NEWSLETTER No 2
Winter 2011

Christophorus House
retirement village

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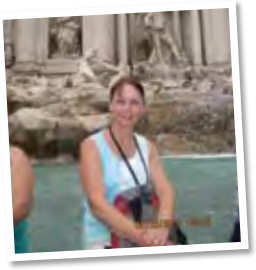
Editor's Letter

Dear Members and Friends

First of all, welcome to our newest residents: Mrs Mavis Bennett and Mrs Robyn Hutchison. Both Mrs Bennett and Mrs Hutchison come from large homes so "squeezing" into a smaller home is a challenge in itself and needs careful planning and execution. Preparation for change is an act of consciousness and is well rewarded during the integration phase as one is given the opportunity to reflect on the past leading into the future, a change that may well bring a breath of 'fresh air' to one's newly chosen life. Congratulations to you both as you adjust to your newly modified life! We wish you joy and happy hours in meeting new friends and settling into Village life here at Christophorus House!



Well, I've had a bit of "fresh air" myself just recently when I holidayed in Europe which included a few days in Rome. Here I am at the famous Trevi Fountain! It was wonderful! Thank you to all the residents who so warmly welcomed me back!

I take this opportunity to remember our resident and friend, Richard Harding, who has been quite unwell and been spending some time in hospital. We send him our warmest greetings, and all those residents who also have been unwell, and wish you all a speedy recovery.

A special mention is made here for our long time gardener and friend to all at the Village, Jason Ibbett, who married his long time sweetheart Liz, in early April this year. We wish them both, together with their young son, all the very best for a happy and successful marriage. We will be celebrating their special day in July with a morning tea so let me know if you can join us.

This Newsletter features some healthy ways to overcome the winter blues, plus a poem written by one of our residents and of course some updates on the work going on at the Hostel. There is also an interesting modified story of the Three Little Pigs, written by past Board Member Phillippa Cordwell. So, good wishes for keeping warm during these cold winter months! Meantime, if you have an article or story you wish to share for our next newsletter, please contact me in time for our Spring edition. Until next time.

Monika Bebb
In the Self Care Liaison office

Winter

Clouded with snow
The bleak winds blow,
And shrill on leafless bough
The robin with its burning breast
Alone sings now.
The rayless sun,
Day's journey done,
Sheds its last ebbing light
On fields in leagues of beauty spread
Unearthly white.
Thick draws the dark,
And spark by spark
The frost-fires kindle, and soon
Over that sea of frozen foam
Floats the white moon.
Walter de la Mare

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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 Chief Executive Officer

Work is well under way on five projects approved by the Board for the Hostel, including the extension to the Hostel, to be named the 'Evelyn Latter Room'. We are pleased that all the drainage work for the Hostel, which included replacing the entire length of the drain pipe (much of which was caved in) along the front of the lower level rooms with larger piping, creating a trench along the roadway, and making the gradient of the front lawn flow towards the drain hole was completed prior to the large rainfalls we had in the last few months. Included also in the five projects is structural work on the Hostel balustrades and a ramp. The rest of the projects should all be completed by 3rd August 2011.

A sub-committee of the Board was established, termed the 'Planning Committee' comprising the following; Graham Long & John Kingsland (Board members), Bill Harris and Rose-Marie van Hoogstraten (residents), Reuben Lane (architectural consultant), Lorraine Polous (Industry Consultant Specialist), John Stuart, (CEO Twilight Aged Care) and myself, in order to undertake due diligence in terms of the proposed 15 Mildred Avenue acquisition and to make recommendations to the Board as to the best strategic direction in terms of residential and other facilities, to be built on our vacant land sites, such recommendation to take a long term (30 year plus) view. The Planning Committee will continue to meet up to October when all matters under the Board's 'Terms of Reference' will have been considered, including finishing with an Architect's brief and a tender process for appointment of the Architect/Project Manager.

