

Forthcoming Events

Winter Warm Up Dinner

Three (3) Course Meal \$25 per person

With Complimentary Drink on Arrival

BYO Drinks

Entertainment by

Sweet Monas

Gospel & Soul Group

Lucky
Draw
Prize

Lucky
Door
Prize

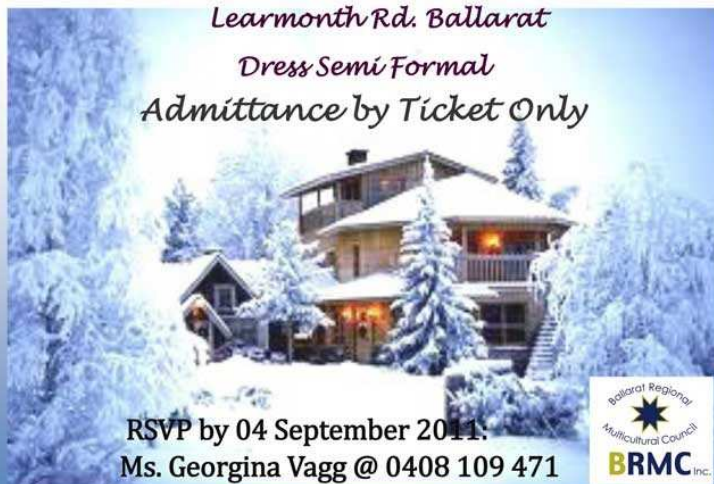
When: 7:00pm 9th September 2011

Where: Cooinda Centre

Learmonth Rd. Ballarat

Dress Semi Formal

Admittance by Ticket Only



RSVP by 04 September 2011.
Ms. Georgina Vagg @ 0408 109 471
Or BRMC @ 03 5332-5941



CELEBRATION OF CULTURES

*Come let us celebrate Cultural
Diversity*



Entertainment provided by local artists from
different cultural group

When: 7:30 pm 11th November 2011
Where: at the Wendouree Performing
Arts, 1220 Howitt St, Wendouree
For more information please call
Ms. Georgina Vagg on 0408 109 471

Mr. Doug Sarah
Master of Ceremonies

Admittance by Tickets Only
Tickets and Bookings to be made at the
Wendouree Performing Arts Centre,
Adults and concession is \$10
Children 15 below \$5



See inside for details

Also inside:

- Profiles
- News from BRMC programs
- Driver training
- Volunteer profiles
- Mandatory detention opinion piece
- Program reports
- VMC Consultation session for Ballarat

**BRMC Inc. Annual General Meeting
Tuesday October 18th at 7.00 pm**

BRMC Executive Committee

Chairperson: Frank Williams
Deputy Chair: Sulaika Dhanapala
Secretary: Pam Anderson
Asst. Secretary: Carmel Kavanagh
Treasurer: Lisa Howlett
Interfaith Officer: Fr. Gerald Loos
Publicity Officer: Gwendoline Blake
Women's Officer: Georgina Vagg
Youth Officer: Lucien Assogba
Community Representatives:
Ugo Vito Lo Iacono
Khushi Maharaj
David Vendy

Co-opted Members:

Tracey Steiner
John Werts

Staff

Executive Officer: Dr Jeff Langdon
Admin Trainee.: Annie Hamerton
Finance Coordinator: Regina Bautista
Volunteer Coordinator.: Nenita Drough
HACC Team Leader: Jason Shorter
HACC Support: Shammika Fernando
MCT Food Coordinator: Yin Toe (Sept)
CPP Coordinator: Kim Romeo
Telelink/SSG Coord: Virgie Hocking
Migrant English Program: Judy Brumby

Contact BRMC

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Chairperson's Report

Congratulations to all Cultural Groups for organising and facilitating such a terrific array of celebrations and activities throughout the year.

Then too the Executive Committee, staff and all the members extend our congratulations to all our Sudanese friends on the achievement of their independence for South Sudan on the 9th July.

In this edition of the BRMC Newsletter we are very pleased to profile some of our earliest migrants' experiences of settling in their new home and environment in Australia. We also commend and congratulate all our migrant communities on their terrific contributions they have made to our society and especially the City of Ballarat.

BRMC also looks forward to some very important forthcoming fund raising events and activities shortly; with the Winter Warm-up Dinner, the Multicultural Concert and a Film night

As well as this, please be sure to contribute to the VMC Consultation in mid September. This is vital for the proposed new struc-

ture of the VMC with its formation of Regional Advisory Boards, as well as funding various cultural festivals and activities. (See page 5 for details.)

Be sure to note that BRMC's AGM is scheduled for the 18th October, 2011 at 7pm as we need and value your vital contribution and ongoing support.

Then too, SpringFest promises to be "bigger and better" than ever this year; so be sure to link up with BRMC to celebrate our multiculturalism and cultural diversity.

Again then, looking forward to your ongoing support and assistance to enrich the invaluable contribution of BRMC and its related organisations to the cultural diversity of the wider Ballarat community.

Frank Williams
Chairperson BRMC



Executive Officer's Report

The financial year has come to an end and it is evident that BRMC needs to find significant new operational funds to continue in its current form. With a reduced number of programs being run through BRMC there is a smaller amount of money to pay for the running costs of the organisation. The Committee and staff are seeking to address this situation through seeking extra funding for new much-needed programs and for the core operation itself. It's not an easy time to be looking for extra funds but we have been successful in getting some extra program grants. Specifically, we were successful in obtaining grants from the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship (VOMAC) for fundraising events including a dinner (See page 5), a film night and a big multicultural concert towards the end of the year. We also got some much needed extra funding to continue the popular Migrant English program and to organise a Youth Sports day from the same source. The Department of Planning and Community Development has provided some support for our volunteer training program. A couple of big applications that were unsuccessful included support from the Attorney General's Department for a Cultural Awareness Project Officer and from the

Department of Immigration and Citizenship for a similar project. Also, a joint application for a youth sports project to the Sports Commission missed out. We are hopeful for applications currently before VOMAC for a joint project with the Ballarat City Council to run Harmony Fest again next year. There are a number of other applications still pending.

One of the issues with funding is the competitive nature of collective representation for multicultural groups in Ballarat. There are at least five agencies active in servicing the needs of cultural groups (not including the specific cultural groups of which there are more than 20). Inevitably, these agencies compete for funds. Ideally one agency could service these needs. This is the case in Geelong with the very successful Diversitat model. Something to think about?

Jeff Langdon
Executive Officer



Meet Annie Hamerton

Annie Hamerton has recently been employed as BRMC's Trainee Administrative Assistant. She is pictured with Regina Bautista our Finance Coordinator and Dawn Manning one of our English Tutors.

