festival of such a magnitude ever held in Victoria. Showcasing live bands and entertainment arts from Africa. DJ Booth from Zimbabwe, Ghana, Botswana, South Africa, Kenya etc. A range of African clothing, stone and wood carving, food will be sold and exhibited. \$ 30 IN Advance tickets.

When: 17 April

Where: Ceres Environmental Park, Brunswick

Phone Number: 0421 571 875

Email: mushangweguardian@yahoo.co.uk

Africa Day

Ballarat African Association Inc.

The Ballarat African Association Inc will be celebrating Africa day on **Saturday 29 May 2010 from 4p.m. to 10 p.m. at Coinda Hall, Wendouree**. Everyone is invited to attend this very important day for the continent of Africa.

Filipino/ Australian Association of Ballarat Inc.

Mother's Day Celebration

9th May

Multicultural Tucker Lunch

12th May

Pistahan Flores De May

22nd May

New Executive Officers-

Annual General Meeting 2010

President : Sherley Hart
Vice President : Chaty Harris
Treasurer : Virgie Hocking
Secretary : Andrew Barnham
Assistant Secretary : Jessie Templeton
Public Relation Officer : Pastor Bob Gray
Property Custodian : Jill Hider

Ballarat Interfaith Network



Rocklyn Ashram

(393 Barkstead Dean Road, Rocklyn)

Saturday May 29, 2010

9.30am for a 10.00am start, until approx. 3.00pm

Program includes: introduction, Satyananda yoga, Nidra deep relaxation, discussion, personal reflection time, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Cost: \$17.00 (inclusive) Judy 5331- 5638

Notice Board

Diabetes Awareness - Diabetes Australia - Victoria, in association with The Cancer Council Victoria, are offering free education sessions in Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Greek, Italian, Turkish and Vietnamese. Any questions -contact Betul Kinali on 9635 5357.

The Cancer Council of Victoria has produced a range of factsheets in 16 languages which can be downloaded from their website www.cancervic.org.au/multilingual. They also continue to offer free education sessions to multicultural communities through the Community Language Program. Details are available in the Resource Centre.

VOICE FM 99.9

Voice FM 99.9 is a Ballarat's Community radio, we have programs in different languages:

Wednesday 1-3 pm **German**

Wednesday 8.30-10 pm **Greek**

Thursday 1 -3 pm **Dutch**

Saturday 3-5 pm **Filipino**

Sunday 2-4 pm **Italian**

Sunday 4-6 pm **Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese)**

Sunday 6-7 pm **Thai**

Sunday 7-8 pm **Japanese**

African Leadership Development Program

The African Think Tank is calling for applications to join a program designed to develop leadership skills in the African community. The program will provide training in key areas of governance, planning, running effective organisations, financial management, legal compliance and the management of staff and volunteers. Candidates should have a demonstrated interest in community development among African migrant and refugee communities. Applications close 12 March.

When: 10 April - 18 September **Where:** Victoria University, Flinders St Campus

Phone Number: 0429009912 **Email:** africanthinktank@hotmail.com

Website: <http://www.att.org.au> **Bookings:** 0429009912

Like Chinese Lion Dance? Want to learn?

The Chinese Australian Cultural Society Ballarat are looking for people to join their lion dancing team. If you are interested in learning about Chinese culture and tradition whilst taking part in a fun activity based on ancient Kung Fu skills then come along to training on Saturday afternoons. Training is provided free of charge.

Michelle Philips: 0421 608 783 winridge@activ8.net.au or Charles Zhang: 0422 343 357

NEW INTERPRETERS PROJECT CONFIRMED FOR MELBOURNE

NAATI is pleased to announce it is now accepting registrations for the New Interpreters Project to be delivered in MELBOURNE. The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd (NAATI) is administering a new national project, namely the New Interpreters Project, funded by the Australian Government. The Project aims to increase the number of NAATI interpreters in both metropolitan and selected regional areas around Australia. The Project will target these areas to increase the number of interpreters in new/emerging languages, rarer languages and languages for which there are shortages in rural and regional areas.