In late May, we had our once a year 'announced visit' to the Hostel by the Accreditation Agency. I am pleased to report that again, after examination of our systems, processes, audit trails and interviews with residents and staff, CHRV received a flawless score – there were no issues and no action recommendations that needed to be made by the Agency Auditor. I congratulate Andrea and her team for running such a friendly, peaceful, caring and efficient Hostel.

We currently have a fundraising drive on, to pay for a new (second hand in new condition) Yamaha piano, which the Hostel is in need of. The cost of the piano is $5,000. We will be having a concert, 'popular brass', in October and another, 'classical music' concert in February/March next year to help pay for the piano. We currently have been given the piano on consignment by Castle Hill Music Shop. I would ask friends and relatives of CHRV to support this initiative by coming along or alternatively making a donation, in order to help us raise the $5,000.

Music is so very important in the lives of our residents and everyone in the Village benefits from our weekly music therapy programs and regular concerts.

Milan Telford
CEO

Maintenance Matters

It's been a busy time again here at Christophorus House, with Hostel renovations underway in full swing. We have had a 60m section of fence replaced which divides our property and next door's, running along the back of the Hostel. Two units have had some major work done, in readiness for the new residents. Some sections of the gutters have been replaced and new downpipes installed. Units 1 to 6 have had all exterior woodwork painted and Stage 2 (Units 7-16) will commence on 1st August. The rain has put a damper on some of the jobs but we're now back on track. Due to the weather, footpaths will undergo pressure cleaning again in the worst areas. There are a few small jobs needing to be done by a carpenter in the next few months and some major tree lopping and removal as we are having problems with tree roots growing into pipes. As it is getting cold now that winter is here, it's good to know that all Independent Living units and Hostel rooms now have their own reverse cycle air conditions installed to keep residents nice and warm! I would like to thank all our tradesmen and staff for their co-operation during the problems which have occurred around the Village these last months. Thank you, and keep warm!

Hayden Ibbett
Maintenance Supervisor

News from the Hostel

Report by Naomi Douglas

Bill Arndell celebrated his 95th birthday in style this year. His family organised a bus trip for his friends, family and staff to accompany him down to Bowral to see the Donald Bradman Museum. It was a lovely day. We had a spacious and comfortable bus in which to travel and we all enjoyed chatting as we drove (an hour and a half or so) to Bowral and the Museum.

We posed out the front of the sign of the museum to prove that we had really been there then headed inside for a good look around. It was interesting for everyone, cricket fan or not! There was lots of memorabilia and history also on display as well as short films. There were items to touch and play with. The men had a great time practising in the small room that was set to look like a cricket field where Don practiced his game as a child. We spent a good two hours looking around and snapping photos of each other enjoying ourselves. Dilu in particular, a mad keen Cricket fan, was constantly snapping photos!

Once we had dragged ourselves out of the museum we spent some time in the gift shop. Bill was happy to receive some lovely mementos like the mini cricket bat which we all signed. Afterwards, we headed out to lunch and had a great time chatting, laughing and sharing what we had discovered. The food was good, too.

Before we left, Bill wanted to go down

to the oval and just step on to the grass. We all trooped down there and enjoyed watching the men playing cricket. Bill joined in and got a few good hits in as well.

On the way home, many of us had a nap. We were worn out from celebrating a special day with a special man. Happy birthday, Bill, and thank you for a wonderful day.

We started our autumn season of bus trips by going to the lovely Lilian Fraser Garden. It was such a peaceful garden with so many nooks and crannies that could keep you busy for a long time. We oohed and ahhed over all the beautiful flowers and trees and wandered around the garden with big smiles on our faces. It was interesting to find out about the history of this garden.

"Dr Lilian Fraser lived on the property for most of her life. After graduating from Sydney Girls High School, she enrolled at the University of Sydney where she attained a Masters of Science in 1932 and a Doctorate of Science five years later.

Only the third woman to qualify as a biologist in Australia, she joined the Department of Agriculture in 1940 to work on citrus crops.