I am a Filipino-Australian person who was born in Paraque and lived in Laguna and recently moved to Laspiñas (north of Manila), in the Philippines. My Dad was British and my Mom originally came from the Visaya Region (islands in the central Philippines)

In the Philippines the two biggest festivals we celebrate are the Pistahan Festival (which we celebrate on the first week of October) and Christmas. Both are large community celebrations,

with lots of food, dancing and religious activities.

I came to Ballarat in February this year and volunteered at BRMC because I enjoy meeting people of different cultural backgrounds. I was thrilled to become the new Trainee in assisting our Admin personnel and our Executive Officer.

I really love living in Ballarat I look forward to meeting as many different people from Ballarat and especially helping migrants and BRMC members in the future.



Become a member of BRMC.

Membership is free and is open to organisations and individuals who support the aims and objectives of BRMC. For details on how to become a member see our website www.brmc.org.au or call the office

Program Reports

Ballarat Intercultural Aged Connections (BIAC) a Community Partners Program (CPP)

Ballarat CPP Intercultural Facilitators



Brigitte Kerrutt



Georgina Vagg



John Werts



Klaudia Hochhuth



Maria Bessems



Ron Males



Ugo Lo Iacono



Ann Frangos



Boris Skontra

Cultural briefings help aged care service providers to deliver culturally appropriate care to their Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients by highlighting the beliefs, religions and cultural needs of the CALD communities.

BRMC and Diversitat collaborated to deliver a cultural briefing to Ballarat's Planned Activity Groups (PAGS) in July. We highlighted cultural issues they may face when working with CALD communities to help them develop strategies on how to overcome these issues. The group experienced cultural awareness through discussions, scenarios and food. All participants displayed positive feedback about the cultural briefing.

In August BIAC had an Intercultural Facilitator mentoring day which involved a visit to Ballarat Unistyle in Lydiard Street. We had haircuts, color and even a beard trim by the students of Shirley Heffernan at UB. Everyone was delighted with the professionalism, friendliness and the great prices. We will be sure to return.



On August 9th 2011, Ugo Lo Iacono facilitated an Italian-specific information session at the Mt Clear Italian Hall. Dr. Walter Petralia from Co.As.It delivered interesting facts about the statistics on Italians living in Ballarat and Victoria as well as important information about Ballarat HACC services. The Italian community really valued connecting and sharing with one another and learning how CPP can assist them in receiving services. The session was very successful initiating a lot of discussion and many questions. The Italian music clips which were filtered throughout the session generated laughter and singing. A very positive and rewarding day.



The monthly 'Coming Together' meetings are still running on the first Friday of every month at 10:30am at Formosa nursery in Leith Street. If you represent a CALD community or service provider in Ballarat and would like to join us, it will be great to see you. If you would like to organise a cultural briefing or an information session for your organisation or community, please contact Kim Romeo on 5332 5941 or email cpp@brmc.org.au

THIS BALLARAT INTERCULTURAL AGED CONNECTIONS (BIAC) PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND AGEING UNDER THE COMMUNITY PARTNERS PROGRAM

Migrant English Program

The tutor program is expanding at quite a rate and presenting challenges in terms of meeting the needs of our migrant clients seeking help with their English.

A number of new tutors have been recruited, trained and placed with students in recent weeks.

We are very pleased to welcome the new tutors and look forward to supporting them in their work.

We are still receiving quite a number of people interested in becoming tutors and with current needs we hope to be able to

match them with our needy ESL clients during participation in the tutor training course.

I will be holding information sessions/interviews at BRMC for anyone interested in joining the program. Please contact me if interested.

The Friday Conversation class 1pm to 3pm is continuing ... Tutors Frank Williams, Pam McKean and Dawn Manning, provide individual help for lower level students as well as an interesting and popular class.

With the heavy workload, I am most grateful to James Hosking, Volunteer, who has been assisting me with administration of the program. James is an IT graduate, who is a great help with computer work, and also a happy and willing general "dogs body" where required.

I also thank all tutors who work in the homes and/or provide our classes ... without their generous assistance we could not provide this important service.

Judy Brumby Coordinator,
PS. We received some good news in August. The Migrant English program has received support from VOMAC to continue for another 12 months.

Program Reports

The Hepburn/Moorabool Multicultural program continues to do well. It has been running now for three years. Our last event was held at the Farmers Arms Hotel in Creswick. 30 clients attended the luncheon and as always they all look forward to seeing each other and are happy to mingle with everyone. The event started with footy tipping, storytelling and trivia jokes.

At the luncheon we had a Pharmacist guest speaker Geoff Unmack from Creswick Pharmacy who talked about managing and knowing your own medication. The group was very interested in the topic and asked a lot of questions. There has been a lot of interaction.

Following the information from the pharmacist we moved on to gentle exercises facilitated by Peter Fulton a staff member from Moorabool Shire. Peter used the staff as a model. Everyone had a wonderful time and it's good to see them smiling and having fun.

Many thanks to all the staff and volunteers who assisted us on that day.



Guests at the luncheon

Telelink Program:

As the outcome of the Hepburn/Moorabool Multicultural Program we have formed a Hepburn/Moorabool Multicultural Telelink group where they run telephone conferencing every fortnight. There are eight participants in the group. The participants are from Irish, New Zealand, Indonesian, Maltese, Dutch and Hungarian backgrounds. The participants are living in the rural areas of Clunes, Daylesford, Creswick and Lal Lal

The group has been running the Telelink session for over a month already and it is doing well. They share different kinds of topics from gardening to trivia quiz. Everyone is enjoying the telephone conferencing.

The Filipino Telelink is going strong and

has caught up with each other a few times. The Coordinator often assists the two groups in linking them and helps them find interesting topics to encourage the group discussion on the phone.

Our German and Italian Clients continue to link up with the Bendigo Telelink, the same with the Dutch client with the Dutch Care. As an outcome of the Telelink program, the Coordinator has referred a client to Uniting Care for further services.

Friendly Visiting Program

Our volunteer visitors are doing a wonderful job. They were very committed to making contact with the clients either through visiting or ringing them, ensuring that our clients are well supported.

We now have another new Dutch client who is living in Clunes and is very isolated. Our Dutch volunteer visitor visits and rings her almost every week to help minimise the isolation.

We have been receiving a few inquiries and referrals from Bacchus Marsh in relation to HACC programs and services that BRMC provides. We even have a new volunteer visitor from Bacchus Marsh who dedicates herself to visit a client in Creswick every week and if she is not able to come to Ballarat she will ring the client and have a social chat on the phone.

Unfortunately our Chinese volunteer visitor decided to go back to live in China. He has been volunteering in the friendly visiting scheme for three years and has made a tremendous change in the wellbeing of the client. Our Chinese client will be continually supported and will be visited regularly by our other volunteers.