MELBOURNE DATES:

Session 1: Saturday, 24th April 2010

Session 2: Saturday, 1st May 2010

Session 3: Saturday, 8th May 2010

Workshop Duration: 15 hours

Application form is available: <http://www.naati.com.au/at-applicationforms.html>

LIST OF NEW AND EMERGING LANGUAGES 'R FORM' - APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION REQUIRED

Acholi, Kingoni, Mizo (Chin), Bari, Kinyarwanda, Moru, Chaldean, Kirundi, Nepali, Creole, Kono, Pojulu, Dzhongka, Kpelle, Rohingya, Eastern Kaya, Krio, Siym, Ewe, Kuku, Sukuma, Falam (Chin), Kurdish (Kurmanji), Susu, Fanti, Kurdish (Sorani), Temne, Fula, Liberian Pidgin, Tidim (Chin), Fur, Lingala, Tigre, Gan, Lisu, Tshiluba, Haka (Chin), Loko, Twi, Hmong, Luo, Uighur, Ikbo, Madi, Uzbek, Kachin, Mandingo, Watchi, Kakwa, Mara (Chin), Yalunka, Kannadai, Marum, Zande, Karen, Mende, Zomi (Chin), Kikuyu, Mina, Zonot (Chin)

'A FORM' - APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION BY TESTING REQUIRED

Amharic, Lao, Arabic (Sudanese), Nuer, Burmese, Oromo, Dari, Sinhalese, Dinka, Swahili/Ki-Swahili, Hazaragi, Tamil, Khmer, Tigrinya

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO: NAATI, New Interpreters Project, Suite 14 Lonsdale Court, 600 Lonsdale St, MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Inquiries about the New Interpreters Project in Melbourne should be directed to the NAATI Victoria State Office on 03 9642 3301. If you are interested in becoming an interpreter in your community or know someone who would like to become an interpreter, it would be appreciated if you distributed the attached information to them.

Enquiries: Cynthia Toffoli-Zupan, State Manager | Victoria Office National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd T: +61 3 9642 3301 F: +61 3 9642 3303 E: meroff@naati.com.au www.naati.com.au <<http://www.naati.com.au/>

Useful Information

International Student Care Service

The International Student Care Service (ISCS) provides friendly and professional advice, information, support and referral to local services and community resources:

- Crisis intervention and support in emergency situations
- Information about accommodation and housing providers
- Legal issues
- Health issues
- Social isolation
- Advocacy to colleges and training providers



Contact details

Free call 1800 056 449. Interpreters are available on request. email info@iscs.vic.gov.au

19-21 Argyle Place South Carlton, Victoria 3053 Online: multicultural.vic.gov.au/iscs

World Cultural Festivals for March, April and May

March Japan

Hina Matsuri (Doll Festival) 3rd of March

By Makiko Paxton, Ballarat Japan Friendship Association

Hina matsuri is an occasion to wish for young girls' growth and happiness. *Hina matsuri* is also called "*Momo no Sekku*", meaning "*Peach Festival*", because it coincides with the peach blossom season.

In Japan, dolls are said to protect a girl from bad luck and misfortune. During the Heian Period (794 to 1185AD), it was widely believed that dolls contained evil spirits and needed to be "cleansed" to help continue protecting young girls. At this time, the imperial court ordered that straw dolls be sent down some of Japan's rivers to be cast out into the sea, taking their bad spirits with them. Even now, the Shimogamo Shrine (part of the Kamo Shrine complex in Kyoto) floats straw dolls between the Takano and Kamo rivers to pray for the safety of children. This practice has been curbed in other places because of fishermen catching the dolls in their nets. They now send them out to sea, and when the spectators are gone they take the boats out of the water and bring them back to the temple and burn them.

Nowadays, most families with girls display "hina-ningyo" (special dolls for Hina matsuri) and dedicate peach blossoms to them. They are usually arranged on a five or seven-tiered stand covered with a red carpet. At the top are the Emperor and Empress. The next step contains three court ladies (sannin-kanjo), followed by five musicians (gonin-bayashi), two ministers (udaijin and sadaijin), and three servants ending the bottom row in a five-tiered display. There are also small pieces of furniture, small meal dishes, and other things. Most families take their beautiful collection of dolls out of the closet around mid-February and put it away

again as soon as Hina Matsuri is over. This is because of an old superstition that families that are slow in putting back the dolls have trouble marrying off their daughters.

A traditional set of dolls can be very expensive. There are various grades for the sets, and some full sets cost more than a million yen (around \$12,000). Unless there is a set handed down from generation to generation, grandparents or parents buy them for a girl by her first Hina matsuri (hatsuzekku). However, since many Japanese live in small houses, the royal couple version (with only the Emperor and the Empress dolls) is popular nowadays.

