



NEWSLETTER No 4 Summer 2011



CHRISTOPHORUS HOUSE
retirement village

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Editor's Letter

It's been an eventful time since our last Newsletter. Preparations for Christmas are well underway and the long-awaited extensions to the Hostel dining and social rooms will be completed in time for this festive occasion. The lawn at the lower end of the Hostel is looking resplendent again, just in time for the *Carols by Candlelight* on 14th December. It has been restored again as a shady haven for residents and visitors to enjoy on sunny afternoons. Well done, Jason!

And to our newest resident, Mrs Cynthia Mace, welcome! We trust you will feel part of the Christophorus House community very quickly. Our thoughts are with Mrs Rees who has been away from the Village for quite some time. We trust you settle in well and feel supported in your new, temporary home. And to all those residents who have been unwell and or coping with challenging changes, may you find strength and comfort from your loved ones and your friends here in the Village.

In this Newsletter, Milan tells of

interesting changes taking place around the Village. Naomi reports on some of the Hostel residents varied and interesting activities and introduces the new DT, Kathy Gaspar. Welcome, Kathy! Did you ever wonder how that little mint candy cane on your Christmas tree came about? *The History of the Candy Cane* will reveal that now. The poem *The White Magnolia Tree* remembers our friend, Bill Harris, and was provided by his family. The tree was planted just outside their unit. Another one of Rosa's poems is timely for Christmas – thank you! My own contribution of *The Ageing Skin* looks at the body's largest organ, the skin, and what would help care for it especially in elderly people.

With the approaching Christmas season, we take this opportunity of wishing you all a joy-filled time. May love be in your life, hope in your heart and peace be in our world for the coming New Year.

Monika Bebb
Self Care Liaison Co-ordinator

Maintenance Matters



There have been some big projects completed since the last Newsletter such as the levelling and returfing of our main lawn. Jason has worked very hard on this to create a real centrepiece for the Village (see picture). Stage 3 (Units 17 to 23) exterior woodwork painting has now been completed, thanks to Luke O'Sullivan who has done a really great job. The Hostel extension is also looking good now that all the windows

have been installed, the roof is on and interior fittings are being fitted. A section of handrail will be installed between ILU Units 17 to 21 in the coming months. The Boiler Room has had some major works to ensure the Hostel has sufficient warm water for showers and heating. Also, air conditioners will be serviced in the Village to ensure all residents are kept cool in the coming summer months. Many thanks again to all contractors and staff that have helped in maintaining the smooth running of Village life here at Christophorus House.

Hayden Ibbett
Maintenance Supervisor

Christophorus House Retirement Village

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Hostel Hours: Staff on duty at all times, 7 days per week
(After Hours after 6pm 0403 575 079)

Patron: John D Shaw; **Board Members:** Chairman Robert Allerdice, Mary Arndell, Graham Long, Sune Nielsen, John Kingsland; **CEO:** Milan Telford; **Hostel Manager:** Andrea Nguyen;

Hostel Supervisor: Vik Sonea; **Self Care Liaison Coordinator:** Monika Bebb; **Maintenance:** Hayden Ibbett and Walter Janssens

Christophorus House is a Not-for-Profit organisation and has operated since 1984.

Newsletter Editor: Monika Bebb

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If you have some information, an event or an item you wish published, please contact Monika on (02)9476 3161 ext 2 or email mbebb@christophorushouse.com.au

From the Desk of the CEO



Coming to the end of another calendar year and reflecting on the year that was, much work was under-taken in planning for the future development of CHRV. In February, a Planning Committee was inaugurated as reported in previous Newsletters and the Annual Report. The resultant 'Architects Brief' that was produced, formed the basis upon which selected architects could provide the Board with a presentation to sell their creative and technical skills to the Board, by which means the Board could select a suitable architect partner for the next decade of development. Before Christmas, the Board will have chosen the successful architect firm bid. There are some very exciting concepts in the master planning on offer and I believe the CHRV community will in due course, also be very excited at the possibilities yet to unfold. It is however, prudent to temper enthusiasm somewhat, with the realities of the complexities

of constraints that such development (new ILU's, Community Centre and landscapes, extension of hostel in 5 to 10 years) will cause to arise. There is a changing landscape in the aged care industry and CHRV will be in a good place to meet the new challenges that are arising.