As she approached old age with no immediate family, Dr Fraser offered her garden to Hornsby Shire Council in 1982. Her final wish was for her garden to be enjoyed as a public garden and park. Dr Lilian Fraser died in 1987 aged 79." (excerpts taken from Lilian Fraser Garden pamphlet). We certainly enjoyed her garden.

Another favourite this time was the Cherrybrook Lakes. The lake has a variety of ducks, birds, pretty bridges to walk over and nice level paths to walk on.

But our greatest find was left for last. It was right under our nose and most of us didn't know it existed: Neal Park is on the corner of Northcote and Sherbrook Roads here in Hornsby. You would never believe that right behind this busy street there would be such a peaceful, tranquil place. It had running water and gorgeous brooks. There were information plaques about Edgeworth David and his work, as well as information about Neal House. It is a sweet little cottage hidden behind the bushes. Someone actually lives in it so we couldn't go right up but we went as close as we dared and took some lovely photos. I think one of the best parts of this park was that it was so close to the hustle and bustle of the city but somehow you were transported away to the bush. A definite favourite for all of us!

We have really been enjoying our bus trips each week. We have been discovering more about our area and its history as well as getting to know one another better. There are always lots of laughs, talking and hot tea and coffee (when Naomi remembers to bring the hot water).

Blueberries

An article in the October 2010 issue of The Hornsby Advocate on blueberries stimulated my interest and I wanted to share it with our readers. This little fruit has something to offer apart from its delicious taste. Once you learn more about this blue fruit, I'm sure you'll be an avid consumer for not just its taste but the wonderful nutritious benefits! (Ed)

A new University of Michigan Cardiovascular Center (USA) study suggests that blueberries may help reduce belly fat and risk factors for cardiovascular disease and metabolic syndrome.

According to a study presented at the 2009 Experimental Biology conference, a diet rich in blueberries lowers blood cholesterol levels while improving glucose control and insulin sensitivity, lowering the risk of subsequent heart disease and diabetes.

Not only are blueberries yummy, they have some fantastic health benefits which include the highest antioxidant capacity of all fresh fruit: blueberries, being very rich in antioxidants like anthocyanin, vitamin C, B complex, vitamin E, vitamin A, copper (a very effective immune builder and anti-bacterial), selenium, zinc, iron (promotes immunity by raising hemoglobin and oxygen concentration in blood) etc. boost up your immune system and prevent infections. Once your immunity is strong, you won't catch colds, fever, pox and all such nasty viral and bacterial communicable diseases.

Blueberries neutralize free radicals which can affect disease and aging in the body: they bring you the brightest ray of hope, for they are laden with antioxidants and rank number one in the world of antioxidants. This is mainly due to presence of anthocyanin, a pigment responsible for the blue color of the blueberries. The abundance of vitamin C is also a big factor for this as well.

Blueberries help promote urinary tract health: the building of colonies of certain bacteria like b-coli along the lining of the inner walls of the urinary tract is responsible for this infection, resulting in inflammation, burning sensation in the passage of urine and other complications. Here, blueberries can be surprisingly beneficial. It has a compound formed of big polymer-like heavy molecules which inhibits the growth of such bacteria. It also has some antibiotic properties which add to this effect. These heavy and big molecules almost wash off these bacteria along the tract, thereby preventing the infection.

They have been proved to preserve vision: blueberry extract, high in compounds called anthocyanosides, has been found in clinical studies to slow down visual loss. They can prevent or delay all age related ocular problems like macular degeneration, cataract, myopia and hypermetropia, dryness and infections, particularly those pertaining to retina, due to their anti-oxidant properties. Blueberries contain a special group of antioxidants called carotenoids (lutein, zeaxanthin etc), flavonoids (like rutin, resveritrol, quercetin etc), in addition to others such as vitamin C, vitamin E and vitamin A, selenium, zinc and phosphorus, which are very beneficial and essential for ocular health.

Brain Health: blueberries can prevent and heal neurotic disorders by preventing degeneration and death of neurons, brain cells and also by restoring health of the central nervous system. It is hard to believe that these berries can have a beneficial impact on problems like Alzheimer's disease. They even heal damaged brain cells and neuron tissues and keep your memory sharp for a long time. Researchers found that a diet rich in blueberries significantly improved both the learning capacity and motor skills of ageing animals, making them mentally equivalent to much younger ones.

