

FROM THE CEO ...

Welcome back to our first newsletter for 2015, as you can see from this bumper edition people have been out and about really enjoying the summer months.

Those of you who have visited the Red Hill property over the last few weeks, will have noticed the new house rising out of the ground on the old orchard. It is taking shape quickly, we hope to have the roof on and the bricks started before the Easter break.

It has been decided that this house will replace Oak House, the current Oak clients will move across as soon as the building is completed. We will then demolish Oak House. It is a very exciting time for everyone involved, people are busy choosing their colour schemes and buying new furniture to really personalise their rooms.

The construction zone will be off limits to all throughout the construction period, but if anyone would like to see the building, please let me know and I can arrange a visit.

VALE – Stephen James Hucks 5/1/1958 – 6/2/2015

Stephen Hucks lived at 'focus', since he moved into the Ruth Rd/ Century Dve property in 1998. He moved across to Bungower Road several years ago when his health first began to deteriorate.

The staff at Bungower must be congratulated on the manner in which they cared for Stephen, even when his condition became palliative; they made the decision that if it was at all possible they would care for him in his own home until the end. Stephen passed away peacefully at Bungower on the 6th February. May he now rest in peace.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

There is still an enormous amount of work being undertaken to ensure the full roll out of the NDIS across Australia.

Senator, the Hon Mitch Fifield, the Commonwealth Minister responsible for disability and aged care released a communique, after the COAG meeting held on 16th February 2015.

Amongst other things it stated: "All governments reaffirmed their commitment to ensure the transition to the full scheme roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is achieved, consistent with the timeframes and funding arrangements set out

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

Vacant

Manager Client Support

Lisa Wilson

Manager Human Resources

in the Heads of Agreements already signed between the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments.

All governments are working in consultation with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), to develop approaches to transition taking into account local circumstances of each jurisdiction and promoting the best possible outcomes for people with disability.

Negotiations are underway on the approach to transition in each jurisdiction and the phasing in of clients, with agreements expected to be finalised bilaterally between relevant governments by June 2015.

These plans will detail key implementation arrangements for each jurisdiction, and will focus on the preparations required by all parties to ensure the NDIS is successfully implemented consistent with transition agreements”. (COAG Disability Reform Council Communique, 16 February 2015).

From all of that it appears that we will have more information about when we will be transition to the NDIS, by June this year. Once we know the timelines we are working towards we will be able to finalise our plans for transition, and provide additional information to families.

In closing, I take this opportunity to wish all our families and supporters a very Happy Easter.

Gail Foster
Chief Executive Officer

BALCOMBE DRIVE

BAM DANCE

Marcus, Bruce, Catherine and Marian go to dance lessons every Saturday at Monash University. Their dance group is called BAM.

On Saturday 21st February they were very proud to show case some of their dances to the community. It was a hot and muggy day, but that didn't stop these fabulous dancers showing off their moves. They danced to four songs and then had a well earned drink. The crowd were very appreciative of their hard work.

BAM is a great way to keep fit and have fun to music, so if you love music and to dance come along and Bust A Move.

BERRY BBQ

The residents of Berry House had a great day out. We all went for a BBQ down at the Rosebud West campsite. Alex cooked the sausages we had a great meal, then went for a drive to Flinders and took a tour of all the beautiful sites.

FI AND BRUCE IN THE CITY

Fiona and Bruce took off on their weekend escape to Melbourne in great spirits. They were looking forward to a fun-filled weekend with each other. Knowing their passions and interests, they spent time enjoying train, tram and bus rides in between window shopping, REAL shopping and dining out. The hotel was in a central spot with some lovely staff ready to help out. Fiona was incredibly brave, daring to take a ride on the Melbourne Star Observation Wheel, and the ice cream stop afterwards was well deserved. There was just enough time to take a tour of the city on the Melbourne Shuttle bus on Saturday morning, before heading to the theatre for the main event of the weekend: Grease, the musical. Both Bruce and Fi had a fantastic time, singing along and having a boogie in their seats. Sunday was a chance to stroll through the Queen Vic Market before heading home. It was a lovely weekend, spending some shared time together.

PINE HOUSE

There have been some big changes at Pine House over the last few months. Joining Jane, Warwick has moved over from Cedar and Mandy has moved from Berry. Warwick and Mandy have enjoyed decorating their new bedrooms complete with brand new furniture. All three people have settled in very well together and have been up to lots of exciting activities. Warwick and Jane enjoyed a visit to the Sand Sculptures exhibit at the Frankston Foreshore and a day out at the Balnarring Races, and they had a wonderful time celebrating at Jenny Williamson's Birthday party in the Negri Hall.

AROUND THE HOUSES



BONDI

HAVING A SAY CONFERENCE, GEELONG 2015

Cade and Renee from Bondi went to the "Having A Say Conference" In Geelong. Cade has been to the conference many times but this was Renee's first experience. They both had a great time. Cade got himself actively involved in answering questions on the NDIS he gave a lot of input to the questions the representative was asking him. Cade also took part in the creative writing workshop; this is something he enjoys

Renee seemed to be quite overwhelmed by all the people but enjoyed herself. She went to badge making classes and made badges for Cade and the staff who supported her; this give her a great deal of fun. She also met some of her friends from her Thursday morning art group which got her excited. Renee also enjoyed some of the performances that where in the main auditorium, there was live music which she says " get down and boogie" and a movie in which people had directed and produced.