The finishing touches (furnishings and furniture, painting) are now in train, on the 5 projects related to the Hostel which we started this year, and which includes the new 'Evelyn Latter' room. This extension to the living area will mean that for the first time, there will be adequate space for all the residents living in the hostel, to congregate at the same time, in the common living areas. The 'Evelyn Latter' room, will be a sunny spot to enjoy everything from reading a book, to having a social interlude with friends and relatives over a cup of tea, or just to be in a quiet space to think and meditate. The new lawn area is looking great and will be first used in a social event on 14th December, for the Carols by Candlelight night, which everyone is welcome to attend and which commences at 6.30pm.

We had a special guest attend the CHRV AGM this year, the Hon Phillip Ruddock. Mr Ruddock has a long association with CHRV, going back to the time when his father was the local MP and was of help to us 30 years ago. We appreciate Mr Ruddock's continued interest and support for CHRV.

For my Christmas message, I should like to paraphrase what Rudolf Steiner once gave in a lecture; "the birth of the light at Christmas will be followed by life in the light. Christians should not, therefore, see in the Christmas festival something that passes. It is not a memorial festival commemorating what has occurred in the past. The Christmas message does not say, 'Christ has been born, Christ was born.' It says, "Today, Christ is born." Today is always emphasized. This is significant. The emphasis on today should be understood in the sense in which Christ has spoken, "I am with you always even unto the end of days." 'All the great teachers of wisdom — the Egyptian Hermes, the ancient Indian Rishis, Confucius, the Persian Zarathustra — have spoken the Divine Word. In Jesus the Christ, however, the Divine Word Itself walked on earth in a living shape for the first time. Before this time there was on earth only the Path and the Truth. Now we have the Path, the Truth and the Life. This should give us inner strength and certainty of hope. It makes possible the mood of peace and confidence of spirit that flow from the Christmas festival to permeate deeply the souls of those striving after the spirit.'

Milan Telford



News from the Hostel

Report by Naomi Douglas,
Activities Co-ordinator

In October, we had a great Italian Day. Anthony prepared a delicious Italian menu which was lovely and well received by all – especially the tiramisu for dessert. We enjoyed the afternoon looking at some of Monika's pictures of her trip to Rome in May which was wonderful to see.

Linda took the residents to see and hear the Epping Boys High School *Morning of Music* which residents enjoyed and eagerly look forward to again next year. The boys were friendly, polite and talented. Morning tea was good too.

November

We started this month off with a Melbourne Cup Celebration – hats, decorations, nibbles, gorgeous lunch,



lots of laughs and fun. A Cup Sweep was held which Elsie took first and second place – especially nice, as it was her birthday (we won't say how old she turned – a Lady never reveals her age!). Altogether a lot of fun was had and a fun way to spend a great Australian tradition.

A special Memorial Day service was held on the 11/11/11 with residents taking part. Minnie read the bible passage, Dianna beautifully read a poem about Flanders Fields and Harold lead us in the Ode. Helen played the piano for us, thereby adding



a special touch and creating real atmosphere for this occasion. It was a lovely way to commemorate those who served our country.

November is also the month for birthdays in the Hostel. We have six residents who will be celebrating their birthday this month! It is wonderful to be able to share in these special times

together.

We are glad to welcome Kathy Gaspar as our new Diversional Therapist. She takes this role over from Linda. Kathy's gentle and kind ways, friendliness and experience make her a welcome asset to our team.

We look forward to December and getting ready for the Christmas Season: lots of eating, singing, carols, craft, laughter and fun!



FOUND – a silver and pearl bracelet in late October. Please contact Monika on 9476 3161 ext 2.

The History of the Candy Cane

One of the most often seen symbols of Christmas is the candy cane. Not only are candy canes used as a sweet Christmastime treat, they are also used for decoration. How did this seasonal candy get its familiar shape, and when did it become part of Christmas tradition? When the practice of using Christmas trees to celebrate Christmas became popular in Europe, people there began making decorations for their trees. Many of the decorations were food items including cookies and candy. The predecessor of our modern candy cane appeared at about this time in the seventeenth century. These were straight, white sticks of sugar candy.

Part of the Christmas celebration at the Cologne Cathedral was pageants of living crèches. In about 1670 the choirmaster at the Cathedral had sticks of candy bent into the shape of a shepherd's crook and passed them out to children who attended the ceremonies. This became a popular tradition, and eventually the practice of passing out the sugar canes at living crèche ceremonies spread throughout Europe.

The use of candy canes on Christmas trees

made its way to America by the 1800's; however during this time they were still pure white. They are represented this way on Christmas cards made before 1900 and it is not until the early 20th century that they appear with their familiar red stripes.