Heart disease: the high fiber content, those brilliant anti-oxidants and the ability to dissolve the 'bad cholesterol' make the blueberry an ideal dietary supplement to cure many heart diseases. It also strengthens the cardiac muscles.

Constipation and digestion: while roughage (fiber) in blueberries keep away constipation (of course, a single piece alone will not do; you need to eat a big handful of them), the vitamins, sodium, copper, fructose and acids improve digestion.

Other benefits and facts: they keep you fresh, active, fit, sharp, close to nature and in a good mood, as they are a very good antidepressant and there are no side effects. Remember, the deeper the color of the blueberries, the more they are rich in antioxidants and other medicinal values.

This article has been edited for this newsletter for space reasons.

For the full article, see http://www.womenfitness.net/blueberries.htm viewed 10/3/11. (Ed).

I'll Do That Tomorrow . . .

Last year I retired after many years at work,
I've moved to a different stage with still no time to shirk!
A friend said I'd be busy, wondering where I found
The time to fit in work, when things to do abound!
First, I joined the CWA to give a helping hand
Things to do won't happen if my head is in the sand!
I help in the tea rooms at our branch (serving *Devonshire Tea*)
Also knitting tea cosies – now my time is more carefree.
I'm a leader of Hornsby's Laughter Club (which helps my attitude),
Volunteering at the *Powerhouse*, something else I include.
Early this year I broke my leg – I stepped on a slippery file.
Hospital then Rehab, really cramped my style!
I found a Retirement Village and bought a unit there
I am a self care resident and hardly have a care!
I joined another writing club to continue writing verse;
We only get one chance at life because there's no rehearse!
Sometimes I watch *Dr Phil* (Oprah's on after him)
Later *Judge Judy* rules the roost – some cases are quite grim!
I even have a garden where I spend a bit of time –
Flowers almost talk to me – also Parsley and Thyme!
I enjoy keeping involved (with *National Seniors* as well)
Being able to *give it a go* ('though I don't always excel).
With something to look forward to, there's no need for sorrow
I'll get my act together and – ***"I'll do that tomorrow. . . "***
Jan Garland (18/10/08)
(Written as an entry in the Country Women's Association 2008 Annual Poetry Competition.)

Keep Your Heart in Peace

Keep your heart in peace.
Let nothing disturb it;
All things have an end.
In all circumstances,
However hard they may be,
We should rejoice rather than be cast down
That we may not lose the greatest good,
The peace and tranquillity of our soul:
If the whole world and all that is in it,
Were thrown into confusion,
Disquietude on that account would be vanity,
Because the disquietude would do more harm than good.
To endure all things with an equable and peaceful mind
Not only brings with it many blessings to the soul,
But also enables us, in the midst of our difficulties,
To have a clear judgement about them
And to minister the fitting remedy for them.

St John of the Cross

Heart Watch

Throwing some light on winter blues

Many people feel more miserable in the winter months. The darkness, ongoing cold and dreary weather can contribute to an overall drop in contentment. The good news is that for most people, the blues can be blown away by doing a few simple things:

- Getting enough sleep – not too much, not too little.
- Getting enough Vitamin D – make sure you catch some sunshine every day.
- Exercise can lift your serotonin levels. It is the 'happy hormone'.
- Eating well – it keeps you energised and feeling healthy.
- Having fun with friends. Staying connected has been proven to raise one's mood.

However, if you are finding it hard to cope with your mood, you may be experiencing Seasonal Affective Disorder, or S.A.D. (see article in the last Newsletter, p6). The exact cause of S.A.D. is unknown but many doctors believe that lack of sunlight in the winter months may cause a disruption of circadian rhythms that affect the brain chemistry of some people.

Maintaining a regular sleep cycle is one of the best treatments for S.A.D. This means waking up at a regular time and trying to get some sunlight before 8am. Combining this with exercise is also important. Another reason to go for an early morning walk!

