



In focus



Newsletter Issue 33 - December 2014

PO Box 62 Dromana 3936
Telephone: 03 5987 0988
Facsimile: 03 5987 1533
Email: gail@focuslife.com.au
Web: www.focuslife.com.au



Directors

Tony Negri OAM (Chairman)
Paul Hardy-Smith
Sally Harrop
Andrea Heffernan
Sara Jholl
Peter Phillips
David Wansbrough
Paul Williams

Executive Team

Gail Foster
Chief Executive Officer
Nicole Williams
Manager Client Support
Lisa Wilson
Manager Human Resources

FROM THE CEO ...

As we say goodbye to 2014, so too do we say goodbye to Nicole Williams, who has resigned her position at 'focus' after 11-years.

Nicole joined the organisation as a Team Leader in 2004, initially working in Cedar House before moving over to The Rise. She served admirably as a Team Leader for several years before being promoted to Coordinator.

In 2010, she accepted the position as Manager Client Support; where she has remained until now.

As Manager Client Support she took on a huge challenge to oversee all the client support areas across the organisation. It was a challenge that she accepted willingly, she has worked many long hours to make sure she performed the role to the best of her ability. Nicole moves on with our blessing and after a short break she intends to work in other areas of interest to her.

We all wish her the very best of luck and thank her for all she has achieved at 'focus'.

One of the stories inside this edition of the newsletter is from the NEW Ash House, please take the time to have a look at the photos of everyone enjoying their lovely new home. The feedback from the staff has been very positive with everyone saying that it is a pleasure to work there with the spacious surrounds and all the proper equipment required to make working with the clients a little easier.

Now that Ash is completed the Board have made the decision to continue with the Red Hill Redevelopment. For this house we are going to start from scratch to alleviate the need for clients to move into temporary accommodation. If you have been to Red Hill in the last couple of weeks you will have noticed that much of the Orchard has been dug up. As soon as we get a building permit a new house will be constructed on the Orchard. When that is completed a group of people will move in there and one of the old houses will be demolished.

There are very exciting times ahead.

Some people may have noticed more construction work going on at the Red Hill site. This work is being managed by the Department of Human Services, Fire Risk Management Branch. A company has been contracted to design and install a new Fire Hydrant System on the site. This work will take approximately 8-months to complete.

On behalf of everyone at 'focus', I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

To the staff of 'focus' I can only say thankyou for another excellent year, we all know we could not provide the services we do without



AROUND THE HOUSES



your hard work and commitment to the clients you work with. Have a great Christmas.

Gail Foster
Chief Executive Officer



BALCOMBE DRIVE

ROSEMARY'S RETIREMENT

The clients of Balcombe House have been lucky enough to have the same staff member for 27 years. After a long career at Mount Eliza and then in the new house at Balcombe, Rosemary Campbell has decided it is time to retire. On the 19th of October the residents at Balcombe invited their families to celebrate Rosemary's long career. Everyone contributed to lunch and there was a lovely array of meats, salads and yummy deserts.

Everyone enjoyed looking at photos from the past 27 years, there was much laughter and a few tears as speeches were made. Rosemary is happy to retire with her partner Barry and will be travelling and enjoying some leisure time after years of hard work. She will be greatly missed by all at Balcombe House.



VILLA MARIA OUT AND ABOUT FAMILY FUN DAY.



AROUND THE HOUSES

BALCOMBE

Villa Maria out and about family fun day.

Marcus, Catherine Bruce and Marian have been working hard at their BAM dance class.

On Sunday 30th of November they were invited to showcase their dances at The Villa Maria Family Fun Day at Albert Park.

They left Balcombe early, joined by Julia and Chris.

They danced on and in front of the central stage and then their dance group and other people in the crowd were involved in a Flash Mob, it was a lot of fun.

They then wandered over to the Melbourne Aquatic centre and danced 3 more dances to a very appreciative crowd.



There was a free sausage sizzle and free icy cold bottles of water which was great as it was a very muggy day. Everyone wandered around looking at all the different entertainers and activities, catching up with some old friends and making some new ones.

Catherine had a chat to Tim Ferguson who is the ambassador of Villa Maria out and about day. Tim has MS and is now in a wheel chair. A very funny man. We were very lucky to watch a performance by Kate Ceberano, everyone danced and Marcus was lucky enough to have a photo taken with her. Kate is a very talented singer and musician. Everyone agreed it was a great day.