Sports Day

In collaboration with Centacare and the Central Highland Sports Assembly we recently held the Multicultural Senior Sports Day on the 16th of August at the Victoria Bowling Club. Everyone participated well in the Tabloid sports and were keen to have a go at most of the games such as indoor bowls, skittles, darts, quoits, hockey, etc.

After a long hard morning and a good lunch the group took it easy by playing cards, checkers and chess.

Towards the end of the afternoon each participant did their best to push the coins closer to the lolly jar just to get the lolly.

The Coordinator continues to support the Multicultural Tucker program in preparing and assisting in coordinating the dining room. She also continues to support the Social Support Bus Trip that Centacare HACC program organises. The last bus trip we had was at the Melbourne Museum. Our next bus trip is on August 31 travelling to Gordon, Musk and Trentham.



Melbourne Museum Bus Trip

It has been an exciting and challenging few months for the programs.

Virgie Hocking

Chinese/Australian Cultural Society



Our group at the moment is very busy organising our big Mooncake festival to be held at the Mining Exchange all weekend 29th and 30th October. The launch will be held with a dinner on Friday 28th at the Inn of Khong.

Paper cutting, face painting, lantern making etc. stalls, dancing, music and lots more. Items will be sold on stalls.

The Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as the Moon Festival or Zhongqiu Festival, is a popular harvest festival celebrated by Chinese and Vietnamese people, dating back over 3,000 years to moon worship in China's Shang Dynasty. It was first called Zhongqiu Jie (literally Mid-Autumn Festival) in the Zhou Dynasty. In Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines, it is also sometimes referred to as the Lantern Festival or Mooncake Festival.

HACC Program Report

No doubt you can see from Virgie's report that there is a great deal of wonderful work being done within the BRMC HACC program. BRMC continues to provide great programs that enrich the lives of older people from culturally diverse backgrounds not only within Ballarat but also the surrounding areas.

A key component to the way BRMC delivers its Home and Community Care (HACC) services is the Active Service Model. What does this mean? Well put simply, it means doing things *with* our clients rather than *for* them. We want to see our clients become healthier, more empowered and happier by doing things for themselves rather than have other people do them for them. To this end, our programs seek to engage our clients in events rather than simply provide the event for them. It would also be true to say that our services are becoming more active, more about being a participant rather than a recipient.

If you come to any of our events you will see these changes happening. In Virgie's Hepburn Moorabool program, guests have been taking part in sing-a-longs and gentle exercise routines. You will have noticed that the Multicultural Tucker program is continuously making improvements, becoming a more vibrant and exciting event to be a part of. Guests are encouraged to bring old photos along to share with other clients, it's about bringing along a bit of yourself to the event, making it a richer more vital happening to be a part of. It has been wonderful. More and more people are bringing photos in and sharing them with friends and staff. Watch this space: things are only just getting started!



On the subject of the Tucker, in July of this year, we celebrated our 60th luncheon. As part of the celebration we held a very successful traditional dress parade. Hearty congratulations go not only to Teresa Skrypko and Sara Magenheimer, who both won prizes, but to everyone who got

dressed up; it really made the day special. There was also a birthday cake, thanks to Jill Spicer and a wonderful photo montage put together by our very capable HACC support worker Shamika Fernando. Thanks also to our guests Frank Hall, Evie Dichera and Vivian Bradbury who have all played a valuable role in building up the Tucker to what it is today. Most of all though, thank you to you, our wonderful guests, without you there would be no Tucker.



Long Live Diversity

On **Friday 21st of October** we will be holding the **Long Live Diversity Seniors forum**. It will be exciting event to come along and attend. Along with health checks we will be holding a myriad of fun activities to watch or be a part of, including: storytelling, folk dancing, singing and an unveiling of the new community garden here at Gplace.

There will be something for everyone at this wonderful event. It will be an excellent opportunity for people to have a great time to get involved in doing some really interesting and stimulating activities. Look forward to seeing you there!!!

Jason Shorter

Another body to represent the interests of the Multicultural Community of Ballarat and Region!

Yes the Victorian Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Hon. Nicholas Kotsiras is establishing eight **Regional Advisory Councils** to help provide advice to the Minister on multicultural affairs.

In Ballarat there is an information session on September 19th at 5.30 pm in the Town Hall.



BRMC encourages all cultural groups to send a representative to this consultation. Nominations for the Regional Advisory Committees close on September 30th.

LONG LIVE DIVERSITY MULTICULTURAL SENIORS FESTIVAL

'Embracing a healthy lifestyle for all'

DATE: 21ST OCTOBER 2011

Time: 10.am.-2.p.m.

VENUE- BRMC Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

102 English street Ballarat

FREE ENTRY

FREE LIGHT LUNCH PROVIDED

Activities

- Dancing Workshops
- Choir
- Guest Speakers
- Demonstrations

Bookings are essential For catering purposes- please book by 14th October 2011

Ph BRMC- 53325941

This festival is proudly bought to you by BRMC (Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council)

To celebrate Senior's festival 2011

AFL Visit

Many BRMC members recently attended the North Melbourne vs. Western Bulldogs clash at Etihad Stadium. It was a great game and the Kangaroos overran the Bulldogs. Thanks to the City of Ballarat for the tickets and the Kangaroo's FC for the opportunity to attend this match.



Committee member and Fundraising guru Georgina Vagg gets up close and personal with the Kangaroo's mascot at the recent AFL football game attended by BRMC members. Note the Bulldogs scarf. Dangerous territory there Georgie.

Activities

Japanese Mayor visits Ballarat

The Mayor of Ballarat's sister city Inagawa visited Ballarat in August. BRMC was pleased to host a reception for him and his entourage. The Mayor of Ballarat, Craig Fletcher, welcomed Mayor Choji Fukuda. Members of Ballarat's Thai community provided a cultural performance. The delegation was presented with 1000 paper cranes from students at UB Tec. In Japanese culture the one who makes 1000 paper cranes is granted one wish. UB Tec wanted to do this and make a wish that the people of Japan are given strength to make it through the hard times. The students learnt and reflected on the Proverb "If you have much, give of your wealth, If you have little, give of your heart."



Lead On Ballarat to assist African Mums learn to drive

Lead On Ballarat has been successful in receiving an RACV grant under the 2011 Community Grants program to assist members of the African community to obtain their probationary licences.

Lead On Ballarat is currently recruiting members of the community to be mentors to these African women. All mentors will undergo VicRoads training and will be supported throughout the program.

Already one African mum is in training. More tutors are needed though. The next VicRoads L2P training will continue in late October.

The grant is being used for the 'Driving Help for African Mums' program. Working with members of the African community and the three Community Houses, Lead On Ballarat will match African women who have their Learners Permit with an L2P Program mentor who will assist them to obtain their probationary licence.

Research shows children are significantly disadvantaged if their

mothers cannot drive. With little driving exposure, African mothers face greater difficulties in obtaining their licences than other members of the community. Up to 50 children will benefit from this program.