After a long day

at the conference both Cade and Renee went to the Belmont Hotel for tea and a drink Cade had the standard " schnitzel and chips" whilst Renee tucked into Steak and Chips washed down with a beer as the whole pub knew what she was having "Corona with a slice of lemon" After a good rest and breakfast we headed back to the conference and had a look around the displays.

Cade was impressed by the transport that was there and had to give it a try. The van was quite roomy and he got in without

problems and straight to the steering wheel. Both Renee and Cade liked the vehicles.

After a look around the exhibit's Cade and Renee went for a look around Geelong and lunch before heading off back home Both Cade and Renee said they had a great time and are looking forward to next year.



AROUND THE HOUSES

OAK HOUSE

JENNY'S 68TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

Loads of fun was had with family, friends, fellow house mates and staff to celebrate

this special day. The juke box was playing and yummy party food was enjoyed by all. Jenny received lots of presents and played the perfect hostess to her guests.

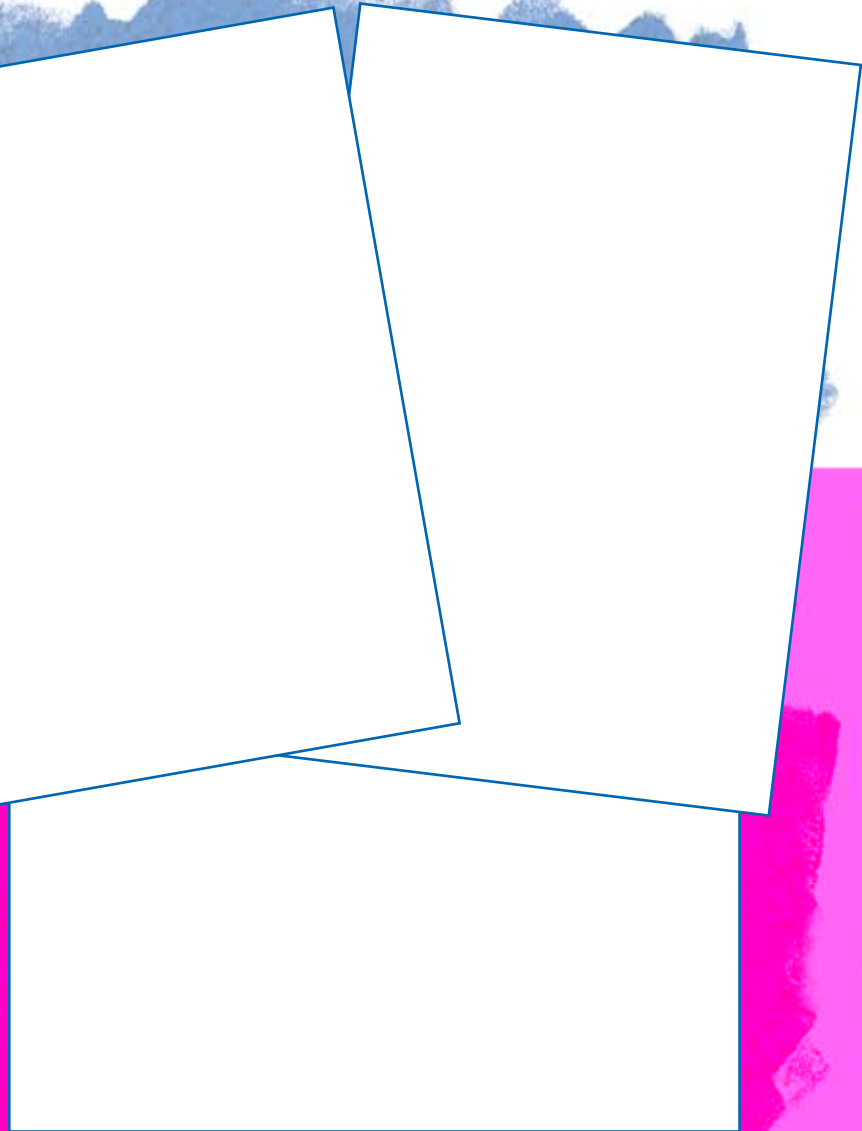


OPPY HOUSE

OPPY ACTIVITIES

Roll Up Roll Up cried the Ring Master, and Fiona, Pip, Sally and Debra did indeed ‘roll up’ very excited to see the Big Top and soak up the atmosphere. Jugglers, clowns, trapeze acts and motorbikes – what an awesome show! And they told the Ring Master that when they caught up with him. Ahhhh perhaps they are now dreaming of running off and joining the circus?

The BAM dance troupe were part of the Frankston Waterfront Festival and their performance was well received with lots of people watching. Afterward Pip, Sally and Debra strolled along the waterfront checking out the stalls and information booths dotted everywhere. They also hung out with a couple of non vertically challenged people.