BONDI

There have been lots of activities happening locally and off the Peninsula, it is a busy time of the year.

Cade and Renee had a great day out at the Classic Car Show at Rosebud. They saw the Bat Mobile and the car from Dukes of Hazard. It was a very warm day but they really enjoyed it.

Cade has attended Comiccon where he had photos taken with various Star Wars and Sci fi characters.

Dave continues to enjoy going to hydrotherapy twice a week.

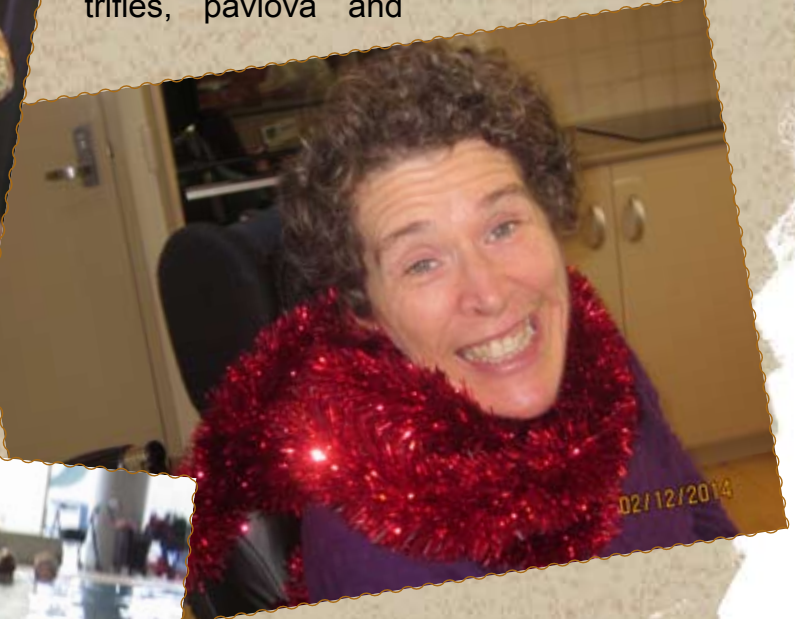
Renee has recently had a family christening and first birthday combined for her niece Miliana. Renee loves getting together with her large family.

We decorated the house and had our party last week and as you can see Megan got right into the spirit of things and decided she would wear some red tinsel. The residents decided we would go the traditional dinner so



we spent all day Saturday cooking Pork, Lamb, Beef and chicken and preparing all the veggies for Sunday. The day went really well and a good time was had by all.

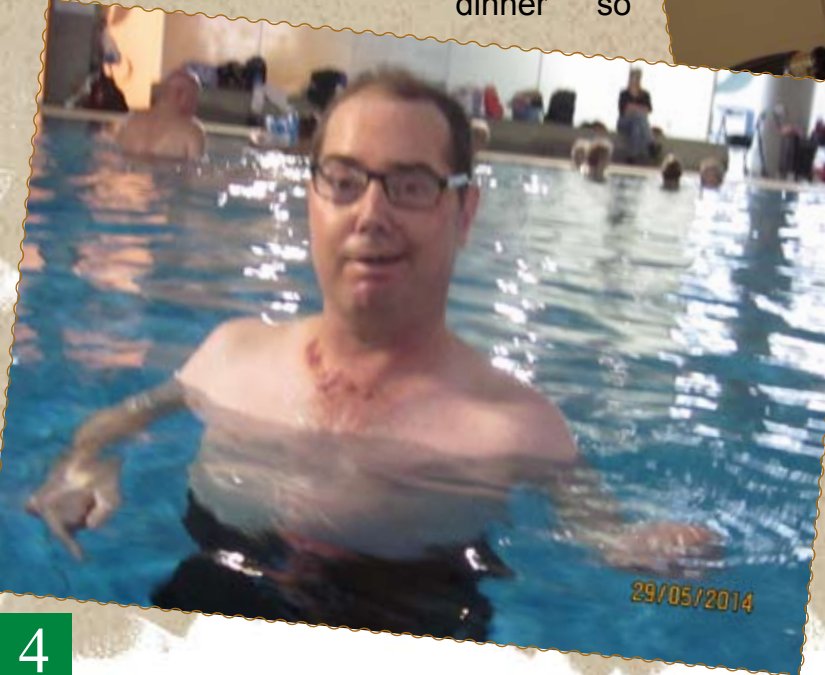
The residents had family members bring along lots of lovely desserts including trifles, pavlova and



lamingtons. Thank you so much for these, we were eating them for 2 days and were thoroughly spoilt.