There are many special delicacies which are eaten on this day. *Chirashizushi* (sushi rice flavored with sugar, vinegar, topped with raw fish and a variety of ingredients) is very popular. A salt-based soup called *ushiojiru* containing clams still in the shell (representing peace and unity) is also served. On the day, people sometimes drink *shirozake*, a sake made from fermented rice. A colored *hina-arare* (bite-sized crackers flavoured with sugar or soy sauce) and *hishimochi*, a diamond-shaped colored rice cake are also served.



I can remember as a child my excited feelings of anticipation as Hina matsuri was approaching. I was excited to see supermarkets selling many types of pink bags of rice crackers, hina matsuri cakes and peach blossoms decorations. Even at school we would eat a special lunch, often a special dessert pudding decorated with Hina dolls. We would also be served soup with pink (represent peach) and white *Fu* (bread like pieces of dried wheat gluten) and green spinach. Yum!!!! Sometimes we would also make origami dolls, which I loved. Teachers taught students the traditions behind Hina Matsuri and we would sing the traditional Hina Matsuri song, *Tanoshii Hina Matsuri* (Happy Dolly Festival). Hina matsuri made me aware of my identity as a girl.



Hinadan (Tiered Hina Doll display) (see picture)

Top centre: are the Emperor (*odairi sama*) and Empress (*ohina sama*), holding a fan. The dolls are usually placed in front of a gold folding screen (*byōbu*). There are the two lampstands, called *bonbori* on both sides. Even today the *juuni-hitoe* (12 layered kimono) is worn at the Royal family's wedding ceremony.

2nd step: three court ladies (*san nin kanjo*) stand.

3rd step: five musicians (*gonin bayashi*).

4th step: there are two ministers (*daijin*).

5th step: three helpers or samurai are represented as the protectors of the emperor and empress.

Lowest two steps: miniatures of furniture, tableware and Imperial carriages.



April Australia

Easter

My Easter Holiday

By Liz Denny (BRMC Committee Member)

Our family treasures the Easter holiday. While at Christmas we are sometimes a little too busy, Easter allows us time for reflection and a quieter time with family and friends.

On Easter Saturday we have friends over for cake and coffee and an egg painting party. By the end of the afternoon adults and children have eggs to add to our basket or to take home.

On Easter Sunday we still have an egg hunt in the morning, even though my boys are both grown up. We have a family lunch in the afternoon. The painted eggs decorate our table. Our basket of eggs includes the red hard-boiled eggs the children learnt to make in Primary school, when they were learning Greek. There are the eggs the boys made for my mother when she was in hospital one Easter, painted with her favourite violets. There are some eggs inspired by the beautiful painted eggs of Europe. Each year some of the painted eggs crack, and each year we add some new ones. The basket is always full.

May – Africa day and Italian Festival-

Africa Day Celebration

By Wilbert Mapombere (BRMC Committee Member)

The day is held so highly because it is a holiday celebrated by the whole continent of Africa without exception. On 25 May 1963 the Organisation of African Union (OAU) was created and that is the reason why all Africans and their friends come together regardless of race, gender, religion or age to celebrate the oneness and unity of the different countries on that continent, now 53. The OAU worked hard to achieve the independence of every country from foreign rule and now it is working towards economic independence and genuine democracy for all. The OAU has since morphed into what is now called African Union (AU).

So come one come all and take part in what is becoming an annual event in Ballarat. There will be speeches by leaders of the community, entertainment from sister organisations and the African Youth. Do not miss it.

Melbourne Italian Festival

The fifth edition of the Melbourne Italian Festival will be held between 22 May and 6 June 2010, to celebrate the 64th anniversary of the Foundation of the Italian Republic.

The event, in collaboration with the Consulate General of Italy and the Italian Institute of Culture in Melbourne, represents one of the most expected and engaging moments for la comunità italiana to share arts, history and food culture together with the other colourful and multicultural social communities in Melbourne. The Festival programme embraces cultural activities from Italy and Victoria of a high standard of artistic performance, which includes local and overseas artists as well, and will culminate in the Italian National Day Celebrations in the vibrant heart of Carlton, in Piazza Italia, on the 30th May.