Many people have given religious meaning to the shape and form of the candy cane. It is said that its shape is like the letter "J" in Jesus' name. It is also in the shape of the shepherds' crook, symbolic of how Jesus, like the "Good Shepherd" watches over his children like little lambs. It is a hard candy, solid like a "rock", the foundation of the Church. The flavor of peppermint is similar to another member of the mint family, hyssop. In the Old Testament, hyssop was used for purification and sacrifice, and this is said to symbolize the purity of Christ Jesus and His sacrifice.

Some say the white of the candy cane represents the purity of the virgin birth. The bold red stripe represents God's love. The three fine stripes are said by some to represent the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Others say they represent the blood spilled at



the beating Jesus received at the hands of the Roman soldiers.

From its plain early beginnings to its familiar shape and color of today, the candy cane is a symbol of Christmas and a reminder of the meaning of the holiday.

Article sourced by R van Hoogstraten, CHRV resident, from an article submitted by Laura Witcher Goldstein at: <http://www.noelnoelnoel.com/trad/candycane.html>

Summer Rain

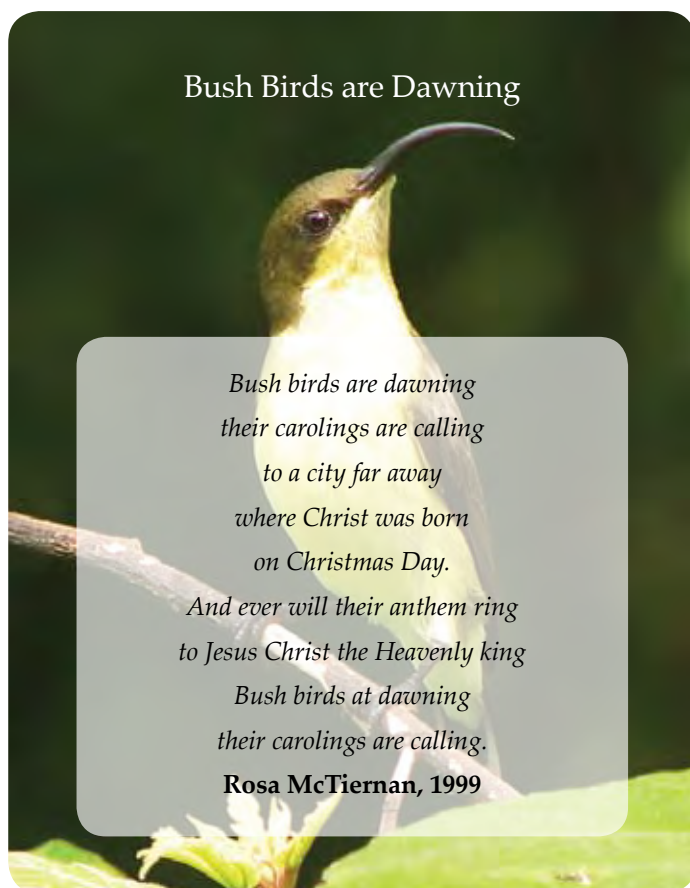
*The summer rain began to fall
I watched it trickling down the wall,
Accompanied by a gentle breeze
It cleansed the air, refreshed the trees,
The birds rejoiced, observed the scene
As raindrops merged and formed a stream,
No longer parched the earth could now
Its gift of life, to all endow.*

Byron B.



Bush Birds are Dawning

*Bush birds are dawning
their carolings are calling
to a city far away
where Christ was born
on Christmas Day.
And ever will their anthem ring
to Jesus Christ the Heavenly king
Bush birds at dawning
their carolings are calling.*
Rosa McTiernan, 1999



The White Magnolia Tree

This poem was provided by Elizabeth Harris' family. The lovely magnolia tree pictured was planted at Christophorus House in memory of Bill who passed away in June.

The year when I was twenty-one,
(John that year was twenty-three)
That was the year, that was the spring,
We planted the white magnolia tree.

"This tree," said John, "shall grow with us,
And every year it will bloom anew.
This is our life. This is our love."
And the white magnolia tree grew and grew...

Oh, youth' a thing of fire and ice,
And currents that run hot and white,
And its world is as bright as the sun...

I was twenty-one...
And I wore a plume in my hat.
And we went to the movies and wept over"
Stella Dallas",
And John sang "Moonlight and Roses"
(a little off-key, but very nicely really),

And we hurried through our crowded days
With beautiful plans, boundless ambitions, and
golden decisions.
There is so much the young heart clamors for,
That it must have, and that it cannot live without,
And it must be all or nothing,
For aren't we the masters of creation?