These women will use the Rotary donated L2P program car for driving practice and the RACV grant will be used to provide them with professional driving lessons.



Real people, real skills, real life.

L2P learner driver mentor program details:

The Ballarat L2P learner driver mentor program is a TAC funded VicRoads managed program providing access to driving lessons for young learner drivers who have difficulty gaining experience without community support. The program is delivered by Lead On Ballarat and is supported by the City of Ballarat, Road Safe Central Highlands, Ballarat Apex, the Rotary Club of Ballarat South, Victoria Police and the Ballarat Light Car Club.

Contact Rebecca Stewart on 5332 3896 or 0417 304 782.

Welcome South Sudan

On the 30 July the Sudanese Community celebrated the independence of their new country, (There are 52 Nations/Countries in Africa), at the Coninda Centre. Guests and visitors from Melbourne, Geelong, Colac and Warrnambool also attended the celebration. South Sudan became an independent country on the 9th July 2011.



BRMC and all other Cultural Associations/Groups congratulated the Ballarat Sudanese Association on this momentous occasion.

It was a great cultural evening with lots of singing, dancing and performances, plus a sumptuous African meal.



We all wish South Sudan good luck in rebuilding their country into a strong nation in the near future

CELEBRATION OF CULTURES

Come let us celebrate Cultural Diversity



Entertainment provided by local artists from different cultural group

When: 7:30 pm 11th November 2011
Where: at the Wendouree Performing Arts, 1220 Howitt St, Wendouree
For more information please call Ms. Georgina Vagg on 0408 109 471

Mr. Doug Sarah
Master of Ceremonies



Admittance by Tickets Only
Tickets and Bookings to be made at the Wendouree Performing Arts Centre, Adults and concession is \$10 Children 15 below \$5

Join the Men's Shed!

BRMC has joint access to the Gplace Men's Shed which is a purpose-built facility out the back of the school building (the old shelter shed in fact!), for various craft activities. The shed is equipped with lots of power tools and

other woodworking equipment.

BRMC Committee member Khushi Maharaj has taken on the coordinating role for this activity. If you would like to be part of the Men's Shed team please let the staff at BRMC know and Khushi will follow up with you.

Story: Maria Rosenberg

A fair dinkum Aussie bloke

A real bushwacker and a true friend, an old timer with all the knowledge of the bush and survival in those good old days. A man with common sense and understanding for the newcomers.

We as Migrants had no idea of life in Australia and were perplexed about the wide open spaces.

My husband met Jim Power who worked at M.B Johns in Ballarat. He became an instant friend.

He told us about those "Rabbit drive days" and showed us lots of photos of the rabbits caught in one day. A fence lined with caught rabbits on the wire fence. It was like a plague in those days.



Jim knew all the answers to fair dinkum Aussie living. As new arrivals we had a lot to learn about our new homeland. Our mind was like a sponge absorbing all the information we needed.

My husband originally came from Antwerp, Belgium, and I was from Tilburg N.B near the Belgium border.

Jim was our neighbor and guide, plus he knew the country well. He helped us to comprehend our new life here.

Having barbeques was new to us. In those days a square honey tin would do the job; it had holes in the side and bottom.

An old wire rack off the ice chest and wacko, ready for a new experience. The homemade barbeque, this went in the car whenever Jim went in the bush

We went to Mount Beckworth. Our children were all in the back of the Ute and collected lots of mushrooms there for lunch.

The fresh air made us all hungry; but it was a great learning experience. Lake Goldsmith was our next stop and it was a beautiful area to visit.

My husband needed to go there to walk behind the horses and plough. It was very hard work and he puffed afterwards.

There was a lot of machinery that was on display and shown there. This was very interesting and also very clever for

those old timers who made do with what was available.

"I'll take you to Daylesford, on another day", he said. We picked some big juicy blackberries there, which the youngsters were delighted to eat. We saw the mineral springs and brought some cordial to mix in and with some lemons, Jim thought of every thing; later he showed me how to make blackberry jam. That didn't last too long at home.

Jim said Lake Jubilee is a sunken mine shaft, I had a swim in it and the water was freezing; very, very cold.

We also found pyrite's in Sebastopol mullock heaps. This is called "Fool's Gold" and



it was all exciting and new to us.

Then he took us where to buy pure honey in Creswick. The friendly bee keeper showed us how the honey was warmed and strained off the lost bee legs. That was the best honey we ever tasted and we used it from then on as a sweetener in all our food.

See the dandelion look alike he said pulling the plant up. These roots taste like nuts, the Aboriginals use it as food; we tasted it and liked it.

Jim's means of survival was inexhaustible, driving on Creswick Rd, we stopped here. He said "I'll show you where the Chinese make their medicine" from an area with plum trees shaped like olives trenches along sides in a row that is how the trees are watered.

Jim was our friend and a friend of many, with never-ending bushwacker knowledge. We felt so happy with what he taught us and to have known him.

He is asleep in peace now, but his memories lives on, a true friend with a heart of gold.

Thank you for the time we shared with you, Jim

Maria Rosenberg Blommers.

Sharing is Caring

Australia is a world of Diversity;

Through Migration this came to be.

We express ourselves in a united song.

We can learn from each other as time goes on.

Each Nation represents a beautiful flower.

Together we form a mighty tower.

We all have skills and worthy things we can do,

By sharing them; we are pleasing ourselves and you.

All men hope to live Happy and Free!

Diversity aims for a World Family tree.

All need to understand at times;

Culture varies we gain with charms.

We have to share only one earth.

Happiness in Diversity we prove our worth.

Maria Rosenberg 9/11/2009

Art and Craft Group?

BRMC Member Maria Sozanski is offering to run a regular art and craft group for women, particularly those from a refugee background. The group would meet weekly and participate in art and craft activities.

The art component would encourage women to paint their stories and then discuss the work. This interaction assists with English skills and self confidence. The craft component would allow the expression of traditional skills.

If there is enough interest BRMC will start such a class. Please contact the staff at BRMC if you are interested.

Celebration of Culture Please keep the 11th November free, for our first major Cultural Concert to be held at the Wendouree Performing Arts Centre. Different cultural groups will be asked to perform, also single artists as well. A great night will be held with special guests.. This is supported by the City of Ballarat and the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Cooking Books Still a few copies left we would love to sell them all please

Awards Attending Father Peter Kunen and Dimitri Dola's Multicultural Awards at the Immigration Department it was a great honor while watching them receive their awards. I have been busy attending different cultural groups' functions, looking forward to seeing you at our functions as well/

Georgina L. Vagg
Women's Officer Fundraising Officer

Profile: Roman and Teresa Skrypko

Many of our older migrants have fascinating stories to tell about their journey to Australia. This month we feature Roman and Teresa Skrypko (next month, more from his wife Teresa) and Maria Rosenberg. And, of course, there is part two of Brigitte Kerrutt's story. See Ugo's story on the back page also.