Date: Saturday, May 22, 2010 - Sunday, June 06, 2010 **Time:** Various **Venue:** Various
Organised by: the Melbourne Italian Festival

In collaboration with: the Italian Institute of Culture, Melbourne, and the Consulate General of Italy, Melbourne Please check the Festival website at: www.melbourneitalianfestival.com.au

Calendar of Cultural and Religious Dates (April and May)

<http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/a-diverse-australia/calendar-australia/>

April	1 Thu	Sydney Royal Easter Show (to 14 April) ± The Easter Show is an iconic showcase of Australian agricultural heritage. National Folk Festival, Canberra (to 5 April) ±	Festival
April	1 Thu	This festival draws together people from all around Australia and the world. They come to share in the songs, dances, tunes and verse that have flowed through the ages from many communities into Australian folk culture.	Festival
April	1 Thu	New Year ± Assyrians all over the world celebrate this day as their national festival. Good (Holy) Friday ±	Assyrian
April	2 Fri	This is a solemn Christian remembrance of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Hot cross buns are traditionally eaten on Good Friday.	Christian
April	2 Fri	Sikh Games 2010 (to 4 April) ± The 23rd annual Sikh Games, held this year in Brisbane over 2-4 April, provide an opportunity for Australia's Sikh communities to unite through sporting and social activities and the celebration of Punjabi culture.	Festival
April	3 Sat	La Festa, Griffith NSW ±	Festival

This festival, held in Griffith, NSW celebrates Griffith's multicultural character and premium wine and food industry.

April	4 Sun	Independence Day	Senegal
April	4 Sun	Easter \pm Easter commemorates the resurrection (return to life) of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion. It is the most significant event of the Christian calendar.	Christian
April	5 Mon	Easter Monday \pm In addition to its religious significance, Easter in Australia is enjoyed as a four-day holiday weekend starting on Good Friday and ending on Easter Monday. This long weekend is an opportunity for Australians to take a holiday or get together with family and friends.	Australia
April	7 Wed	Annunciation \pm The Coptic Church has a major feast on this day.	Coptic Orthodox
April	10 Sat	Yom HaShoah - Holocaust Remembrance Day \pm This day has been established to remember the six million Jews killed by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. It is observed by many people of Jewish and other faiths.	Jewish
April	10 Sat	National Youth Week (to 18 April) \pm NYW aims to encourage all young people to share ideas, attend live events, have their voices heard on issues of concern to them, showcase their talents, celebrate their contribution to the community, take part in competitions, and have fun!	Festival
April	13 Tue	Songkran - Thai New Year (to 15 April) \pm Songkran, the Thai New Year and Water Festival, is one of Thailand's oldest and favourite festivals. Thai communities across Australia celebrate this festival with authentic Thai food, crafts and performers.	Festival
April	14 Wed	Vaisakhi and Khalsa Day \pm Vaisakhi celebrates the beginning of a new solar year and harvest season. Khalsa Day falls on the first day of the Vaisakh month and commemorates the baptism in 1699 of five brave Sikhs who offered to give their lives for their faith.	Sikh
April	14 Wed	Sinhala and Tamil New Year \pm The two main Sri Lankan ethnic groups, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, celebrate a common traditional New Year on this day.	Festival
April	16	Queen's Birthday	Denmark

	Fri		
April	17 Sat	National Day	Syria
		Woolgoolga Curryfest, NSW ±	
April	17 Sat	The Woolgoolga Curryfest celebrates the cultural diversity of this seaside village near Coffs Harbour with curries from around the world, music and dance. Sikh Games are also held. Woolgoolga has the largest regional Sikh/Punjabi population in Australia.	Festival
		Bundanoon is Brigadoon ±	
April	17 Sat	This is a large annual Highland Gathering held in Bundanoon, NSW, featuring a street parade, massed bands, Scottish country dancing and Highland games.	Festival
April	18 Sun	National Day	Zimbabwe
		Anniversary, Pontifical Ministry of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI ±	
April	19 Mon	On this day in 2005, German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected the 265th Pope and took the name Benedict XVI.	Holy See
April	20 Tue	Yom Ha'atzmaut - Independence Day	Israel
		First Day of Ridvan ±	
April	21 Wed	This Baha'i commemoration is of the 12 day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival.	Baha'i
		St George's Day ±	
April	23 Fri	St George is the patron saint of England, who was martyred in the 4th century and became an ideal of martial valour and selflessness.	England
		Anzac Day ±	
April	25 Sun	Anzac Day is one of Australia's most important dates of national commemoration. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War (1914-18), at Gallipoli. Dawn services at war memorials honour the sacrifice of those who died in war. Marches and reunions are held during the day.	Australia
April	26 Mon	Union Day	Tanzania

