



August / September 2015

# Konekti

BRMC's newsletter

## Warm Ballarat welcome for Minister



VICTORIAN Multicultural Affairs and Finance Minister Robin Scott came to Ballarat in July, he met community, business and government leaders at the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council offices in Golden Point.

The Minister told the meeting, which also included 40 people drawn from the multicultural communities of Ballarat, that multiculturalism was often seen in a "Melbourne-centric way..... But there are many great stories to be told about strong multicultural communities in Victoria."

"Multiculturalism at its core is about respect for the common humanity of all of us," the minister said.

The state of Victoria, he said, has allocated \$28 million to multicultural affairs.

"Part of the funding will be put into education programs to support multiculturalism," said Mr Scott.

The Minister has since reiterated his support for the work of regional community councils and his commitment to a strong and a non-partisan multicultural Victoria.

The Premier, Daniel Andrews, the Minister and the new Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) chairperson, Helen Kapalos, have launched a campaign to support diversity, inclusion and harmony.

For details visit [www.embracediversity.com](http://www.embracediversity.com); Like #EmbraceDiversity on Facebook; or follow #Embrace Diversity on Twitter, or join #Embrace Diversity on Instagram.



**EMPHASIS:** Robin Scott, the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, left, with Clr John Philips, the Mayor Ballarat and Ann Foley, the Executive Officer of the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council. The minister addressed a group of over 40 leaders of Ballarat's multicultural communities (inset picture) at the BRMC premises of the GPlace in Golden Point.

**What's Inside:** Africans celebrate in style, page 2; Italian Film Festival, page 3



**THOUGHTFUL:** Ballarat African Association Secretary Buk Dojiok enjoys the success of an evening he helped to organise for the Ballarat community.



**FUN HAD BY ALL:** Adults and children took to the dance floor.

# African revels light up cold winter's night

JUNE 27 was a night of African music, food and live entertainment in Ballarat.

Over 500 people descended on Coinda Hall in Wendouree 27 to celebrate Africa Day in Ballarat and they came from all over Victoria to join in the celebration.

Organised by the Ballarat African Association with support from the BRMC, the night featured food prepared by cooks from the Togolese, South Sudanese, Moroccan Kenyan and Nigerian communities of Ballarat.

There were Togolese and South Sudanese traditional dance performances before the packed hall. And the live music by Afro-Australian fusion band Afrovival and the Oil Can brought everyone to the dance floor.

It was two years since the community had organised its last big event. The celebration on June 27 showed it was high time for more from Ballarat's African communities.



**FUSION:** Afrovival and the Oil Can provided the live music that sustained the festivities after the Togolese and Nuer dancers warmed up the crowd with their traditional dancing.

## A life journey from Germany to Ballarat

**By Irmgard Fedulow**

*I WAS born in Germany. I emigrated to Australia in 1953 with my parents and family – three brothers and my six-month-old old baby girl. We were very excited to come to a new country for a better life.*

*We came by ship. It was called the Anna Salem. It was a very nice ship with a big swimming pool. We were five weeks on board with only water as far as we can see.*

*We arrived at Station Pier in Melbourne on March 15, 1953. There were a lot of people waiting at the pier on arrival. I still remember now, on leaving the ship, my brother called out: "Are there any girls here?"*

*Somebody answered: "Don't worry, mate, there are plenty of girls here." We didn't know anything about Australia.*

*From Station Pier, the train took us on a long journey to Bonnegilla, a large immigration camp in Victoria. It was already dark on arrival, when we were placed in the barracks.*

*Women and children were separated from the men. The barracks had bunk beds, straw mattresses and two army blankets on each*

*bed, a table and two chairs and a tray to get the food from the kitchen.*

*It was all new and very hard to get used to these changes, but we had to get on with our new life. The accommodation was to be only temporary until one had found work, as we had come to Australia on a two-year work contract.*

*I lived with my mother and my baby girl on Block 19, which is now part of the Bonnegilla Migrant Museum.*

*I made many new friends, and we walked a lot in groups in the country. We learned and saw many new things – beautiful gum trees, different birds and kangaroos.*

*After some time, we moved to Ballarat where I met my husband and we were married in 1955.*

*With our new friends, we went to dances, on fishing trips. We had a good time, but we also worked very hard.*

*I got a job at Lakeside Hospital, a mental health institution. I worked very hard there. I could hardly speak English, so I had to learn quickly.*



**Irmgard Fedulow**

*Now I am retired and I still care for people. Once a month I meet at a Multi-Cultural Club where I entertain older people with stories of my life's journey and sometimes sing in English and in my native tongue, German, especially at Christmas time.*

*I have two daughters and a son who is a school teacher. I also have six grand-children.*

*I still often think back of my life, where I was born and where I went to school when I was growing up. I like Australia for its freedom and wide open spaces. I am happy here and I call Australia home.*

# A decade of service in tutoring English, Literacy

BRMC Migrant English Program trains community volunteers to tutor English. Free one-to-one tutoring and conversation classes are offered.