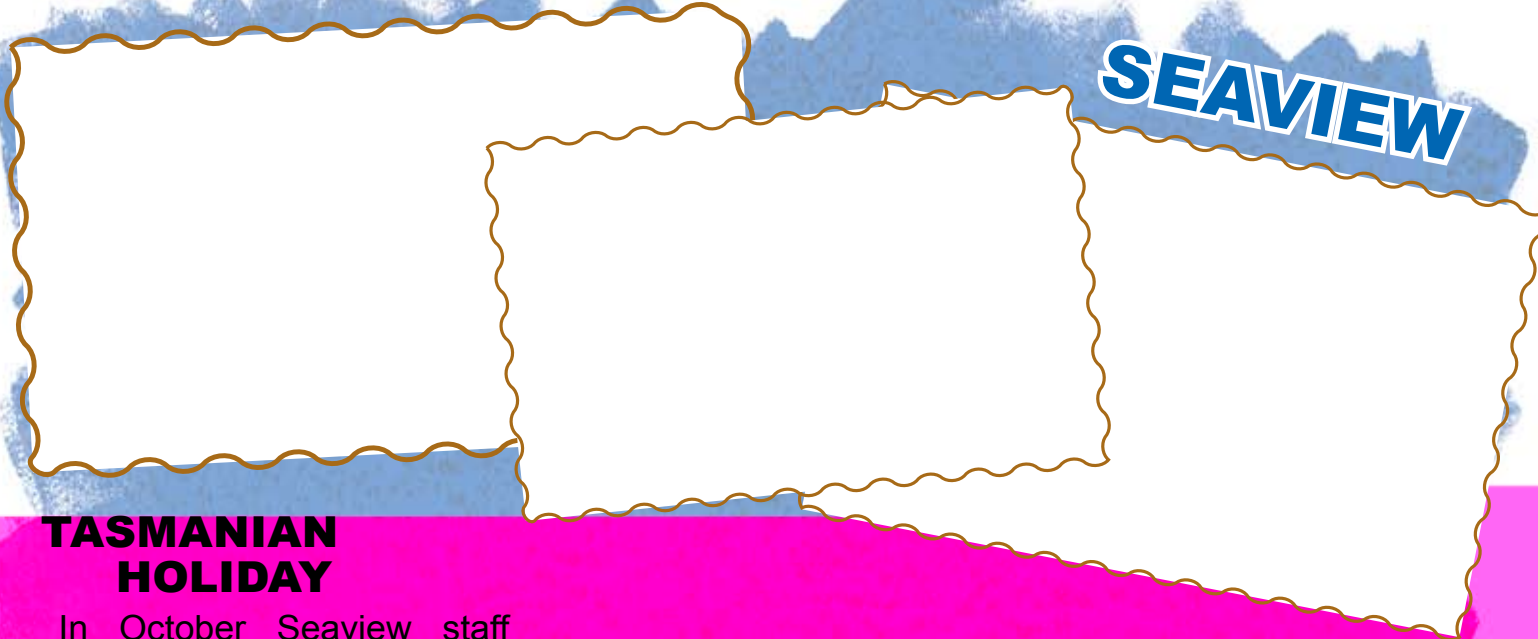
ASH HOUSE

In February Ricky had a birthday bash with his family at L’Aqua in Dromana.

A great time was had by all, especially Ricky as he was spoiled with lots of presents and family hugs. After a rousing rendition of “Happy Birthday” Ricky got to the good bit.....the cake.