April	27 Tue	Independence Day	Sierra Leone
April	27 Tue	Freedom Day	South Africa
April	27 Tue	National Day	Togo
		Theravadin New Year (to 1 May) ±	
April	28 Wed	The Buddhist New Year is celebrated on different days around the world and in Australia, depending on country of origin or ethnic background of Buddhist communities. In the Theravadin tradition, followed for example in Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Laos, Buddhist New Year is celebrated from this day.	Buddhist
April	29 Thu	Ninth Day of Ridvan ± This Baha'i commemoration is of the 12 day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival.	Baha'i
April	29 Thu	Australian Celtic Festival, Glen Innes NSW (to 2 May) ± This festival is a celebration of Celtic culture including dancing, music, singing and jousting.	Festival
April	30 Fri	Buddha Birthday Festival, Brisbane (to 2 May) ± This three-day festival showcases the diversity of Australia's multicultural society with cultural displays, music and dance performances and vegetarian food.	Festival
April	30 Fri	Noosa Food and Wine Festival (to 2 May) ± This festival features three days of music, wine, celebrity chefs and cooking demonstrations.	Festival
April	30 Fri	Official Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix	Netherlands
May	1 Sat	National Day	Marshall Islands
May	2 Sun	Twelfth Day of Ridvan ± This Baha'i commemoration is of the 12 day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival.	Baha'i

May	3 Mon	National Day	Poland
May	9 Sun	Europe Day	European Union
May	13 Thu	Ascension of Christ ± This day observes the departure of Jesus from earth after his resurrection. It is perhaps the earliest observed celebration in Christianity.	Christian
May	14 Fri	Australian-Italian Festival, Ingham Qld (to 16 May) ± This festival highlights Ingham's Italian heritage through Italian food, entertainment and cultural displays. The theme of the 2010 festival is 'Mangiamo, Beviamo é Cantiamo!' (eat, drink and celebrate!)	Festival
May	14 Fri	National Day	Paraguay
May	15 Sat	Buddha's Day and Multicultural Festival, Melbourne (to 16 May) ± This festival commemorates the birth of the Buddha and highlights and promotes cooperation, community understanding and harmony in a culturally diverse community.	Festival
May	17 Mon	Constitution Day	Norway
May	18 Tue	Shavuot ± Shavuot is a Jewish celebration of Moses's descent from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments.	Jewish
May	20 Thu	National Day	Cameroon
May	21 Fri	Birthday of John the Baptist ± The Mandaeans are an ancient religious community from southern Iraq and Iran.	Mandaean
May	21 Fri	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development ± "As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity..." Article 1 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.	United Nations
May	22 Sat	Blacktown City Festival, NSW (to 29 May) ± This festival features events for residents and visitors to enjoy, held at	Festival

various locations in the Blacktown area.

May	22 Sat	National Day	Yemen
May	23 Sun	Declaration of the Báb ± This date marks the anniversary of the Báb's announcement of his mission in 1844. The Báb is a prophet and forerunner of the Baha'i faith. Work is suspended on this day.	Baha'i
May	23 Sun	Pentecost ± Pentecost celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit and is regarded by some Christians as the birthday of the Christian church.	Christian
May	23 Sun	Pentecost ± The Coptic Church has a major feast on this day.	Coptic Orthodox
May	24 Mon	Independence Day	Eritrea
May	25 Tue	National Day	Argentina
May	25 Tue	Independence Day	Jordan
May	26 Wed	National Day	Georgia
May	27 Thu	National Reconciliation Week (to 3 June) ± National Reconciliation Week celebrates the rich culture and history of the First Australians.	Australia
May	27 Thu	Buddha Day - Vesak Day ± Vesak is the major Buddhist festival of the year and celebrates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha.	Buddhist
May	28 Fri	National Day	Azerbaijan
May	28 Fri	National Day	Ethiopia
May	29 Sat	Ascension of Baha'u'llah ± This day marks the death of the founder of the Baha'i faith, Baha'u'llah, in 1892. Work is suspended on this day.	



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