The following is an edited version of an interview with Roman Skrypko conducted in 2007 by the Courier.

Roman perhaps we could start by talking about how you travelled to Australia from Germany?

From Germany we went to Italy to Napoli, we stayed in Napoli I think for a couple of weeks or so. From Napoli we left to go to Australia.

So when you were on the boat what did you actually do?

On the boat I did everything actually. They wanted volunteer workers. I used to paint. I did concreting for which we got food. When we came to Melbourne as workers on the boat we did not have to queue for the meals. We just went straight through. That was all that we got. We didn't get any wages.

When you were travelling on the boat were the women and the men separated.

Yes, women on the one side, men on the other, on top deck we were all together. I was about 20. We landed in Melbourne about the 30th of May, 3 or 4 weeks. We came to Melbourne during the day and we had to stay on the boat overnight. There was another boat in the port. The next day they pulled up and we went straight from the boat, loaded on the train and straight to Bonegilla.

What happened when you got to Bonegilla?

At Bonegilla there were the barracks and straw mattresses, those army barracks, blankets. Being youngsters, the next day we chased the rabbits. We stayed in Bonegilla about 4 weeks. When I came to Melbourne it was the end of May. When I started to work they sent me to Western Victoria to forest commission on 24 June.

Who went with you?

There were quite a few of us – Ziggy Pavlic a good friend of mine. There were quite a few of us went on the train. They loaded us on a train to Melbourne and the Forest Commission or the people picked us up and loaded us onto another train and we went to Portland. I think it was Portland or Hamilton and then we were picked up by not a bus but one of those trucks that carry horses.

A cattle truck?

Yes, some sort of cattle truck, yeah we went through Portland, it was right on the beach and we travelled on to Dartmoor and along to Glenelg right on the border. I was 21.

Did you come to Australia on your own?

Yes, actually after the war I was homesick but something happened that a lot of people said don't go because the commies are over there and I decided to go to the end of the world. As you can see I was an ambulance driver, I was personal chauffeur to Mr. Rignon, who was a person in the French occupation. I was his chauffeur and ambulance driver and told me Australia "C'est Bon" Australia was very good, so I decided to go to Australia.

So when you went to Western Australia, what did you do there?

We chopped the gum trees and planted pines. The foreman put a stick every four foot and we put a pine into each hole. We lived in a camp.

There were 70 of us.

How long did you stay there?

We stayed there quite a few months from there they transferred some of us here to Beaufort to the Tute Camp, near Mt Cole. We worked over there in the Tute Camp.

At the Tute Camp you were cutting wood again?

Cutting wood, stacking in 6 foot lengths and stacking up. That was the work at the Tute Camp; cutting, splitting and stacking up and they were selling the wood. A truck would come up and take

the wood away.

How long did you stay at the Tute Camp?

I didn't quite finish my contract – 2 years – I was sick of it and didn't finish and there I was relieved, I came to Ballarat and the employment office told me to go to M B John's and I went there and they told me to start straight away. So I started at John's, I've been there nearly 25 years.

I started as a machinist 3rd class and went to 2nd class, 1st class and towards the end I was classified as a specialist. I still have a reference and documentation from Mr. Lonsdale, engineering manager.

Did they give you training?

When I started, actually, I was the first one to start at M B John's, from the newcomers. Training when I worked at John's at the beginning they gave you such and such a thing to do a machine to work yourself up, afterward they tell you what and you have to read the map or the plans and towards the end after 25 years, I had a bit.

When you first started could you speak English Roman?

A little bit, I was almost 2 years here and in those days when I was in the camp I did a correspondence course, filling in papers, sent it to Melbourne writing letters they sent them back corrected. Actually in those days my writing and spelling was better than it is now.

When you worked at M B John's you lived in Ballarat, where were you living?

Actually in Tute camp the Australian people from Beaufort they used to come to the Tute camp and a friend of mine knew the girl, Loretta Davis and John Davis and they invited me over there and they accepted us two fellas to the Australia Young group and every weekend I spent in Beaufort with the Australian kids. Actually the people were fantastic young and old ones. Every Sunday we used to go to church, if you were Methodist we went to Methodist, if you were Church of England, you went there. Mind you when I came to Ballarat to work at M B John's, at the weekend I used to hitchhike back to Beaufort.

How long was it before you began to feel that Ballarat was your home?

Well, when I met the guys at John's an older gentleman Bill Baldish and Mr McConkey who said Roman could you explain in English to Edmond (Theresa's father) what to do and how

to work. My English wasn't bad and I knew a bit and so we started to sit together at lunch time and he tried to invite me to lunch but I didn't feel that I wanted to leave my other friends – Roman Paradiso, and others. One day her father says Roman come to our place my wife will cook a Polish meal, but I didn't go. He kept inviting me saying that his wife was a good cook and I have a 16 year old daughter, so I changed my mind, and that's when Ballarat became my home. Actually there is a photo over there – the first time we went with the parents to the gardens, I didn't know her name, I heard her father call her Theresa.

So that was when you met Theresa?

That's when I met Theresa. We got married in 1951. We didn't waste much time before we got married. We bought a house in Skipton Street and, actually, we lived with her parents for a while. Actually speaking we had a very, very good life on top of it as I did say previously Australian people are very nice, very honest. You didn't have to lock the doors.

When you working at M B Johns, when you first started were there many other people who were migrants?

No, when I started I think there was a Yugoslav fellow, I was the second one at John's. Adam Kieza came afterwards. I can name a whole lot of people. I don't know who was before me.

Roman, when you married Theresa did you become involved with the Australian society and the community or were you only involved with the Polish community?

Actually, I was involved before I married Theresa, in Ballarat with an Australian friend. When I left Beaufort and lived in Ballarat I met a chappie over there and he gave me an address in Ballarat for Mrs. Nett. He was



Profile: Roman and Teresa Skrypko (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

her brother. He says to me she will help you. I was actually boarding over there until I met Theresa. Even today Mrs. Nett she is a fantastic lady, I think she is in her 90's and she still admires Theresa as her daughter and me as her son. I boarded with them when they were just across the road.

Did you find it easy to settle into the Australian lifestyle?

Yes, very easy to me I did not mix that much, but in Beaufort I was one of them. A young fellow does this, not that I was a drinker after the kids were born I might have a bottle or two but that time I did not touch the grog at all. Different today!

What sorts of the involvement did you have with the Polish community?

I was a member in the Polish Association and I was the internal auditor for quite a few years, Treasurer for quite a few years, I was the President for quite a few years, so I did a few different things. The best time was when Father Grouch was here, I was president then and I think we had a very, very strong community here. It was quite a few I think there were 70 families altogether in Ballarat in those days.

When would that have been?