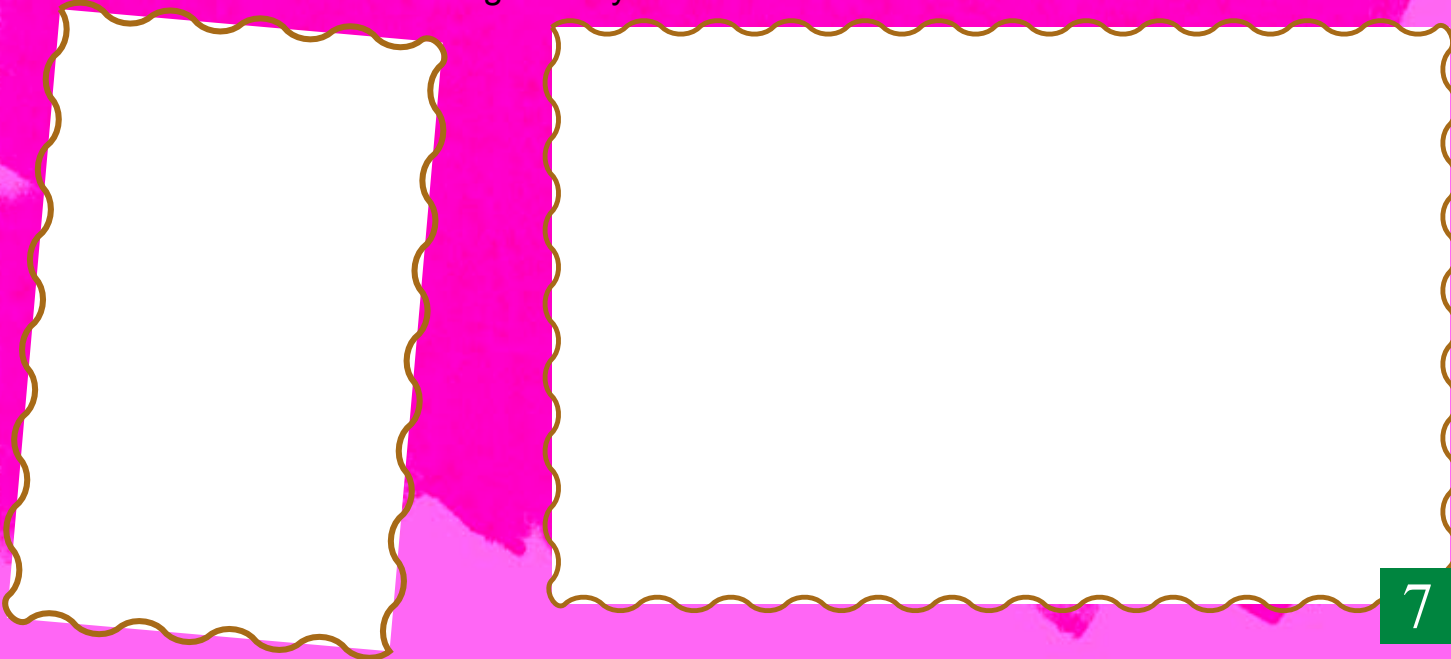
SEAVIEW



TASMANIAN HOLIDAY

In October Seaview staff supported Mary-Anne on a wonderful five day holiday to Tasmania with her mother Heather.

Mary-Anne was very excited to go to the airport and catch the plane. Once we arrived in Tasmania we picked up the hire care and drove to Wynyard for lunch and a coffee. We then continued on for a two hour drive to get to our destination the historic Stanley! We stayed at the beautiful Hanlon House which was right next to the water and as soon as we arrived Mary-Anne got to pat a baby penguin! For the next few days Mary-Anne enjoyed sightseeing, travelling to Smithton shopping, going out for lunch, and to spend lots of time with her mother and cousins Marion and Peter, who also run the local Museum. When we visited the museum Mary-Anne was given some beautiful souvenirs made by Marion, for herself and also some to bring back for the other residents at Seaview. Mary-Anne also enjoyed visiting all the local shops in Stanley and travelling to the Gift shop at the ‘Nut’ a historic volcanic landmark in Stanley. Mary-Anne says her favorite part of the trip was visiting the ‘Nut’ and spending time with her mum and she would like to go back and visit again very soon!



AROUND THE HOUSES >>>>>

THE RISE

All the people at The Rise love to get out and about in the community...

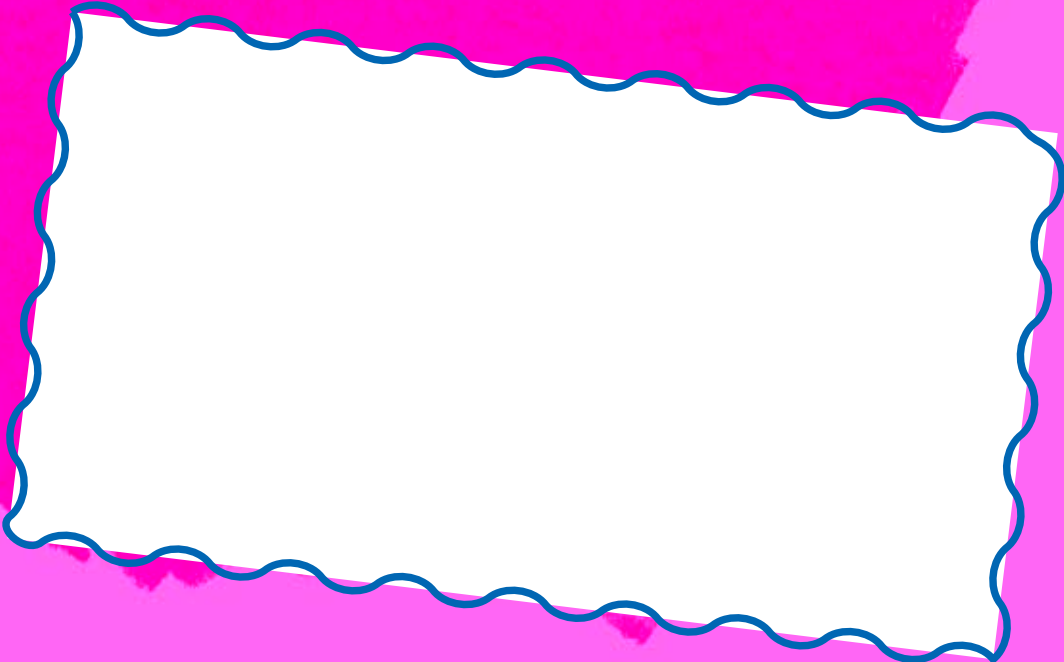
Aaron walked for 90 minutes at the 1000 steps walk in the Dandenong Ranges. He walked up and down a lot of steps! A fun outing and a great effort from Aaron.

Katrina enjoyed visiting the Frankston Waterfront Festival recently. She listened intently to the band on the main stage, 'Sol Nation' (Take a large melting pot, fill it half way with Reggae, add a dash of East Timorese folk song, a punch of Cuban Salsa, a sprinkle of Latin dance... Sol Nation!)