We have some good things coming up in the next few months. Megan is off to Manpower so hopefully we will have some pics, although we might have to censor them! Renee will see a show; Cade always has plans and is currently building a spice rack at Men's shed.

We want to wish everyone all the best for



CEDAR

BERNIE'S NEW VEGIE PATCH

One of Bernie's goals was to build a vegetable garden.

Staff assisted Bernie to go to Bunnings to purchase tools, soil and vegie plants. Bernie chose to have his vegie garden down by the garden shed.

Every morning Bernie takes his watering can from home and waters the vegies, when they are ready to pick, we will support Bernie to cook them..



Christmas and the coming New Year.



AROUND THE HOUSES



HARTIGAN

Hartigan people have enjoyed many recent activities as you can see from the photos. Sometimes amongst the good times there is still work to do but that can also be fun!

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL FROM EVERYONE AT HARTIGAN HOUSE.



AROUND THE HOUSES

JEANETTE BIKE SHOPPING

I recently went shopping for a new exercise bike, we went to Just Fitness in Frankston were I test drove several bikes. I decided on this nice red one, I am looking forward to getting fit, healthier and enjoying the fresh air.



MICHELLE'S NIGHT OUT

Michelle dressed up and was on her way to the Frankston Arts Centre. She followed staff across the road and picked up the tickets at the office before the show; she was busy looking at everyone. Michelle looked at the art work while waiting for the show to begin. She appeared excited to see Beatle Boys. She stayed in the seat for the whole two and half hours watching all the audience singing and dancing. She appeared to be watching the audience more than watching the Beatles. She was clapping her hands all night and swinging to the music. She was very happy after hearing 40 greatest Beatles songs; she really enjoyed herself.



AROUND THE HOUSES



ASH FLAT

THE NEW ASH HOUSE

On Monday 3rd November 2014 the new Ash House was officially opened with residents moving in to their new home.

Everyone is very happy with the spacious new abode and in the few short weeks since the opening the ladies and gents have settled in nicely.



AROUND THE HOUSES

OLSEN HOUSE

DISCO DIVAS

It is no secret that the Ladies here at Olsen LOVE to get their groove on; and do so with style.

Every month Dixie, Sue, Holly and Nicole get all frocked up and head to the Wesley Mission Disco and the end of year Disco Bash where they dance the night away.

ALL of the party favorites are played like YMCA, The Nutbush and The Macarena.

Holly really likes to see how the staff shake their booty and get her moving.

For Dixie it's a chance to let go and dance like no one is watching.

Sue loves to do the Time Warp Again!!!!!! With a jump to the left..... you know the rest.

And Nicole couldn't wait to socialise with all the other disco goers.

Not a bad way to spend a Friday night!



GLAMOROUS SUE

Sue recently had a mention in an edition of our Newsletter where her proud face was seen at the SASI Art Exhibition held at Cube 37.

Sue's artwork piece "Rose" was purchased by a Member of Parliament to be on display in Parliament House.

So, what to spend her prize money on??

Sue took herself down to Myer with one intention..... to find the most GLAMOUROUS DRESS.

And she succeeded.

Sue came home with a Gorgeous Blue and Black striped dress. This was a purchase done all by herself with the lovely Myer ladies help.

Sue was so pleased with herself and this really showed when she did a fashion show for staff.

Even better, Sue has shown herself to be an excellent bargain hunter. Her new dress was a steal, costing her less than HALF of its original price.

Staff here at Olsen are thinking about asking Sue what her thrifty shopping secrets are in hopes that we too can have similar luck.

EXCELLENT work Sue, you look stunning.

Now to find an occasion to wear your dress.



AROUND THE HOUSES



OLSEN HOUSE

HOLLY'S COOKING ADVENTURES

Review: Le Olsen Grill and Patisserie.

"Yum!" –Resident

"Culinary EXCELLENCE!" -Staff

Tonight I had the pleasant opportunity to dine in one of Frankston's up and coming eateries.

Le Olsen Grill and Patisserie boasts a chef who was trained by the culinary experts and the best support team ever seen in a kitchen.

All meals are prepared with care and precision.

Nothing Makes Chef Holly happier than seeing people enjoying her food.

