

October 2011

Hello everyone and welcome to Spring. Isn't it lovely to have some warmer weather again and the colourful flowers blooming everywhere? I hope you enjoyed the last bumper edition of the Friends of Fernlea newsletter that celebrated our 10 year anniversary. It was inspiring to relive the stories of years ago.

Happenings at the House

As always it has been very busy in the House. Each day is usually overbooked and six guests turn up. The lack of space is an ongoing issue but our guests continue to enjoy their time spent at Fernlea. Some of the themes and activities for the past three months have included:

Tales of the Titanic:



Spring has Sprung:



Pyjama Party:



Sunbury festival:



Welcome to John Stayte who has been appointed Manager of Volunteers to replace Frances Foletta. John started with us at the beginning of June as the Coordinator of Volunteers. His first three months has been challenging but John has stepped into his role.

Welcome to Martin Bede

Martin joined the Committee of Management in July replacing Jim Rehir who had resigned after moving from the area.



Martin is a lawyer by profession with considerable experience in both private practice and in-house legal roles. He is currently Company Secretary and General Counsel of Regis Aged Care.

Prior to this he has acted as Company Secretary for both public and private sector organisations in a variety of industries including Dairy Australia Limited and Victorian Rail Track Corporation.

Welcome Martin

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General meeting was held at Fernlea House on Monday 24th October. It was disappointing to see so few members attend. In fact there were only 12 people.

Fernlea House is a community organisation, founded by the community and run by the community. It relies on the community for support. AGMs I know are not also interesting but I am wondering if I could have some feedback on what might encourage you to attend. One suggestion has been "A Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" with some entertainment or a guest speaker. Please consider providing some feedback to me. Just ring Helen on 5968 3895.

The new Committee of Management members are:

Bob Farrow – President (2011 – 2013)

Joe Verrill – Treasurer (2011 – 2013)

Anne Carter – Secretary (2012 – 2012)

Angela Dione – Ordinary member

Sharyn Turney – Ordinary member

Martin Bede – Ordinary member

Rod Brown – Ordinary member

On behalf of all members of Fernlea House I thank them for their ongoing contribution.

Living, Laughing, Loving Address Book

STOP PRESS – ITS NOT TOO LATE TO BE IN THE FERNLEA BOOK!!

As you know we are celebrating the first decade of Fernlea's living, loving and laughing. The very special address book will include the history of Fernlea and contributions by anyone who supports Fernlea. It will make a wonderful present to give friends and family and all contribution and sales monies will go to Fernlea House.

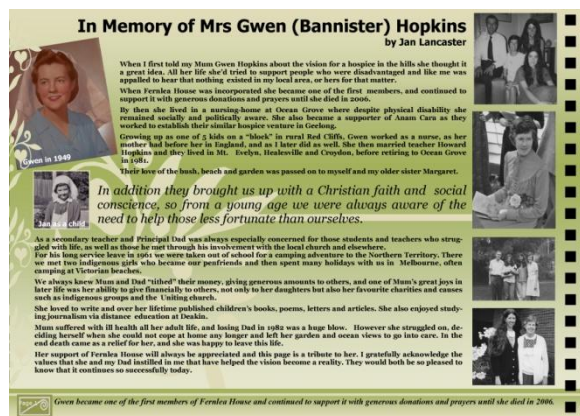
The deadline has been extended so there's still time to be involved. Forms are available via the website or Fernlea House (also sent out with the last newsletter).

You may want to consider joining with family or others to sponsor a page together, perhaps a tribute to a loved one or a piece relating to your connection with Fernlea.

The design team of artists Merran Berry and Leonie Williams (founding member and past Vice-president) await more entries.

The book will not be completed in time for Christmas but is expected to be out in 2012.

You may purchase a gift voucher for when it is published, which would make a lovely present. Any queries contact the house or Jan Lancaster (murjan54@hotmail.com or 9754 8420)



ITS TIME

“*Fernlea in the Valley*” has opened! The time snuck up on us fairly quickly, but we were ready to roll.

We have a new Nurse to join us at Healesville, Marisa, and Marion, who already works at Emerald, will work at Healesville as well. We have trained volunteers ready to go, and some of our existing volunteers will also work up at Healesville to support us.

Because we do not have a bus for Healesville, we are still looking for more drivers, to pick up and take home our guests, on a Wednesday. Special driver training will be taking place soon, for anyone interested. So if you or someone you know might be free and would like a drive in the countryside, please give John a call at the office.

We are all very excited about this new venture, and will keep you all up to date with posts and pictures on the website.