It would have been the 70's. In the 60's our kids were born in 1951, 1953 and 1955 so at that stage we weren't involved much.

Things were very difficult financially?

Yes, yes,

Theresa: Things were very difficult that's why we both worked and the reason that my mother and father both worked too, there were no baby sitters we did both. Roman worked nightshift and I worked dayshift. I left in the morning and he came home about 2 o'clock at night so when I came from work and I worked in the factory in Mt Pleasant, so when I was coming home he would see me – because we lived in Munro Street – he saw me coming on the bike as he was turning into the gardens at M B Johns. Once he saw me in Sturt Street that I was coming, we waved to one another he went his way and I went to the kids, our next door neighbour knew that the arrangement was done so she made sure that I was home within 10 minutes. She knew that if I wasn't then something had happened between the gardens which were only three blocks away. It was very, very hard.

Roman: We tried in the beginning to pay off as quick as possible our house and to have something over our head, simple as that.

Theresa: And not only that, Roman worked very hard because after he worked at M B John's people were building and needing help, so he'd be helping somebody build – he'd be putting fences up he'd be cementing for one another. The chappie who owned a farm; he helped him build chook sheds, so we had no weekends off, it was more or less work seven days a week.

So was Roman helping other people in the Polish community?

Theresa: Yes, they were working together. Say for instance one was building and he came up to do the cementing, so the wife would put up all the lunches and everything and sometimes the men would be cementing because it was wet- would be cementing till perhaps eleven o'clock.

So Roman, Theresa has just mentioned that she used to work and swap over shifts basically, so how many children have you

got?

Roman: We have two boys. We sent both to catholic school, Peter he said dad I don't want to go to St Pat's I want to do trade, so he went to state school as a tradesman as a plasterer. Bernard was going to St Pat's until then. He can laugh today. Actually, last time we went to Melbourne to Mr Bracks he said "Hey you done better than me "Both of our boys we tried to do our best. Bernard played the saxophone. Peter played the drums we've got a photo. So very good family, we're quite happy with our two boys.

Can I ask you Roman maybe reflect on what coming to Australia has meant to you, to talk about what you feel you've achieved by coming to Australia as a migrant

Roman: Well, straight forward when I came down here if there wouldn't have been all the water I would have hitchhiked back. Now if someone would take me over there now and tell me you've got to stay over there, I would try to swim back.

You feel that Australia is very much your country now.

Roman: Yes, definitely I mean not only that our family are here our own children, grandchildren and what we achieved here, were respected and we respect the other people. We understand on top of that the 25 years, I bought a second cab then I was a director on the Board of the taxi company for quite a few years, till I decided to sell my taxi licences and they respected me and I was quite happy. To me it's more than home. At present I established nine years ago the Seniors Club. We have Polish Seniors Club. We visit our oldies in hospitals and in private homes. Theresa yesterday or the day before she left home at 10:00am and didn't get home until 7:00pm at night because the lady was sick and she had to wait for the doctor and go to the hospital. All of those things yesterday and today, so we are involved with our oldies and now on top of that we are involved with the Multicultural Council. I am officially the bus driver I collect anyone that wants to be picked up for the once a month multicultural meals they just ring me up and I pick them up and drop them off free charge. We're happy. I'm retired now we're quite happy whatever's left for us.

Theresa you spoke before about the tradition of Wigilia. Are there any other traditions that you brought from Poland with you that you would like to talk about?

Theresa: Well the traditions that we've had again are now dwindling away. When you're baby was born you went through a lot of problems or troubles because things were hard to get. Getting the godmother whoever you chose to be the godmother she always had to make sure that the baby was dressed up in the beautiful long frock. The baby had to be christened no later than after 3 months.

Right 3 months of age?

Theresa: 3 months of age yes. After 3 months of age the baby should have been christened and then you had a tremendous party afterwards. And then you find that the children were going to communion and that was a wonderful time where you. As we were preparing our children that were another big feast, there was always a party to go afterwards. You made sure that the girls were beautifully dressed in long white frock and the veil and the boys wore beautiful suits navy with white shirts they carried large candles in their hands and you took photos and then you came home you always invited people for a party – any reason to have a party. But in Ballarat people they enjoyed themselves, on Sunday we would always go to the gardens because there was nothing else to do and our tradition was that on Sunday it was a day that you did not work. You did your work on Saturday but you made sure that on Sunday you went to Church and then you met and you went off to the gardens to meet someone else. The men stayed at home and played cards and the women would be up on their bikes with the kids and going on the trams and going around the lake and we would sit down. It was a wonderful time because you spent so much time with each other and exchanged so many wonderful memories and then slowly, slowly as everybody began to have bigger and bigger house and the family was growing up and then we had engagements, weddings and now all the festivities have gone and we are attending more funerals and the population is ageing.

Theresa: Yes unfortunately when we were young we would say what party is next, where there is a dance next, where do we meet again. Now when we meet we all say who has passed away and that's the conversation. Roman and I have had a good life, I can't complain and people in Ballarat were very good, always ready to help one another and always ready to have any excuse to have a party.

Roman and Teresa have two children, five grandchildren and one great grandson and a very close family.

Next issue, more from Teresa.



Roman receiving as award from the Victorian Governor

Refugee Awards

In June this year two Ballarat refugees received Recognition Awards from the Victorian Multicultural Commission. Dimitri Dollard was nominated by the City Council. Fr Peter Kunen was nominated by BRMC. They were among the 22 refugees who received their awards at a Ceremony in Melbourne. Georgina Vagg represented BRMC at the Awards.



Refugee Week



Some of the BRMC activities in Ballarat during Refugee Week in June. From left; Performers at the Kaleidoscope Concert, some of the participants at the Youth Sports night mixing it up with some Ballarat Miners players, Komi Dzagba speaks at the prayer service, guest speakers at the Refugee Forum and wide shot of the Kaleidoscope event at the Mining Exchange.

Breaking the stalemate on refugees and asylum seekers

Frank Brennan

Reproduced from the ABC Drum website

We Australians are still all at sea seeking to find an asylum policy which is workable, economic, legal, politically saleable and above an agreed moral bottom line.



The contested issues are offshore processing and onshore detention.

This week the High Court will have a look at the legality of the latest scheme for the treatment of asylum seekers arriving by boat. This time it will be the Gillard Government's "Malaysia solution" under the judicial spotlight.

The court will be asked to scrutinise the Australian Government's declaration that Malaysia is a safe place for asylum seekers awaiting determination of their claims. The Court will also be asked whether the Minister who is the guardian of unaccompanied minors arriving on our shores can discharge his public trust by shipping those in his charge offshore.

The Centre for Policy Development has today published a welcome report, *A New Approach: Breaking the Stalemate on Refugees & Asylum Seekers*. Its authors – John Menadue, Kate Gauthier and Arja Keski-Nummi – recommend that Parliament legislate for an "independent Refugee, Asylum and Humanitarian Assistance Authority".