BRMC appreciates the generous and skilled work of Judy Brumby and her volunteers as we mark Judy's tenth year.

"Looking back over the 10 years, a number of things come to mind – the support and friendship of great staff, many wonderful volunteer tutors, and getting to know people from other lands and diverse cultures," says Ms Brumby.

She already had extensive experience with individual tutoring and class work in ESL (English as a Second Language), development of Literacy with adults, youth and children when she joined the BRMC at its Mair Street premises in July 2005.

"My work at BRMC involved coordination of general tutoring, and the AMEP (Adult Migrant English Program) Volunteer Tutor Program in partnership with AMES until 2010. This program expanded considerably from the end of 2005, when our African community

began arriving in Ballarat," she said.

"From a small program with about 20 tutors and 40 students, the program expanded to approximately 60 tutors and 100 or more students, which also included increasing numbers of clients from other countries."

Ms Brumby still works closely with Settlement Services staff, and the newly arrived people were provided through home tutors and a weekly conversation class, regardless of their eligibility for AMEP.

"Along with support from AMES in Melbourne, tutors receive extra training in tutoring strategies, cultural differences and experiences of our clients," she said.

Much of the coordination has been done voluntarily but organisations such as the Victorian Multicultural Council and the City of Ballarat have contributed funds.

Judy is changing her focus a little to concentrate on her literacy-based projects.

"I have recently commenced a Reading and Writing Project which involves a small class conducted by me, with tutors assisting each



**Judy Brumby**

client. There is still a great need amongst many migrants.

"I have particularly enjoyed conducting or taking part in small classes and occasional home tutoring.

"As well as the various teaching strategies used, we found the use of poetry and music lots of fun and invaluable in improving oral and pronunciation skills," said Ms Brumby.

## Eighth Italian Film Festival in September

THE Ballarat Italian Association is hosting the Eighth Annual Italian Film Festival for Ballarat.

All films, which have won awards at festivals around the world, will be screened at the Museum for Australian Democracy (MADE) on Stawell Street on September 4 and 5. **Tickets are only available online before the screenings. See contact details below.**

These films were picked from the Italian Film Festival in Melbourne.

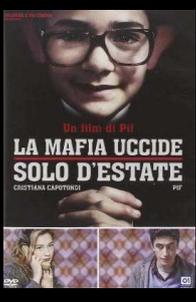
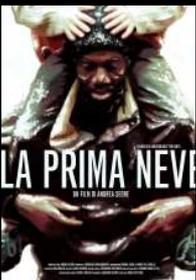
On Friday, September 4, the festival begins with the screening of the children's film *Pinocchio* starting at 5.30pm.

Later in the evening, at 8pm, the film *La Prima Neve* (First Snow) will be screened.

On Saturday, starting at 2pm, *In Grazia Di Dio* (Quiet Bliss) will be shown.

Later on, at 8pm, *La Mafia Uccide Solo D'Estate* (The Mafia Only Kills in Summer) will conclude the festival.

☐ **To buy tickets please contact Jeanne on 0408 313 842 or you can email her at: [jeanne Wheeler@bigpond.com](mailto:jeanne Wheeler@bigpond.com) Tickets will not be available at the door.**



**HANDOVER:** Virgie Hocking, left, of FAABI (Filipino/Australian Association of Ballarat Inc) receives a \$500 cheque from BRMC Executive Officer Ann Foley.

## BRMC contributes to Filipino project

The BRMC recently handed a cheque for \$500 to the Aklan Mission Project which will go towards the building of a multi-purpose centre for underprivileged children in Capiz Province, Visayas Island in the Philippines.

Virginia Hocking, who is a Ballarat-based fundraiser for the project, said the people in Aklan were also raising funds and there was support from sponsors for the project.

When complete, the multi-purpose centre will be able to withstand natural disasters, such as floods and cyclones, that regularly affect the island.

☐ **For information and to offer support, call Lawrie Hocking on 0412 803 835.**



**STALWARTS:** Lawrie Hocking (standing) gives Georgina Vagg a Certificate of Appreciation for her fundraising efforts for the Aklan Mission Project in the Philippines.