Oh, valiant and untamed were we,

When we planted the white magnolia
tree!
And the white magnolia grew and grew,
Holding our love within its core,
And every year it bloomed anew,
And we were twenty-one no more.

No more untamed, no more so free,
Nor so young, nor so wild and aflame
were we.
Dearer to us grew other things:
Easy sleep, books, a day's quiet holiday,
Good talk beside a fire, the beauty of old
faces...

We have known many things since then:
The death of a child and the bitter lesson
That a heart which breaks can mend
itself again
(That it can and must be done),
And what loyalty can mean,
And how real a word like courage can become,
And that solitude can be rich and gratifying
And quite different from loneliness...

There is so little the serious heart requires:
Friends, faith, a window open to the world,
Pride in work well done,
And strength to live in a world at war



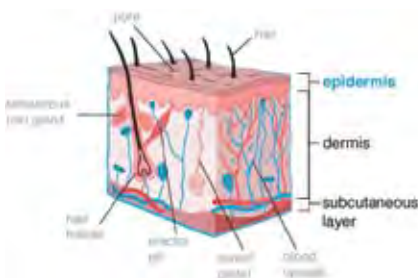
And still maintain the heart's own private peace...

Dear Heaven, I give thanks to thee
For things I did not know before,
For the wisdom of maturity,
For bread, and a roof, and for one thing more...

Thanks because I still can see
The bloom on the white magnolia tree!

Helen Deutsch

The Ageing Skin



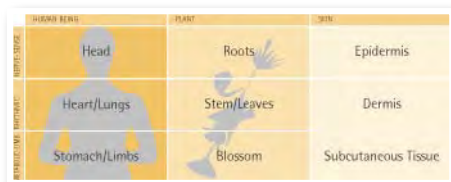
A recent visit by Helios Health and Beauty manager Fay Brander, who brought the Dr Hauschka skin care range of products for staff to experience, ignited my interest in taking a closer look at the body's largest organ, the skin. It was also interesting to hear a bit about the background of these

products. I discovered there is much to learn about the skin!

The Nature of Being Threefold – In her presentation, Fay presented the skin as a threefold nature of the human being: the head, corresponding to the nerve-sense system where we find the ability to think and perceive. It is a cool, dark, still and sterile environment and the possibility of cell regeneration is extremely limited. The polar opposite of the nerve-sense system is the metabolic-limb system which includes the metabolism as well as arms and legs. Unconscious processes take place there. The metabolism is warm and very active with its digestion and elimination. The environ-

ment is alive with bacteria, regeneration and cell renewal. The mediator between the two poles is the rhythmic system, or heart and lungs. The activities performed here mimic qualities of the nerve-sense and metabolic-limb systems. Movement and stillness are found in the breathing and in the beating of our heart. In this threefold nature of the skin, the outermost layer, the epidermis, represents the nerve-sense system. The dermis, the skin's middle layer, reflects the rhythmical life of the heart and lungs. Capillaries, respiration and circulation predominate. The subcutaneous tissue of the inner layer relates to the metabolic-limb system. It shows activity and movement.

The Threefold Nature of Plants – The plant's root system lives in the dark, quiet, cool earth. The roots sense and absorb nutrients in the soil. There is a kind of consciousness associated with the root of the plant in this ability to select and take up what is necessary. In this sense, the roots of a plant are related to the head of the human being and the outermost layer of skin. The activity in the metabolic-limb system of the human being can also be seen in the blossom and fruit of the plant. The blossom moves; it opens up and closes. Created in warmth, the blossom is warmer than the rest of the plant and reproduction is evident.



The middle part of the plant corresponds to the rhythmic system. Its stem and leaves reinforce the idea of rhythm in the alternating leaf pattern and in the contracting and expanding quality between stem and leaf.

Fay showed that by understanding the remarkable similarities between plants and the skin, the plant substances used in the products supported particular skin functions. She said that the skin care preparations contain elements of root, leaf and flowers so that all three layers of skin are addressed. By offering a picture of health for the skin to mirror she said, the products help activate the natural healing processes of the skin so that rhythm and balance can be restored. This seems quite a unique approach.