Have a chuckle this winter. Having a good laugh is no laughing matter when it comes to improving your health. Laughing helps relax the muscles of the face, shoulders, neck and upper torso by reducing blood pressure and stress levels.

- A distraction from worries to lighten stress, anxiety, depression and pain.
- Internal exercise where the lungs inhale and exhale rapidly, improves circulation and blood supply to vital organs.
- Laughing releases hormones called endorphins, which act as natural pain killers and help to evoke a good mood.

From the Newsletter of
the Heart Health Program
Issue 5, Winter 09

The Three Little Pigs for Grown-ups

This little fable was inspired by the writing workshop at the Christian Community family camp at Longbeach. The workshop was facilitated by Pam Jackson, who directed us to some short creative writing exercises, one of which was to choose a short fable or tale and rewrite it. A very modern (and shall we say satirical) version of The Three Little Pigs came to me during the camp rest time in the afternoon of the second day. In any case, thank you Pam for the well selected prompts and opportunities to get writing – for fun.
On Wednesday evening of the camp I was sitting at the dinner table with Lisa and three of the children who were all under nine years old – Max, Kiara and Isobel. Max started us on a discussion about why grown-ups so often seem not to be having any fun. 'Like, they don't have any playtime', he said. This little fable may have something to do with why grownups so often seem not to be having much fun.

By Phillippa Cordwell

Once upon a time there lived three little pigs – Helter, Skelter and Hogwash. Their mother had fallen on hard times, and the three brothers, now of independent age, were well equipped to build their fortunes for themselves.

Helter took up a position on the local council, directing the service departments down the streets of the already well-to-do of the council jurisdiction, repaving the roads, sanitising their rubbish bins, and trimming the nature strips that hailed their front fences.

Skelter sought out more ready ways to a fortune, and entered the jewellery business as a cutter and setter of the finest gems – while at the same time researching the illicit trade in diamonds from Africa to the willingly ignorant wealthy of the Americas.

Hogwash, more drawn to the issues of social justice, became a politician – more for the social than for the justice. By the power of his word – and more so his words, and the way he strung them together – he associated with the most respectable and persuasive in the area of society where there were those who could turn the tides with the wave of a hand. And so he learned to build with words the world that people wanted to live in. And he found wealth, as favour found him.

Now Helter the councillor, by the knowledge gained as to where all the leftover building supplies could be found after the housing of the wealthy scrounged his house together in a mock-up of Adobe and Hellenic styles, with an All-American façade – in the next suburb.

Skelter the jeweller on the other hand, having accumulated some wealth this way and that – and mostly by that – moved overseas to the Bahamas. There he bought, quite quickly, a ready-made palace of fake marble - twelve rooms in all, and with an indigenous serving staff.

Hogwash however, remained to build his house of words in the place where they had grown and nurtured. And people from all around flocked to fill in the bricks of his words with trusting mortar. And so he found himself able to live wherever he might be, the mortar always being ready for his bricks.

All this, while a dark figure had been stalking the fortunes of the three little pigs – unnoticed for the bright glow of economic success.

Unfortunately for Helter, the beneficent beneficiary of the suburban fortunate, building resources became scarce, service workers were laid off, the canny sold up their properties with slick proficiency, and the new struggling suburban class were too taken up with the slippery slide backwards to be able to find grease for any palms. Helter, cut loose from the coat-tails of his past clients and benefactors, slid backwards also, and the walls of his house fell down with the first blow in the winds of changing fortune. Helter died under the fall of a substandard roof.

Less dramatically did Skelter, the jeweller turned prince of principality, suffer the hot breath of changing fortune. The first to go were his indigenous staff – for they knew how to rehouse themselves from pure simplicity. Skelter stayed inside the walls of his fake marble palace, but the natural sands of time chipped away at the foundations, for they were not fooled by the mere appearance of marble. Skelter stayed in his palace, for the crumbling walls still gave scant shelter, and he had his glittering dreams that stayed with him to the end – in the Salvation Army hostel.