The Centre for Policy Development has done the sums and found that, despite the public obsession with boat people being held in detention or offshore, "in the past 10 years 76 per cent of asylum seekers came to Australia by air". They recommend that all asylum seekers be processed on shore. The latest Nielsen poll shows that 53 per cent of Australians agree. Admittedly 15 per cent support the completely unprincipled idea of sending asylum seekers back out to sea. But only 28 per cent support the idea of sending them to other countries like Malaysia, PNG or Nauru.

A New Approach recommends a reversal of the Howard government decision to create a nexus between the number of successful onshore asylum claims and the number of places available for humanitarian offshore cases. With the nexus, every successful onshore asylum seeker takes a place in the quota of one offshore asylum seeker. Usually we take 12-15,000 humanitarian applicants each year. Howard and Gillard both increased the intake by 1,000 per annum as a sweeten-

er to offset their offshore solutions.

Offshore humanitarian applicants do include very needy, deserving refugees without access to people smugglers. Presently the Australian system gives preference to three groups of onshore asylum seekers over offshore humanitarian applicants. Those three groups are: transparently honest visa holders who arrive by plane and whose country conditions deteriorate after they have arrived in Australia; plane travellers with visas who make less than full disclosure about their asylum claims when applying for a visa to enter Australia; and unvisaed refugees who arrive by boat often having engaged the services of a people smuggler.

Strangely it is only the third group which causes great community angst even though most of that group, unlike the second group who come by plane with visas, are honest about their intentions and their status, and are proved to be refugees. The report's authors think we should treat asylum seekers the same regardless of their mode of transport and visa status. They recommend that we:

"Increase our annual refugee intake from 14,750 to 20,000 by 2016. As a first step towards this target, de-link the counting of asylum numbers in Australia from the offshore resettlement program... De-linking the offshore and onshore numbers will go some way towards nullifying concerns that asylum seekers (especially those who arrive by boat) 'jump the queue' and deny resettlement for a person in a camp."

At the moment, it is only the third group who are subjected to mandatory detention during the processing of their claims. The latest Nielsen poll shows that 64 per cent of the population support such detention though many Australians are probably unaware of the difference in treatment of those who arrive by plane seeking asylum.

The average stay in detention for a protection visa applicant has blown out from 103 days to 316 days in the last two years. In mid-2009, there were 1,007 people (101 of them children) in immigration detention. By mid-2011, there were 6,403 (991 of them being children). In the first six months of 2009, there were 189 protection visas granted to persons in immigration detention; in the first six months this year there were 1935.

Last week, Andrew Metcalfe, Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship appeared before the Joint Committee on Australia's Immigration Detention Network. He turned the tables and asked the members of parliament: "Is immigration detention a deterrent? Does immigration detention facilitate case resolution?" Gone are the days when government can assert

without evidence that immigration detention is a deterrent and an aid to case resolution.

It is time to review the workability and economic efficiency of immigration detention for asylum seekers, especially in view of the statement by Steve Hambleton, president of the Australian Medical Association, at last week's formal dinner attended by Prime Minister Gillard and Opposition Leader Tony Abbott:

"The AMA believes that the system of mandatory detention of asylum seekers is inherently harmful to the physical and mental health of detainees. The harm is especially acute in the case of children."

Asylum seekers arriving without visas should be detained only for the purposes of health, security and identity checks. The authors of *A New Approach*, with extensive refugee policy experience between them, believe this can be done in 30 days. Detention for any longer should require a judicial order. Once those checks are successfully completed with a decision that the known applicant poses no health or security risk and if there be too great a caseload for final determination of claims within that time, these asylum seekers should be humanely accommodated while their claim process is completed.

Until the treatment of asylum seekers in transit countries such as Indonesia is enhanced, we Australians must expect that some of the world's neediest refugees will engage people smugglers and come within reach of our shores. We should process them promptly, transparently, and on our turf. For as long as they do not excessively skew our migration program, we should allow those who are proven to be genuine refugees to settle permanently so they may get on with their lives and make their contribution to our national life.

In hindsight, we know that proposals such as temporary protection visas and the Pacific solution are not only unprincipled; they fail to stem the tide or to reduce the successful claims. Regardless of the High Court outcome, the Gillard Government should be looking to a regional solution to a regional problem, rather than shipping an Australian issue offshore with a proposal which is either unprincipled or unworkable – unprincipled, in part, because it will include unaccompanied minors or unworkable because it will not.

We need principled, workable solutions. A New Approach deserves consideration as a circuit-breaker.

Frank Brennan is an endorser of the Centre for Policy Development's report, the report [A New Approach: Breaking the Stalemate on Refugees & Asylum Seekers](#) released today. The report calls on our nation's political leaders to return to constructive bi-partisanship on this issue of national importance.

Profile: Brigitte Kerrutt (Part Two)

In part 1 of her story last issue Brigitte told us about her early life in Koenigsberg/Eastprussia - leaving there for Germany, then coming to Australia in 1982 after a heart attack. She then moved to Ballarat. At the end of last episode Brigitte had just purchased a house and was on her way to the bank to get finance

The bank manager typed my answers to his questions on that big mortgage form. He finally asked: "Where do you work?" – "I do not work. I am actually not looking for work yet. I arrived in Australia only five months ago. If I take on a job now I probably only get a fortnight holiday like in the USA and then I never get to know my new home country." Surprised he asked me: "But what do you live on?" Now I was surprised that he obviously was concerned about whether I had enough money to eat. So I looked for my notes about my finances in my handbag, handed that paper over and apologised that it was untidy, thanking him for his caring attitude. With curiosity and then almost admiration he said: "You have got a budget?! Can I make a copy of it?" I agreed and asked: "Do I have to apply for the "First-homeowner grant" with you?" – "Yes, but you do not qualify for that grant. You need to have a savings record over two years with a rising tendency."

Again I was fishing in my handbag and found a savings book. Two years ago, when I was 'holidaying like a healthy person', I saw in Melbourne the sign 'Migrant Advisory Service' and went in to ask about health insurance, unemployment, job centre, etc. I did not really get my questions answered but was handed a few pamphlets with the remark "you come here and then you will see." When I noticed that this was a bank I felt obliged to open an account with \$20, as I was flying back next day.

Now I checked the date when I had made that deposit – and got goose pimples all over. It was the day, when 'my' house was put on the market. The savings book was two years and one week old. The accruing interests over that time showed the rising tendency required.

Oh yes, I got the house, the mortgage within 30 days and the First-homeowner grant. Only God could plan everything so accurately.