The food: The EXCITING set Menu offers the personal preferences of Chef Holly, including imaginative reworks of classics, creations to satisfy the biggest of sweet tooth, and humble soul food to warm you to the core during the winter months.

All dishes are carefully chosen by the Chef herself in consultation with her kitchen support crew and only use the finest of ingredients.

The Restaurant: Great Atmosphere, great support team, meals all served promptly at 6pm which suits my early evening stomach rumbles.

THE VERDICT: All should know the excellence that is Le Olsen Grill and Patisserie. I cannot wait until I next visit and see what Chef Holly comes up with next.

Star rating 5/5



OPPY HOUSE

NEW PET

This year there has been much discussion about a 'pet' at Oppy house so after research and planning (and the generous donation of an awesome tank by Sally's family) Ten handpicked fish have moved in - they all have names (these change daily) and the ladies spend a lot of time watching and talking to them. They take it in turns to feed them. They are proving to be a great hit (and much easier to manage than one suggestion of having a tiger as a pet!



AROUND THE HOUSES

OPPY HOUSE

BAM DANCE GROUP

Sunday 30th November Jane, Pip, Sally and Debra were part of the BAM dance group performing at Albert Park for Villa Maria's Out and About Family Day. If being part of the dynamic group and also a flash mob! Was not enough there was much to see and do – hang out with Australian Cricketers, listen to Kate Ceberano jamming and generally mingling and having a great time.

The four ladies have LOVED their weekly dance classes this year and are looking forward to more great routines in 2015.



WELCOME DEB

Debra Black come into Oppy House last August and settled very quickly saying she loves living with the other ladies.

Deb is taking on new challenges and goals and embracing her new life. Welcome Deb!



AFTERNOON TEA

A Festive afternoon tea for the Oppy ladies and their families (and the odd Significant Other)

Was held recently with all attendees proclaiming it to be a great success – raving over the home baked delicacies and atmosphere. Lovely to see family members joining Fiona, Jane, Pip, Sally and Deb to celebrate Christmas and the end of the year. We all look forward to 2015.



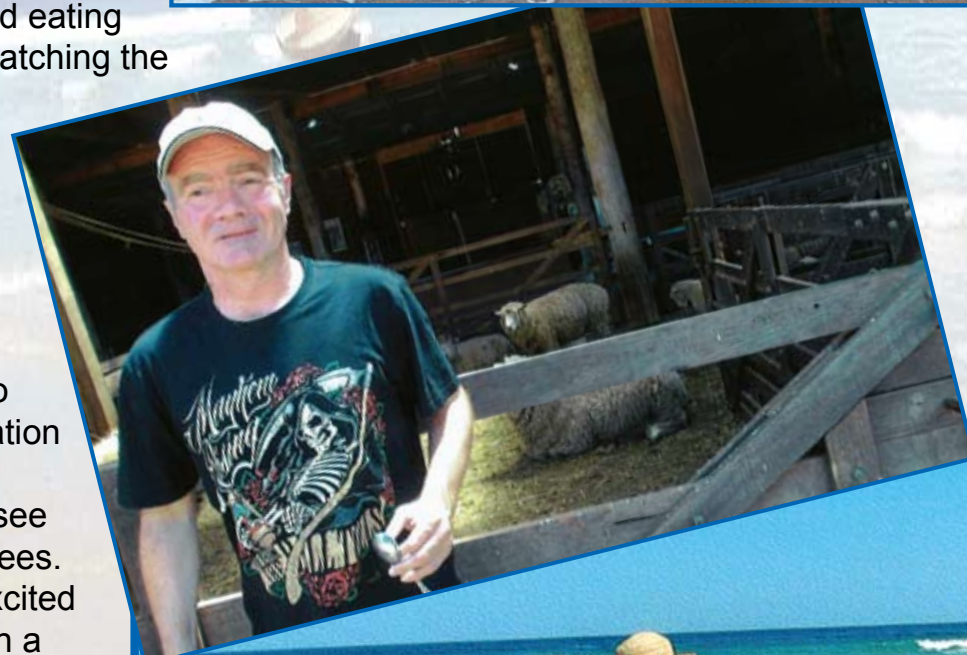
RYMER HOUSE

PHILLIP ISLAND HOLIDAY

Katrina and Michael started their holiday to Phillip Island for 4 days, first going to Woolworths to buy supplies for the weekend. They chose what they would like for breakfast and dinners. We then headed off to Phillip Island, arriving at Wheelies Rest Holiday House. Katrina and Michael unpacked their bags and made their beds. We then went into Cowes and got fish & chips for lunch which we all enjoyed eating at the picnic area watching the boats.