Shopping

Something else new in the neighbourhood is the Woolworth store on the roundabout near the library in Emerald. I know we will all be popping in to have a look for curiosity's sake, just to have a peek at what it is like and how their prices compare. However, don't forget that if you have a Community Benefits Card with IGA, that Fernlea House Inc. can be designated as your choice for benefits. If you don't have a card, there are some available from the Fernlea Office.

Diversity 2011

In September Marian and I were lucky enough to attend the National Palliative Care Conference “*Diversity*” in Cairns.

We were excited to meet so many people from around Australia, Ireland, Germany, Singapore and beyond, which was wonderful for networking and the sharing of knowledge with other practitioners.

The diversity and quality of the presentations was excellent and we have enriched our knowledge of palliative care greatly which will improve our practice and the care we give our guests and their carers.

Jean Kittson was the M.C. for the conference and she kept us thoroughly entertained throughout with, her humour and understanding of the topic it was fantastic and she added to our learning by her outstanding performances and sharing with us her own palliative care experiences. Jean is an ambassador for Ovarian Cancer Australia, The Macular Degeneration Foundation and Junction Works.

Professor Lukas Radbruch Chair of Palliative Medicine at the University of Bonn, and Peter Larkin Associate Professor of Clinical Nursing (Palliative Care) at the University College Dublin and Our Ladies Hospice Ireland were two outstanding lecturers at the conference. Prof. Radbruch gave the opening plenary discussing the diversity of palliative care needs, delivery and outcomes in Europe.

“A report to the European Parliament produced by Martin Moreno et al in 2008, revealed broad discrepancies in the provision of palliative care as well as in the vitality of the development between the European Union Member States. The statistics suggest profound differences between countries such as UK, Ireland, Sweden and the Netherlands, who were rated highest in these two indicators, and the countries of Greece, Portugal, Slovakia and Estonia who scored much lower. Similarly, the more recent report of the Economist on quality of death, ranked the UK highest in the overall score and another 5 European countries among the top 10, but again other European countries such as Portugal, Turkey and Russia scored very low.”

To help us understand this he recommended we watch *The Story of Viad from the Ukraine on U-Tube*. This was a tragic story of how people suffer when there are no analgesics available. Legislation on narcotic law is much more restrictive in Eastern European countries than in Western European countries.

Prof. Ladbruch also highlighted the fact that 1:100 people in Germany volunteer this is very impressive and a great resource. When reflecting on Prof. Ladbruch lecture it made us feel very grateful that in Australia we can access palliative care and that we have access

to medications that relieve the suffering of so many of our patients.

I spoke with a palliative care nurse who had worked in outback Australia and she assured me that the Aboriginal people had analgesia and medications that they needed.

Dr Larkin's plenary was on "the challenges of putting Education into practice – How does it change the way we work with patients?"

Dr Larkin says "teach the students to use their heads, hearts and hands to achieve a good mix of knowledge."

The importance of Pain Management and controversies at the end of life was very thought provoking when Associate Professor Ben White (Faculty of Law, Queensland University of Technology) discussed the "Hard questions about the difficult choices we make at the end of life. Deidre Morgan, an Occupational Therapist with Peninsula Health Vic reminded us that patients are not "passive recipients of care, but want to do as much for themselves as they can as long as they can" we should not disempower them with our a care.

Claudia Gugiu (Manager of NSAP) was the Ian Maddocks guest lecturer.

Claudia was the winner of the best abstract by someone under 40yrs. Her lecture was on strengthening quality care at the end of life and she helped develop the national palliative care standards for improvements in care for patients, their families and carers which we follow to ensure best practice.



We felt our poster was the best of all 150 posters on display at the Diversity 2011 conference. We

were proud to represent Fernlea House and the poster was extremely well accepted. It stimulated lots of discussion about Fernlea and the social/medical model we have developed to ensure holistic palliative care. We had lots of interest shown and gave out numerous invitations for our famous morning teas. Dr Barbara Hayes has already made a date to visit. We have developed good links regarding the approach to advanced care planning and respecting patient choices and we will be developing Fernlea leaflets on the subject using the Northern Health Advanced Care Planning Approach, *the ACP in 3 Steps*, by Anne Marie Fabrie.

Children from the Parramatta State School opened and closed the conference letting us experience traditional indigenous and Torres Strait Islander music and dance it was a wonderful to see.

On arrival back we have made a resource manual which is in the office for our reference.

The conference was stimulating and well organized. It provided a great opportunity to find out updated approaches to palliative care and help Fernlea House get onto the bigger map. We had a very successful conference and feel the name Fernlea House and the fantastic work done by all the staff and volunteers is now a national icon.