The semi-trailer arrived with my 6m long container. Old Tom, my adopted daughter Doris and I stood on my driveway, when the driver – he was the only man in the cabin... - leant out of the window to declare: "My union forbids me to touch a single piece of furniture." Oh, God, neither of us can lift those heavy pieces. I asked Tom, who was a terrible stutterer, to ring the church and ask to "detour some of the working bees over here". While we were waiting next to the telephone, I prayed: Oh God...oh God..

Suddenly two young men, carrying the heaviest oak cupboard as if it was an empty cardboard box, appeared in the door, asking: "Where do you want this?" I quickly got my plan of the house and directed the men with all the heavy things from the container into the different rooms. By and by about 20 "bees" arrived, emptying the big pieces where I had put the boxes with books, etc. Within one hour the whole house was furnished.

I asked all helpers to come in and have their well-deserved cupper. When the driver came I asked him where his friends were. "What friends?" Well, those two who carried all the heavy stuff. "I don't know them. They came from the street." I asked the "bees" if they knew them? Nobody had seen them before. They had gone how they had come. I got those famous goose-pimples again. I was and still am convinced that they were angels.

I have not met anyone before and since who worked so hard for one hour and did not even stay for a drink and/or a thank you.

As I only had those second five years to live I did not look for work. One day the son of my friend rang me, because his Ger-

man teacher wanted to see me. When we met in front of the grade 6 classroom the teacher stared at me and started to stutter, whether I had prepared a lesson? "No – you mean I should teach? Now?" She nodded. I had never taught in my life, only swimming.

Well, the challenge was out and I entered the classroom. No motivational decorations, only a map of Germany hung on the wall. Speaking in German only I suggested that we travel through Germany. The children thought that I did not know English and really worked hard – and we all enjoyed it. The teacher was very happy and asked me whether I was available later in the year when she was going on long-service leave. "Of course, the principal will have to agree." I nodded, not knowing that this was the beginning of my new profession, the most stressful one you can think of and in my state of health.

I was employed without having shown a curriculum vitae even.

Three days later I became known to everyone in the school community as during an after-school sport swimming session I happened to rescue a girl from drowning.

After the first four months the principal asked me to stay on teaching. A couple of months later he told me: "If I were you I would do something about my Dip. Ed. as I can see you teaching full time soon." "What please is Dip.Ed.?" I did it in-service by correspondence with the University in Armidale over three years during which time my teaching load was increased to fulltime.

The most astonishing fact about this is, that before I had no time for children, and no patience. Now I seemed to be a different person – I loved the children and I loved teaching them. When the school decided to drop German in favour of Japanese, the children voted with their feet: During a lunch break they came to me with the new year 7 class-lists, where those names were ticked who wanted to do German – even privately. They were 42 students. As the new principal thought it would not look good if he allowed me to use a classroom after school hours, I had those children at my home once a week for a whole year. Students and parents were more than happy and forced the school to put German back on the curriculum.

When Queen Elizabeth II came to Ballarat, she was to drive past our school. It was on my day off, however, when would I see her if I would not go there? So I decided to go and wait for her with the others if I would find a parking place. Students, teachers and parents stood waiting patiently. When I drove slowly into the street the students started to cheer and wave – I lowered the window, smiled and waved graciously back. "How do you do it?" one parent asked me. "It is not me but the students."

I taught in four different schools in and near Ballarat from 1984 – 2003, sometimes simultaneously. All those schools contacted me whether I had some spare time to teach.

I still live in my first house, with all the furniture in the same place, writing my life story, hoping that God will grant me the time to finish it.



**Brigitte Kerrutt Secretary
German Austrian Association**

Featured Volunteers

James Hosking

I started at BRMC earlier this year, after finishing my IT degree in Sydney and moving back to Ballarat, looking for something positive and helpful to do while not delivering pizzas. Learning bits and pieces of various languages at university and during an exchange semester to Sweden gave me a passion for foreign verbs and nouns, and so I decided to try my hand at tutoring English for migrants, which I'm enjoying immensely.

I hope to travel overseas again in the not-too-distant future, to

teach English this time, although I don't know where. My two Chinese students are teaching me about their amazing language and culture, which is not helping the 'farsickness'.

At BRMC, I'm also helping out in reception, the Friday conversation class and the administration side of the English tutor program with Judy Brumby. Through the different programs I've met lots of wonderful people, and it's nice to see so much great work being done in the community.



Ugo Vito Vittorio Lo Iacono

Ugo was born in Fiume in northern Italy in 1945. At the time the territory was occupied by the dictator Tito, from Yugoslavia. He then went to Udine in 1946. In 1947 he applied for migration through the International Refugee Organisation that was processing DPs to resettle them overseas.



Ugo as then moved to various camps in Rome, Trani and then went to Bignoli, a suburb of Naples. Following this Ugo was transferred to Delmenhorst in Germany for a couple of months. Finally he was sent to the port of Bremen to board a ship to Australia sailing via the Suez Canal and around India and Indonesia enroute to Melbourne.

By August 1950, Ugo was transported to Bonegilla with his late brother Aldo. Some two years later his mother and father came to Australia, from various camps in Italy.

Ugo's first appointment after about a month in Bonegilla camp was with the Forest Commission near Ballan. Here he was employed in a team to cut firebreaks in the forest. Then in January 1951 Ugo shifted to Clunes and started work at the local knitting mill. He remained in this job until January 2003. Whilst in Clunes he met Mary (his wife to be) whom he married on the 28th December 1954.

From the outset, being very community minded, Ugo has had an outstanding consultation to both the Clunes and Ballarat wider communities.

The following details briefly highlight Ugo's noteworthy list of contributions.

Community contributions Clunes

- Clunes Borough Council 1961- 1964
- Clunes Hospital Committee Life time member Twice President- 1960- 1994
- Clunes Cemetery Trust Committee 1960 - Current day
- Youth Group Leader (and responsible for its establishment) 1959- 1995
- Scout Leader Clunes 1959- 1998
- Commissioner for taking Affidavits 1969 (Became Justice of the Peace- 1990)
- Correspondent for the Italian Consul Ballarat and district since 1969 made Cavalier (Italian Knighthood 1973)
- Clunes Homes for the Aged- Committee member 1966 - present
- Correspondent to ITAL-UIL (Institute of Care and Assistance for Italian work)
- Clunes Lions Club Inaugural member 1975 (until it was wound up 1989 - Present Day)

Community contributions Ballarat since residency Feb 2004

- Justice of the peace (JP) 1990 - Present day
- Ballarat Italian Association- Member since 2003
- Ballarat Italian Senior Citizen Member since 2004 Secretary since 2006
- Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc. since 2006
- Complied successful Grant Applications since 1989
- for the club, for the last 5 years.
- Attends BRMC General Meetings (6p/y) on behalf of the Italian Senior's club and reports on their activities and functions.
- Elected as a Community Representative onto the BRMC Committee of Management for 2010- 11

BRMC Financial & Program Supporters



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Australian Government

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