Elderly Skin Traits: The most common factor among elderly skin is the fact that it is usually always dry. This is because as we age, our skin begins to thin. As it thins, it is less able to retain moisture, thus leading to dry skin. Dry skin can lead to problems in a younger person, but can cause even more problems for the elderly. The thin skin is easier torn, and that lets bacteria get in. The elderly have a harder time fighting bacteria off, so you don't want anything to increase the chances of infection.

Treating Elderly Skin: Treating elderly skin will always include caring for dry skin. The skin should always be kept clean and well hydrated to avoid potential problems like cracking, pain and itchiness. Moisturising will help seal in the body's natural moisture and help skin be more comfortable. Creams are much better than lotions because they are thicker and stay on the skin longer. When choosing a moisturising product one needs to consider the harsh Australian sun, for example, which often burns and damages skin, especially in summer. The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is both the major cause of skin cancer as well as the best source of vitamin D. In Australia, we need to balance the risk of skin cancer from too much sun exposure. However, Vitamin D forms in the skin when it is exposed to UV from sunlight so a nice afternoon stroll for example will help maintain healthy adequate levels. Including a wide variety of foods in the diet also helps support not only healthy skin, but bones and muscles as well. The organ of the skin is the great mediator between one's inner self and the world outside. One should have a vested interest in protecting this most important organ, particularly as there

are many challenges such as the sun and environmental pollution which affects not only our physical body but also the plant world, and the decline of our regenerative forces. Choosing the right skin care product can be daunting in the face of these modern day challenges. However, there is a large variety of products available on the market today which caters for individual needs, such as dry skin, thereby assisting in restoring and protecting the skin's natural healing processes. However, a visit to your doctor is recommended if you are experiencing more than just dry skin, for example, and who may refer you to a skin specialist for investigation.

Although the skin has only briefly been 'touched' upon here, thanks to Fay it has provided an opportunity to look more closely at the complex and manifold layers of the nature of our humanness. What a wonderful organ!

Monika Bebb

Resources:

Diagram 1: <http://www.google.com.au/imgres?q=three+layers+of+the+skin&hl=en&gbv=2&tbm=isch&btnid=uk-n-q9BKraZQM:&imgrefurl=http://www.tattoodonkey.com/there-are-three-main-layers-to-the-skin-epidermis-dermis-and-/>
 Diagram 2: http://www.drhauschka.com.au/story_nature.html
<http://www.livestrong.com/article/116541-elderly-skin-care-tips/#ixzz1eJ3aGHux>
<http://www.bioskinbalm.com/zinc/> ; http://www.drhauschka.com.au/story_nature.html; <http://www.beautyblisscosmetics.com> and http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Lynn_Starner - written by Lynn Starner, the proprietor of Beauty Bliss Mineral Cosmetics.



Calendar of Events in the Cottage

| 2011 | Day | Event |
|--------------|-----|---|
| DECEMBER | 2 | Footbath with leg massage with massage therapist, Ian Wallace. For an appointment, contact Monika 9476 3161 ext 2. |
| | 8 | Christmas lunch for all residents of Christophorus House in the Hostel dining room. RSVP 1st December. |
| | 14 | Carols by Candlelight on the lower lawn outside the Hostel at 6.30pm to 7.30pm. All welcome. RSVP 5th December. |
| | 16 | Footbath with leg massage with massage therapist, Ian Wallace. For an appointment, contact Monika 9476 3161 ext 2. |
| | 22 | Drinks & Nibbles for Self Care residents at 5pm. RSVP 15th December. |
| JANUARY 2012 | | There are no activities for January 2012. |
| FEBRUARY | 2 | Mannings Funerals – Rodney Rietdyk JP will present an informative and humorous aspect of and about the industry. |
| | 9 | Self Care Residents' meeting in the Cottage |
| | 14 | St Valentine's Day celebration in the Hostel. |
| | 27 | Social Group meeting in the Cottage |

The above events are held in The Cottage unless otherwise indicated. Please contact Monika on 9476 3161 ext 2 beforehand to confirm times and dates as changes may occur due to unforeseen circumstances.

REGULAR EVENTS IN THE COTTAGE

Bridge is taking a break at present. For enquiries, contact Monika.

First Class is held from February to November on the third Sunday of every month.

The **Christian Community** holds Services for *The Act of Consecration of Man*. Phone Monika for details.

Board Meetings are held on the third Monday of every month.

Self Care Residents' Meetings are held every two months on a Thursday.

Social Group Meetings are held every three months on a Monday.

Footbath/Leg Massage Therapy is fortnightly on Fridays in the Hostel.