Seagulls were a pain, stealing a dim sim out of Karen's hand. Katrina said that was funny. After lunch Katrina and Michael went to the Koala Conservation Centre and walked around the park to see the Koala's in the trees. Katrina was very excited to see a mother with a baby in its pouch. . Saying "Baby Koala, baby Koala". Then it was off to the beach, they really seemed to enjoy the water taking their shoes off and walking in up to their knees. Lots of smiles and splashing the water.

Next day it was off to the Phillip Island Grand Prix Visitor Centre. Both Katrina and Michael liked watching the cars doing



laps, though we found the cars a bit loud. We then went back to the holiday house to make a picnic lunch, then off to a farm to see the animals. Katrina seemed to like the horse the most but also liked the baby chickens. Michael liked the sheep. We then sat to eat lunch and listen to the live music before walking around the homestead. On the way back to the holiday house we stopped at the beach to cool down as it was a very hot day.



Katrina & Michael got up early as Michael was heading back to back to Rymer House but Katrina continued with her holiday for a few more days. She went to French Island, out for dinner and then the Penguin Parade. We arrived at the Penguin Parade at 8pm, it was a good time to arrive as the penguins started coming up the beach at 8:20pm. Katrina said that it was funny when all the

Penguins ran back into the sea before starting the walk back up the beach. She went to the board walk to see the penguins up close as they were walking along the tracks. It was a good time of the year to go as there were lots of baby chicks coming out of the nests to get fed by the parents. It was a really enjoyable holiday and one that we would like to do again.



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT



CERTIFICATE 1 IN WORK EDUCATION

Our students recently graduated from the Certificate 1 in Work Education. Congratulations to all involved.



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

BIRDS FOR FLINDERS

Flinders room have been busy working to our new time tables, which are more individualised and also updated to our participants changing needs and likes.

Many of our participants continue to enjoy Sailing of the beautiful bay launching from Blairgowrie Yacht Club. Which is at present under going a rebuild so this will be exciting to watch and see the end result of a new modern building and state of the art marina and harbour .

One of the new programs is gardening with Maree, this has been so much fun, learning the process of planting the seeds, caring for the seedlings – watching them grow large enough to be planted into the garden beds, a sprinkler system has been installed now this will ensure our plants survive over the hot summer.

We have also been busy completing a visual poster of each participant's individual goals, these are displayed in the room and will be a focus to try to achieve all in 2015.

We have also been making some items for the Christmas market they were cups and saucers with bags of wild bird seed, with gluing, making tags and bagging up the bird seed. They will hopefully make some wild birds happy of the hot season when food is hard to find.

Our aviary is still our responsibly, and enjoy the calmness of sitting inside the aviary and watching the birds enjoying the fresh branches we supply each week. Our new birds a pair of quail have been very busy also and currently have 9 eggs we hope to have little baby quail soon.

So please enjoy your Christmas with your families and loved ones, we shall see you all back safe and sound on the 5th of January, 2015.



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT



RED HILL GARDEN PAINT DAY

Despite waking up to an overcast day with rain threatening all participants decided the weather was not going to put a dampener on a fun day. Thanks to Bunnings and Dulux, who had supplied the paint, crowds gathered in the vegetable garden to paint the planter boxes in bright colors. Rainbow color scheme was chosen to symbolize the change in the growth cycle of the produce in each of the planter boxes.

Following a morning's hard work, a bbq lunch was enjoyed by all. The day also marked the delivery of our new outdoor settings, constructed by hands on learning students from Frankston High School. The tables look fantastic and natural materials reflect what the garden is all about. A big thank you to Frankston High School Students!



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

STRETCH & MOVEMENT PROGRAM

Well our new program has been up and running, dancing, stretching, throwing, catching, stepping and smiling for the last few months.

The participants warm up with a series of gentle exercises and stretches, then move on to a series of floor activities including a floor ladder and hurdles. Everyone is getting use to the flow of the session and all are improving each session. Moving around the circuit the next activity is the target hoop, where the aim is to throw a selection of the balls, rings, hoops, sticks, woven balls dependant on their holding capabilities through the hoops, this activity is the favourite of many of the clients and they are showing a huge improvement.