Robbie enjoyed Crib Point open air heated pool recently. Robbie walked around in the water and also did some breast stroke. One of the Peninsula's 'hidden gems!'

Wendy visited Dromana bowls club Australia Day week-end to take part in 'barefoot bowls.' Wendy was happy and laughing as she enjoyed a barbecue dinner and the ambiance of being at the busy bowls club.

Charmaine says, 'You're a chicken!'" Charmaine is pictured here at the end of a recent shopping trip to Big W at Karingal to purchase a wrestling dvd for herself.



OLSEN HOUSE

BASIC HOSPITALITY

This first term of 2015 saw the introduction of a new program in Dromana. A small group of participants get together once a week for a full day where they are working on healthy cooking choices, cooking skills and budgeting in relations to entertaining visitors. Each group member has chosen 2 meals, which in turn is prepared and cooked weekly – practice makes perfect! Where possible, fresh ingredients are being used to prepare the meals. Some ingredients are picked from our own garden. So far we have made our own tomato pesto, our own tomato pasta sauce with garden grown herbs and some very yummy healthy smoothies...who would have thought spinach could be so tasty.....

The end of the year will see the group inviting guests for a special lunch at ISS Dromana with scrumptious fresh food – stay tuned.

he n ro a s ea a o eep l



DRAMA CONNECTIONS

Drama Connections was excited to be able to present a special Christmas Concert for the good folk at Regis Sherwood Park, Retirement Village in Cranbourne. We all had new shirts to wear on the day, and after practising for many months, we were finally about to perform. We took along a keyboard, drums and guitars. Sandy Squire-Hill, Jaki Handley and Jackie Compton, got us to the venue on time, and helped us set up. We started with a few favourites from ABBA, then a couple of Elvis songs, where Marcus shone. Koochie sang a couple of numbers and then all too soon it was Marcus and Mary doing some rap which was appreciated by the elderly audience. We then

finished off with a traditional Christmas song. The audience loved our concert and we look forward to performing at more nursing homes during the year.



MCALISTER- MCALISTER SOX AND MIGHTY MCALISTER

McAlister had two teams strutting their stuff at the Great South East Bowl Off. The McAlister Socks whose uniform included the longest, craziest and most fashionable socks around and Mighty McAlister. McAlister's bowlers were Adam, Fiona, Tim, Gerard, Deb, Bernie, Pip, Amanda, Jackson and Chris. With such extraordinary talent, pins were being knocked down left, right and centre and there were many strikes. It was a brilliant day with smiles all around and everyone enjoyed the games, great atmosphere, delicious lunch and getting to meet the other teams. McAlister will be happy to compete again next year.

RED HILL- 'FOCUS' POWER

An awesome day was had by the Red Hill team 'focus' Power who consisted of Geoffrey, Anita, Melinda, David, Sarah and Becky at the Great South East Bowl Off. Sign in was first on the agenda when arriving and then it was straight to our appointed lane of No 23 to start our day. Every body in our team was very excited especially when it was their turn to bowl and in true team spirit there were high fives all round. Anita had all our team cheering for her amazing strike half way through the game, well done Anita.

DROMANA- FABULOUS 'FOCUS' LEGENDS

This Dromana team consisted of some pretty cool and fast paced bowlers which were hard to keep up with and so we saw some fantastic bowling, loads of strikes, plenty of high fives and some great teamwork from the Fabulous focus Legends. The bowlers making up the team were Ryan, Damien, Mary, Catherine, Deb and Marcus and as for the team uniform well let's just say we couldn't be missed. Damien won a door prize and we all had a sensational day.

HAVING A SAY CONFERENCE

In February Deb, Adam and Sam went to Having a Say Conference in Geelong for the day to perform on stage with the Cirque Sur Roués work shop group that they have been attending in Frankston. Along with Gerard and Amanda who were already at the conference they all took part in a performance and did an outstanding job. During the weeks leading up to the performance everyone worked hard on their routines, getting ready to show the audience their extraordinary talent. Lots of music and dance movements using ribbons, hoops, poi balls and devil sticks. There were claps and cheers from the audience after a great performance.

McAlister attend a fishing group which is held at the Patterson River in Carrum. This activity is on a Monday fortnightly basis, everyone that attends has a great time and there are lots of stories about the one that got away. Adam just happened

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT



to catch the first fish of the day with one cast of his rod and the fish was hooked. That was the only fish caught for the day and if you ask Adam how big it was he bends the truth a little. Well done Adam. Sailability at Mornington Yacht Club has recently commenced for McAlister and all the clients are keen to get in the boats whether they are in the two person boat or the power boat. We soak up the views of Mornington Harbor. Sailability is run by a group of fantastic, motivated people who volunteer their time for us to attend this

is coming along nicely, McAlister participants enjoy going there and getting their hands dirty, helping out and learning how plants and vegies grow in the garden and how to look after them, but most of all it's the excitement of seeing what they have grown and been able to take it home to eat. McAlister now have Clients attending Certificate 1 in Transition Education/Social Impact being held in Dromana which is all

great activity. We appreciate all the hard work they put in so that all goes smoothly The women's group at McAlister were lucky enough to receive tickets to go and see the Sand sculpting at Frankston foreshore. This year's theme was Disney's "Friends, Foes and Super Heroes" It was a great day and the Ladies enjoyed their time at the event. McAlister's garden plot at the "Joy of the Earth Community Garden" in Frankston



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

about developing social skills and also building and maintaining friendships there has been some really good feedback from the participants that attend. Jane volunteers her time on a Tuesday morning to help the ladies at the Red Cross Op Shop in Frankston. She sorts out the clothes and prices them for sale, but most of all Jane enjoys socialising with the people that work there. She loves to tell us about it when she gets back.