# Regular activities

## Community Shed

Meets every Thursday.

A great way to contribute to the community, learn/share skills.

Make friends while having a good time.

Call Kate Allen on 5332 5941

## Homework Club

Every Wednesday from

4pm-5.30pm at Ballarat Library.

Call Tara Hossack on

5338 6864 or via the BRMC

on 5332 5941

## GPlace Gardening Day

Every First Thursday of the month.

9.30am to 12noon.

## Yoga class

Every Monday 5.30pm-6.30pm

at GPlace. \$8 per session, bring your own yoga mat.

Call Mina: 0433 627 770

## Seniors Hub

Multicultural Seniors's Hub meets

every third Tuesday of the month, 2pm to 4pm, at GPlace. Activities include craft activities, indoor sports and games and the Library Outreach programme.

Call Kate Allen or Katja Fiedler on

5332 5941

## Seniors' Cooking Club

The Multicultural Seniors Cooking

Club runs on third Tuesday of every month. Collect delicious

recipes, cook and promote delicious and nutritious food from around the world.

Call Juliet on 0427 647 799

## English Class

1-3pm, every Friday at City of Ballarat Library. Cost \$40.

Concessions apply.

Call Judy Brumby on

0487 173 957

# Determined grandmothers join forces to publicise refugee children's plight

SINCE their launch in May this year, the Grandmothers Against the Detention of Refugee Children (GADRC) Ballarat have certainly drawn attention to their cause.

GADRC in Ballarat was started by three concerned grandmothers in the Bunninyong district.

One of the three, Cath McDonald, had attended a rally of concerned grandmothers in Melbourne last year. She was concerned for the plight of children held in detention on Manus Island and at detention centres in Australia.

"The children are someone's grandchildren, and those grandparents can do nothing to help them. The least we Grandmothers can do is speak for the children who have no voice," Ms McDonald said.

GADRC Ballarat was launched in May and the group liaised with other refugee support groups during Refugee Week 2015 (June 14 to 20).

The colour for GADRC support groups throughout Australia is purple and this was the colour that was prominent during the group's first walk along Sturt Street when they handed out leaflets to the Ballarat public at the start of Refugee Week.

The GADRC opposes the detention in refugee camps. It aims to voice its concerns to politicians and to the public that these children and their families, as well as unaccompanied minors be released into community



**COLOUR PURPLE:** Members of Grandmothers Against the Detention of Refugee Children Ballarat at a recent meeting.

detention. GADRC wants to provide accurate information and education resources about children in detention. It also aims to liaise with other GADRC members and supporters of asylum seekers and refugee groups.

The group meets for coffee on the last Wednesday of every month. The group will next meet on September 30 at the Saltbush Cafe at the Museum of Australian Democracy (MADE) on Stawell Street.

The group is also plans to hold a Spring Walk up Sturt Street on a date still to be decided. There is no fee to join and all are welcome regardless of religious and political affiliations.

To contact Grandmothers Against Detention call Cath McDonald on 0437 185 238; or you could email: grandmothersballarat@gmail.com; or visit: www.facebook.com/GrandmotherBallarat

# Community Bulletin board

## Stammtisch (gathering)

German speakers have a chance to improve their German in a convivial and relaxed setting.

**Where:** Mitchell Harris Wines, 38 Doveton Street North.

**When:** On the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. 5pm to 6pm. Next gathering Tuesday, 8 September.

**Contact:** Call Meg Randles on 0459 361 160.

## Yoga Classes at BRMC

Yoga classes run by Mina to help you become stronger, more flexible and balanced.

**When:** Every Monday 5.30pm to 6.30pm.

**Where:** The GPlace.

**Contact:** Mina 0433 627 770; e: minarz.r@gmail.com

**Cost:** \$8 per session.

## Library Service at the GPlace

Library Outreach programme at the GPlace, home of the BRMC.

**When:** every third Tuesday of the month in the afternoon.

**Where:** GPlace, 102 English Street, Golden Point.

**Contact:** 5332 5941.

## Multicultural Playgroup

The City of Ballarat's Family & Children's Services invites you to the Multicultural Playgroup at the Parent Place. A variety of activities, songs and stories for you and your child to enjoy.

**Where:** The Parent Place, 39 Sturt Street.

**When:** Every Friday from 11am to 12.30pm.

BRMC is the peak multicultural organisation in Ballarat and Central Highlands. We promote cultural diversity and harmony and offer a range of services.

## Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

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