By Kathryn Lees-Doherty

The Power of Volunteering

After almost 45 years of volunteering in both church and non church settings I have come to believe that there is power in volunteering. The power lies in the message which volunteering communicates to those that benefit from the volunteers; it says I care enough to put my caring into action. Volunteering says that am concerned about another human being.

At Fernlea House I am surrounded by a wonderful team of volunteers, who constantly go above and beyond in their commitment to the Fernlea House guests and carers. Each one is an individual with many gifts and abilities, personalities and life styles. However when they come to Fernlea House they all have one purpose, to serve the guests. A job they do so

well, it is a tremendous privilege to be part of the team.

Do you know someone who would benefit from the opportunity to be a volunteer at Fernlea

“Research tells us that people who volunteer live longer and healthier” (Good Practice and Exhibition Launch facilitated by the Migrant information Centre –Eastern Melbourne for volunteer coordinators/managers).

John Stayte
Manager of Volunteers

The National Palliative Care Conference in Cairns was about Diversity.

Kathryn and I attended as the representatives for Fernlea House. It was a privilege to be amongst like minded people from all over Australia and the world. To listen to others points of view, knowledge, and experience.

Every day at the conference we were entertained by the talented stand up comedian Jean Kittson, who was our MC. Jean was able to lighten up such a serious subject [death and dying and palliative care]. This being a reminder that Palliative Care is about making every day count. Living, Loving, and Laughing.

There were many posters on display. Our Fernlea House poster was the most admired and questioned about. Everyone was amazed about the model of care Fernlea House provides and asked several questions, each time wanting to know more. We were so proud of our day centre in the hills. There were stands in the big room, promoting various items for palliative care. There were a couple promoting infection control, which I was particularly interested in, as I hold a port folio in infection control at Fernlea House. The conference was truly about diversity.

Kathryn and I were able to participate in positive networking, and make an impression upon others about the values of Fernlea House. There was an emphasis on the recognition of volunteers. Without volunteers we cannot provide the model of care required for holistic care. Both Kathryn and I have learnt so much from this conference. We will be able to pass on this knowledge to Fernlea House, to staff members, volunteers, and guests. This will further improve our quality of care.

House? We are currently recruiting volunteers for our February 2012 training course, if you know someone please get them to contact me.

Thank you to the Team of Fernlea for giving us this opportunity.

With warm regards, Marian

Launch of Victorian Strengthening Palliative Care Policy & Strategic Directions 2011-15

The Honourable David Davis, Victorian Minister for Health and Minister for Ageing, launched *Strengthening Palliative Care Policy and Strategic Directions 2011-15* on 25th August. This important document reflects the leadership and commitment of the Victorian Government to provide optimal palliative care for all Victorians, when and where they need it. A copy of the document is available at [:www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/palliativecare)

The seven strategic directions outlined in the policy are:

- Informing and involving clients and carers
- Caring for Carers
- Working together to ensure people die in their place of choice
- Providing specialist palliative care where and when it is needed
- Coordinating care across settings
- Providing quality care supported by evidence
- Ensuring support from communities



Grants received 2011

Behind the scenes the Grants Subcommittee continues its tireless work to raise extra funds to supplement what we receive from the Department of Health & Ageing. Without the work that this committee puts into raising extra funds, we would not be able to provide the level of service to our guests and their carers and the general community that we do. I would like to publicly acknowledge and thank them for the amazing work that they do.

Members are:

Joe Verrill (Chairperson), Jenny Lyndon (secretary), Jan Lancaster, Heather Tobin, Sharyn Turney and Leonie Scott.

SUCCESSFUL GRANTS Financial Year 2010 - 2011

	Description	Date	Amount
1	Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund Carer Support Project	27.8.10	\$24000
2	Shire of Yarra Ranges "Fernlea in the Valley" Project Worker	24.6.11	\$6000
3	Victorian Volunteer Small Grants 'Become a Fernlea Fern'	10.2.11	\$3610
4	William Angliss Charitable Fund - new wheelchair	12.10	\$1000
TOTAL 2010-2011			\$34610

SUCCESSFUL GRANTS Financial Year 2011 - 2012

	Description	Date	Amount
1	Cardinia Foundation Trust <i>Project Worker Fernlea in the Southeast</i>	29.7.11	\$10000
2	Helen McPherson Smith Trust <i>Fernlea in the Valley</i>	6.7.11	\$52500

During 2010 – 2011 Donations have been gratefully received from:

Emerald Uniting Church	Hills Film Group	Ritchie's Stores	Kambada Studios
D. Jonker	P. Daly	N. Hazelwood	J. Deith
B. Coupe	W. Finlay	H. Bell	C. Foster
M. Hall	F. Dean	E. Mignerey	E. Dix
G. Legge	J. Wolff	B. & G. Overton	L. Scott
A. Bolch	M. Anderson	S. Wills	D. Wendt
H. Boreham	Monbulk Care Network	H. Peace	G. Francis
S. Thwaites	M. Sparkes	T&M Jackson	P. Dennis
B. Neale	D. Cordell	J. Verrill	R. Allan
L. Hamer	Menzies Creek Hall	H. Teo	V. Chorn
M. Jacobs	J. Webber	In memory A. Bailey	Customers Monbulk Video Store
B. Collaton	A. Pike	S. Pike	C. Ring
S. Dunn on behalf Shire Yarra Ranges	People who attended the Fundraising Folk Night	Eastern Ranges Division of GPs	

A very sincere thank you for your ongoing support.

Some tips and Reminders:

Arrangements for Christmas

Fernlea House in Emerald will be closed from 5.00pm on Thursday 22nd December and will reopen to staff on Monday 9th January and for guests on Thursday 12th January 2012.

Fernlea in the Valley will be closed from 5.00pm on Wednesday 21st December and reopen for guests on Wednesday 11th January 2012.

Bush Fire Season

The bush fire season is upon us again. The CFA website www.cfa.vic.gov.au has valuable information about how to protect your house and property. Don't forget to prepare your bush fire plan and have made decisions about what you will do. The web site provides the following information:

Grassfires

Due to favourable growing conditions across Victoria in 2011 there is an above-average risk for grassfires for the 2011/2012 fire season.

Grassfires spread rapidly and can quickly threaten lives and property. If you live in a grassland area you need to have a Bushfire Survival Plan. Surrounding grassland and paddocks can pose a risk for:

- farms in rural Victoria
- suburban blocks in Melbourne
- small towns.

Grassland includes pasture grass, crops and areas of undisturbed natural grasslands.

Understanding grassfire risk

Grassfires tend to produce fewer embers than forest fires;

Grassfires can spread quickly and are extremely dangerous;

Grassfires can travel up to 25 km per hour. In open grassland, fires can pulse up to 60 km per hour in extreme circumstances;

Grass is a fine fuel and burns faster than forests; Grassfires tend to be less intense than forest fires, but still generate enormous amounts of radiant heat;

The taller and drier the grass, the more intensely it will burn.

*The shorter the grass, the lower the flame height and the easier the fire will be to control;
Short grass (under 10cm) is a much lower risk;
Grassfires can start earlier in the day than forest fires, because grass dries out more quickly than forest when temperatures are high;
Living in a grassland area with dried-out brown or golden-coloured grass that is over 10cm high is a bushfire risk. There are some exceptions, such as Phalaris grass, which will burn even when green.*

Protecting yourself from grassfires

- Grassfires can start quickly and spread rapidly, catching people off guard.
- Grassfires are very hot and can produce huge amounts of radiant heat that can kill anyone caught out in the open.
- The safest place to be during a grassfire is well away from the threat.
- Shelter from radiant heat

Shelter yourself from radiant heat by:

- going inside a building that is well prepared and actively defended
- going inside a private or community fire shelter that meets current regulations as a last resort, go to a Neighbourhood Safer Place (Place of Last Resort). If there is no such place, then a ploughed paddock, dam, swimming pool or other large water body may offer some protection from radiant heat. This does not include a water tank. Dams may not be reliable as their water levels fluctuate and they may be empty in summer.
- Cars offer very little protection from radiant heat. A car is unlikely to protect you from the radiant heat of a grassfire. However, it offers more protection than being caught on foot in the open. If you are in a car and become caught in a grassfire, do not get out and run.
- Protective clothing
- If you are threatened by a grassfire, always protect yourself by covering up all exposed skin with protective clothing.

Protective clothing includes:

- Long-sleeved shirt and pants made from a natural fibre such as cotton or wool
- Sturdy boots and woollen socks

- *Tough leather gloves*
- *A wide-brimmed hat*
- *A face mask or towel to cover your mouth and nose*
- *Eye protection such as smoke goggles.*
- *You need to shield yourself from radiant heat behind a solid structure such as a building.*

Membership

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2011 – 2012 please consider doing so. Membership costs are \$r5.00 concession and \$10.00 ordinary. Every little amount helps us to continue our work.

Also there is a vacancy on the Committee of Management for someone who would like to assist.

Scams

There have been quite a few scams going around recently both by post and email. Please be careful to check that what you receive is legitimate. Also to remember to destroy any mail you receive that has your name and address on it.

The Day the Circus came to Fernlea House



Fernlea House is

“An Australian Government Initiative”

And proudly supported by

Dandenong Ranges
Community Bank® Group