Mitchell room has celebrated two birthdays over February/March. Jessica and John both seemed to enjoy their cakes and having "Happy Birthday" sang to them!

CERTIFICATE IN WORK EDUCATION GRADUATION CEREMONY

On the 17th of December last year, our students from the Work Education Course celebrated the completion of their studies. A Graduation Ceremony was held at L'Aqua Restaurant in Dromana. The students sat down for a delicious lunch together with their teacher, Terri, and Support Worker, Isaac. Special guests also dropped in for a meal and a chat: some parents, residential staff and members of the Management team. Everyone had a great time. The students were happy to have completed the course, and their guests were proud of what they had achieved. When the meals were finished, it was time for speeches. The students gave Terri a special gift in appreciation for her hard work. Terri and Isaac then handed out certificates to the students, who all had big smiles on their faces. It was a wonderful occasion, and a fitting finale for all the dedication the students had shown. Well done to you all!

STRETCH & MOVEMENT PROGRAM

Our Stretch & Movement program continues its success; this term we have new participants who after only a short time in the program are excelling in their range of movement.

All of the participants are joining in with the group activities, are engaged and having fun, they are involved in sharing, show a willingness to help others in the program, have learned patience, while improving their own fitness and movement.

We have purchased some new equipment and everyone has had a wonderful time getting involved in the new activities and using this equipment which includes Hop Scotch, Totem Tennis, Hula Hoops and a game which involves throwing velcro balls onto a target hoop. This piece of equipment has been the one most enjoyed by participants and Ricky Wallace has had great success with it and to date has got all 24 of the balls to stick to the target.

Melinda and Deb's favourite are the new hula hoops which fling and spin and are so much fun that even James, Sarah and Geoff have given them a try.

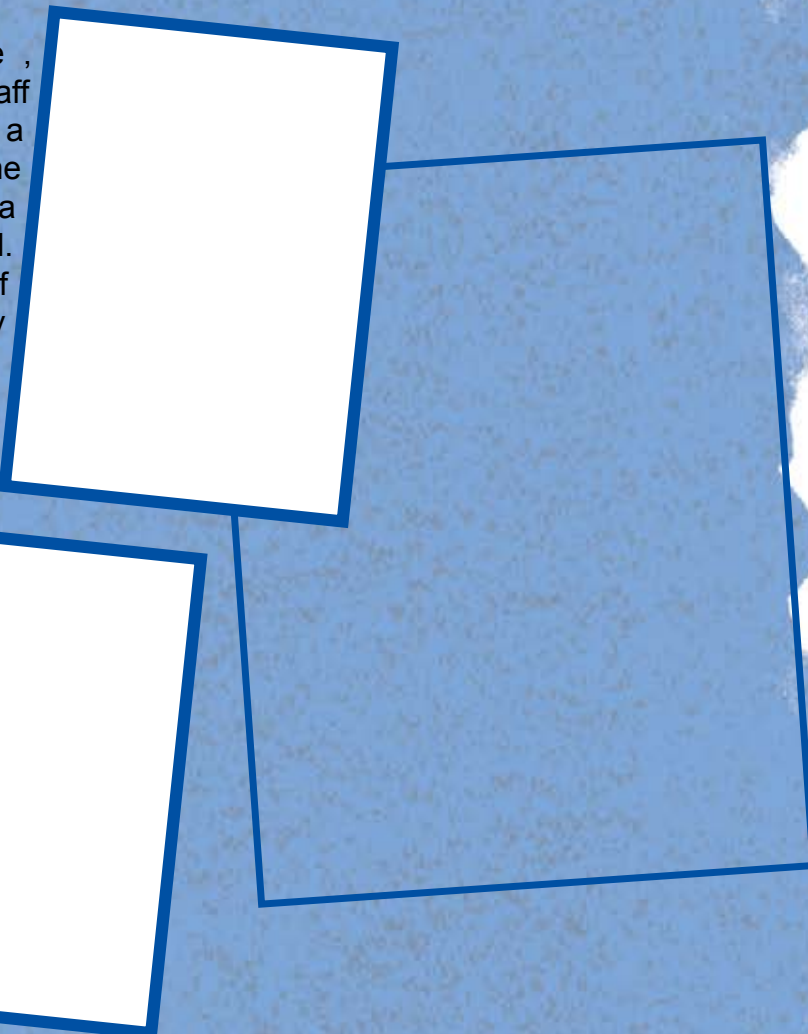
The Stretch and Movement Program, increases hand eye-coordination, stretches muscles, develops skills and is a fun way to work in a group, have lots of laughs and get fit all at the same time.