The next activity is a rebound nett furthering the skills practiced with the target hoops, the aim is to throw the ball at the centre of the nett and catch it. This was difficult at first for many but they improve every week, so much so that one participant Deb Kearney has been awarded a certificate for 116 catches.

Deb is a star at throwing and



catching, this improvement of her hand eye co ordination and concentration , also her confidence is fantastic showing what a little practice, encouragement and determination how you can improve.

We will continue to coach, encourage, teach and have lots of fun in the new program.



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT



CAMP MANYUNG

Bags packed ready for an adventure at camp Manyung. Arrival time was 6 pm on Friday night and every-one was excited to be there. There was the usual meet and greet with the other participants and team leaders of the camp. We checked out our cabin, unpacked the bags and headed to the dinning room for dinner. .



Up early for an exciting day of great activities. Breakfast then a camp meeting. Jackson, Josh and Bruce were ready for the day. Every-one was assigned to different groups. We were in Evans group. First activity of the day was an obstacle course through the trees.

Bruce was the first to go yelling and laughing, Jackson next. Jackson had all the safety gear on but chickened out and was happy to watch. Then came Josh ever so polite and wanting to go last. Once through they just kept wanting to go again and again.

Next was the pizza making. Every-one helped pick the herbs from the garden. Pizzas were made then

eaten. Jackson, Josh and Bruce then then went to the beach for fun activities. On the way we all collected items for our



Hollywood Disco night to use in making the Limo's to ride the Red carpet. The Hollywood Disco night. Jackson, Josh and Bruce all dressed ready to party. Lots of dancing and having a great night.

Every one was excited by the day, getting ready for the Red Faces comp. Lots of dancing, singing and having fun. Awards were given. Three cheers and it was time to say good bye. Off home after a fantastic week-end of fun and laughter until the next camp.



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

FUN TIMES AT MCALISTER

McAlister have been involved in some fun and exciting activities over the months.

McAlister was involved in the (come and try fishing competition) at Lilydale Lake organized through Scope. It was a fantastic day for every-one involved. Scope put on a BBQ lunch and drinks. Then it was down to the business of trying to catch some fish (Trout). With volunteers on hand to help out every-one was ready to go. With support from staff, rods were cast ready to hook the big one. In minutes they were biting and fish were being hauled in. It was a catch and release system. A Rex Hunt kiss and release. Big smiles from every-one with lots of screams and laughter. A good days fishing.

We now have a Lawn mowing program at McAlister involving Jackson and Gerard mowing a Lawn in Rosebud. It's a fortnightly program of mowing and weeding the garden as well as mowing at McAlister. Jackson is always wanting to mow lawns where ever he goes and Gerard likes the outdoors. With a hello from the guys then its down to mowing. Its great for the guys to be out in the community and meeting people. McAlister also has lots of other exciting things on the go. Stay tuned for more news to come.



THE WORKSHED

At the Workshed, we have built so many great things!

We helped build a chest of draws for Mikael:

We built a footstool for Mikael to use at his flat.

And some great Christmas decorations to take home for our parents, but don't tell them, it's a surprise!





Michael has recently joined the Tuesday Music Group at the Salvo's in Hastings. Michael enjoys the atmosphere and chatting to other participants and staff. He moves and grooves to the tunes and always has a big smile on his face. Well done Michael!
We look forward to seeing you back next year!!

OUTREACH NEWS

Irene enjoyed a trip on the ferry from Sorrento to Queenscliff on a beautiful sunny Sunday, we were sitting inside enjoying a coffee when we were surprised and delighted to see a pod of dolphins showing off in the water. We walked into Queenscliff and brought some fish and chips for lunch and wandered around the main street shops.

Gary too enjoyed a trip on the ferry on a bleak Wednesday, he did not see any dolphins this trip. We brought fish and chips for lunch and sat in the park to eat them surrounded by hundreds of seagulls and a family of magpies. Mum magpie was so gassy as she stole a chip from my hand as I was putting it to my mouth. We sat at the front of the ferry coming home and Gary thought he was Leonardo Di Caprio in the film Titanic!!

Ron has made a new friend who lives in a paddock up the road from him. Ron walks daily down to feed "Neddy" as he has named him. Neddy enjoys the apples and carrots Ron provides and has also almost

overcome his fear of horses. Neddy comes when Ron calls him and is beautiful horse.