Now Hogwash the politician, who proffered the bricks of words for the willing mortar of his constituency, had noticed the shadow lurking around the edges of town. He couldn't quite see who or what it was as he squinted over the shoulders of the crowd beneath his podium. But he kept his patience, and maintained his watch. And as the dark figure became nearer and gradually took its shape within his vision, so he trimmed and shaped the bricks of his words. And as the bricks changed with ever so slight remixing of the ingredients, the constituency modified their mortars for stickability. Thus the house of Hogwash remained seemingly strong and invincible. For even as the colour of the bricks darkened in the shadow that grew, encroached, and engulfed, so did the mortar and so too the constituency.

No-one noticed a shadow over and around them, for everything within the constituency was darkened equally by the growing shadow. Only Hogwash, the politician, could see this. But he understood only the changing cast of colour, and not from whence the shadow was cast. Nevertheless, as long as he and he alone could see this shadow, his house of words could remain strong. Eventually, although his house was strong, it became too dark for Hogwash to find his way around. So he took a plane to the Bahamas to see how Skelter was faring.

Finding Skelter's marble palace in complete decay, he was directed to the indigenous servants who had gone back to building their own houses. He saw that these houses moved and changed with the seasons. Their winter house was made of the sunlight taken from the sky – and so the sun was less bright in winter. Their summer house was made from rain taken from the clouds – and so there were fewer clouds in summer. Their autumn house was made from earth, taken while the plants took their rest. And their spring house was made from the wind, taken from amongst the leaves of the trees – and so the trees were calm in spring.

Hogwash was impressed by this, and began to have ideas for his constituency. In the meantime, having received an email telling him of Helter's unhappy end, Hogwash paid a visit to the local council and erected a monument in Helter's memory. It was made of the last remaining bricks of the house of Hogwash.

Hogwash then returned to his waiting constituency and laid before them his new ideas and plans for an ecological infrastructure. He passed new regulations for the procurement of sunlight, rain, earth and wind; and the scientists bent their minds to quicker and ever more profitable technologies in the building of new houses – from these newfound ecological materials.

Hogwash married and had three sons – to whom he devolved the names of his brothers and himself. When they grew up Helter-the-second built up a recycling business. Skelter-the-second built a benevolent trading partnership between the indigenous people of the Bahamas and the renewing middle class of his hometown. And Hogwash-the-second became a climate change scientist. And so the house of Hogwash remained strong - for the time being.

Calendar of Events in the Cottage for 2011

2011	Day	Event
JUNE	22	**5pm** – Midwinter Soup Nite – for Self Care residents.
	23	**1.30pm** – Fire Evacuation training – for all Self Care residents.
	27	**10.30am tbc** – Morning Tea Wedding celebration for Liz & Jason. Please phone Monika if you wish to come on 9476 3161 ext 2.
	30	**2pm** – SC Residents' Meeting re ILU Residents Statutory meeting. For all Self Care residents.
		1.30pm – Fire Evacuation training – for all Self Care residents.
JULY	28	**2pm** – Storytelling (continuation of last year) with Neil Anderson. $5.00 includes afternoon tea. All welcome.
AUGUST	25	**2pm**– Self Care Residents' Meeting.
OCTOBER	2	Daylight Saving starts.
	8	Christophorus House Fundraising concert. Details to be advised. Please check our website or phone 9476 3161 for details closer the time.
	20	**12noon** – Barbeque Lunch for SC residents.

The above events are held in The Cottage. If you wish to come to any of these, please contact Monika on 9476 3161 ext 2 beforehand to confirm times and dates as changes often occur due to unforeseeable circumstances.

REGULAR EVENTS IN THE COTTAGE

Bridge is on every Tuesday afternoon from 1 to 4pm.
First Class is held from February to November on the third Sunday of every month.
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 Thursday.
Footbath/Leg Massage Therapy is on Fridays in the Hostel.

Greg Dimmock and his Bag Full of Instruments

Jan has been busy knitting hats for jars!