Staff will continue to develop the activities to suit our participant's needs and work with each individual to increase their own skills, participation and concentration.

MORNING MELODIES

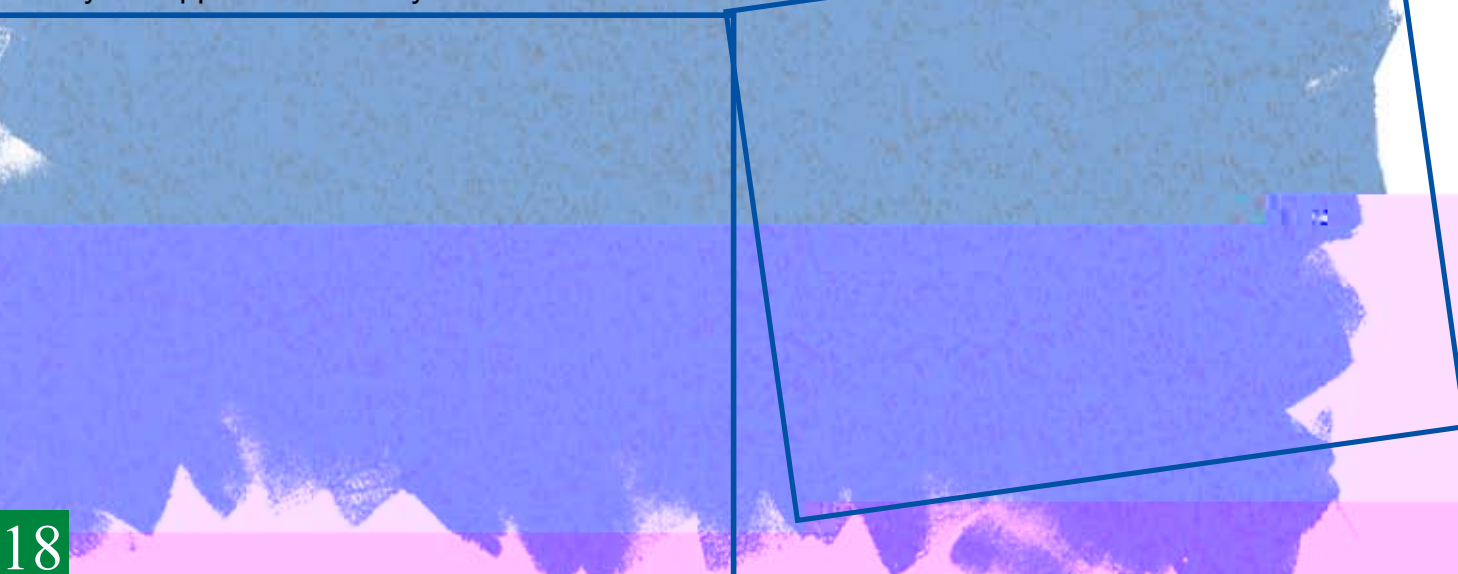
In February Chris, Sarah, Jess, Jane, Andrew, Dale and John along with staff members from Mitchell room went for a day out at Morning Melodies over at the Somerville Hotel. The entertainment was a Neil Diamond Tribute which was really good. Andrew Tagg was dancing to a couple of the songs and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

Hopefully Morning Melodies will be an on going event for Mitchell room.



THE NEW SWIMMING CENTRE IN FRANKSTON.

Peter, Maria, Michael, Chris, Jeanne, Elliot, Flynn, Camille, Mark and Corey appear to enjoy the new swimming centre in Frankston. The new hydro pool is awesome! The change rooms are right by the hydro pool. It is spacious and has a warm spa in the hydro pool itself. We can walk up and down the pool, do gentle exercises or relaxed in the spa section. Everyone appears to enjoy the bubbles the spa makes. After the session everyone appears to be very relaxed.



'LETS GO SURFING' EVENT

On Saturday 17th January, 2015 the 'Lets Go Surfing' Event hosted by the Disabled Surfers Association Mornington Peninsula (DSAMP) was once again held at the Surf Life Saving Club Pt Leo. This event gets bigger and better with every year and Nick and Veronica were thrilled to join the many participants there to have a great time.

The day started off quite cool and windy, however the surf was up and the water was warm and both Nick and Veronica were eager to surf the waves. Nick took his turn first supported by the many wonderful volunteers and looked a natural as he skimmed the waves. The smile on his face said it all.

Veronica put her previous experience to good use and looked very confident as she rode the waves to the shore. She was happy to be part of the excitement and chatted to the many volunteers.

After enjoying the surf a BBQ lunch was put on for all, which went down a treat after everyone's amazing efforts in the water. After lunch there was time to kick back and relax up at the Club House. Nick and Veronica continued to soak up the wonderful atmosphere and the sun which was now out as they joined in the many conversations.

A fantastic day was had by all and it was fabulous to see so many turn up to this fun and welcoming event and experience all it has to offer. A big thank you must be said to the band of DSAMP volunteers who make this day possible. Both Nick and Veronica are keen to do it all again and look forward to the next 'Lets Go Surfing' Event.



HAVE A SAY CONFERENCE 2015

Sixteen very excited participants met at Dromana ISS on Tuesday 3rd February, ready for a few big days ahead in Geelong.

Our accommodation was at Geelong Riverview Tourist Park, where we stayed in 3 onsite cabins. After settling in, a small group went

shopping for the Camp Kitchen BBQ Dinner which was greatly enjoyed by everyone.

Wednesday morning, and the 2015 'Having a Say Conference' was officially opened at Deakin University by the Mayor of Geelong. After the official opening, participants were invited to the stage if they wanted to have a say...Marie was one of the first up on stage to let everyone know how much she enjoyed attending the conference. Marcus also went on stage to tell the audience this was his 3rd time at the conference.

The Come and Try Activities the most anticipated activities at the conference, ranging from Tim getting a drive in a Mazda MX5 convertible, Veronica doing flower arrangements, Marcus and Nick on a Harley Ride – just to name a few of the many activities chosen by participants.

In the evening, there was a dinner organised at the Sphinx Hotel, which was followed by Red Faces Competition with some great performances –

which was eventually won by Marcus Schindler for his solo dance performance, inspired by Eminem... Congratulations Well Done!

During the evening we also celebrated Veronica's birthday with cake and around 200 people joining in singing Happy Birthday for her.

There would be no 'Having a Say Conference' without the big dinner dance, at the Pier on the Geelong Waterfront. This year was no exception and the sight of over 1000 delegates having a great time on the dance floor was one of celebration – sure it was extremely hot in there but who cares...everybody had a ball, dressed to the theme Bling.

Friday morning our participants gathered in the main hall to watch the finals of the Red Faces Competition. We

may have been a little biased but we were well prepared to give the biggest cheers to Marcus Schindler for his solo performance on the big stage. The judges agreed with us and awarded the win to "our man" – Again big congratulations to Marcus for his fine effort!

Once again all participants enjoyed attending the conference, meeting lots of new people and reacquainting themselves with participants from past years – not to mention trying out some great new activities and attending work groups of their choice.

HAVING A SAY CONFERENCE 2015

On Tuesday 3rd February, I went to Geelong and I did some activities. I did scrapbooking on the Wednesday.

Then on the Thursday I did Jewellery making.
By Marie McLellan



World of OZ

Rehearsals are under way for ISS production for this year. We hope you like the photos, as we all enjoy practising singing, dancing and acting. See you on Friday 17th November 2015



'focus' says thank you

Thank you to the following businesses that have supported 'focus' with our Fundraising BBQ's at Bunnings.

- Dromana Fruits
- TBEEZ Bakers Dromana
- B.R.A.D's Fresh Meats Mornington

Your generosity and support is very much appreciated!

Another BIG thank you must go to Maree, Rudy and Willem Schurmann who volunteer in our Horticulture program at Red Hill every Thursday. Their dedication and knowledge is invaluable and with their wonderful assistance the garden is looking amazing!



OUR DAY OUT

Mitchell recently went on an outing and it was lovely to see all of our participants enjoying the day together.

We went over to The Salvation Army in Hastings where we made a Rocky Road treat and had our lunch. Afterwards we enjoyed a sunny afternoon at the Liberty swing .

THE WORKSHED

Its been a busy couple of weeks at the Workshed . We have been working on our vegie boxes with great success Ben ,Rhys and Mik have done a great job helping to build them.While the guys are building, Stef and Jayden are inside cooking lunch for everyone.Brendan has also started to become involved in woodwork .He has made a locker with help from Steve to put his back pack in when he is at Banksia.The guys are also busy making letter boxes ,blackboards and bird feeders .We were all invited to Bunnings Hastings Tradie beakfast where we all enjoyed a bacon and egg roll.Kara from Bunnings has been a great help to the Workshed for donating materials for our activities .Also Reece Plumbing Somerville have also donated a truck load of pallets for us to make furniture ,planter boxes or anything the guys want to make .

COOL ART AT 'THE BARN'

'focus' is bringing Cool Art back.

After a review of the accessibility issues, Cool Art at 'The Barn' has been relocated to 16 Beach Street Dromana.

'focus' would like to thank Active Support Worker, Natalia Lopo Morales who facilitated Cool Art for many years for her Client Centered approach.

Natalia encouraged individuals to use an innovative and broad range of medium and implements to express themselves in a supported environment which has had outstanding results. The Participants who attended under Natalia's guidance gained valued roles as Artists and went on to exhibit their works in many Art shows over the years.

Sincere thanks go to Elizabeth Byrne for her enormous generosity in donating the use of 'The Barn' for nearly a decade. Owner & Coordinator of The Center for Renewal, and President of Haven Hub Committee Elizabeth works tirelessly to enable access and equity for consumers and carers in both the Mental Health and Disability sectors.

'focus' participants have been blessed to have participated in Art therapy whilst surrounded by peaceful rolling acreage, amongst natural bushland.

Again, many thanks Elizabeth.

'focus' would like to welcome Amanda Forster, Art Facilitator at 16 Beach Street Dromana.

Amanda brings to 'focus' a wealth of knowledge and experience in the teaching of a broad range of Art Forms to people living with disabilities.

Amanda is responsible for the development of the art programs across 'focus' ISS. It is delightful to have her now facilitating Cool Art.

