

Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group Newsletter October 2015

A Project of the Blue Mountains Family Support Service
Inc.

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From the Annual General Meeting

The well attended meeting held in Springwood Uniting Church Hall accepted the Chairman's Annual Report and the Annual Financial Report . The audience was most interested in what Adelaide and Noeline had to say about the Delivery and Storage of Goods and the successful Cricket team Ocean 12.

Suzie Van Opdorp was made a life member of the BMRSG and was thanked for her many years of support. Mayor, Councillor Greenhill accepted the position of Patron of our group and our other visitors spoke well of our long standing dedication to assisting those in need and wished us well.

The highlight of the afternoon was the powerful address by Phil Glendenning, the Director of the Edmund Rice Centre and the President of the Refugee Council of Australia. He stressed the need for practical grass root groups such as ours as well as the political action led by the Refugee Council. As he travels frequently overseas he was able to give us first hand knowledge of the disasters perpetrated as a result of our 'Turn Back the Boats Policy". He did not paint a rosy picture and stressed the need for a united effort to educate the public to force the major parties to abandon offshore processing immediately. This was received with loud applause from the audience

Annual Report by Chairman Hal Ginges

Our Chairman presented a very comprehensive Annual Report which was well received by the members present.

If you did not receive a copy of this report at the AGM or cannot access it on our website then call Marie Standen on 4751 2120 and a copy will be posted to you.

Annual Financial Report

BLUE MOUNTAINS REFUGEE SUPPORT
GROUP

FINANCIAL REPORT
EXTRACT FROM BMFSS AUDITED REPORT
30 June, 2015

PROFIT & LOSS

	This year	Last year
INCOME		
Donations received	\$53,808	\$120,589
FACS volunteer grant	\$0	\$4,587
Sales	\$1,232	\$0
Fund-raising income	\$11,528	\$7,462
Interest	\$1,594	\$0
Membership fees	\$5,563	\$4,422
Cricket grant	\$9,973	\$1,100
Loan repayments	\$4,420	\$0
Total income	\$88,118	\$138,160
Retained earnings	\$109,902	\$35,710
TOTAL	\$198,020	\$173,870

EXPENSES

Refugee support	\$34,877	\$49,648
Administration	\$6,231	\$4,484
Fund-raising expense	\$3,388	\$1,363
Volunteers' travel	\$5,606	\$8,472
Cricket team	\$9,475	\$0
Donations	\$18,860	\$0
Loans	\$4,820	\$0
TOTAL	\$83,257	\$63,967

BALANCE SHEET

Main bank account	\$55,479	\$30,699
Term deposit	\$60,512	\$78,918
TOTAL ASSETS	\$115,991	\$109,617

Message from our Treasurer, Michael Morley

Once again we have been supported by generous donations, in particular two special individual donations of \$10,000 and \$5,000. The Everyday Hero fund raising facility continued to bring in a steady stream of donations. Through the efforts of team manager Noeline Nagle, the Ocean XII cricket team was supported by a grant of \$9800 from Wenty Leagues Club as well as other donations, including \$1000 from Peter FitzSimons. (The team has gone on to win the New South Wales Championship of the Last Man Standing competition, and will contest the Australian Championship in November.) Raffles, a forum and a fund-raising barbecue at Bunnings added to our income.

We have been able to support several refugee/asylum seekers with No Interest Loans to help especially with work training and requirements, and accommodation. These loans are being paid off in installments. Our funds enable our volunteers to make regular distribution of food and other supplies to those living in the community on various kinds of visas, often with very limited means of support.

We made a grant of \$10,000 to the Public Education Foundation to provide scholarships to needy refugee/asylum seeker students to enable them to continue their education in the last years of school and first years of university. Another grant of \$10,000 was made to Holroyd High School (Principal Dorothy Hoddinott) to help provide for the needs of refugee/asylum seeker students there.

Michael Morley 19 September, 2015

Letter of thanks from Ms. Dorothy Hoddinott AO Principal, Holroyd High School

My apologies for not having replied earlier – I was flattened by a nasty upper respiratory tract infection and have been very busy ever since coming back to school.

Of course, we would welcome a further donation to help our refugee and asylum seeker students. They have very high needs because they start with nothing.

This year, we have been using the funds donated by BMRSG to purchase laptop computers for all the Year 11 and 12 refugee and asylum seeker students who did not already have laptops. There was a brief period under the last Federal Labor Government when students received these devices through the Digital Education Revolution program, but funding for that program ceased a couple of years ago, although the need remains for low socio-economic status students, few of whom can afford to buy a computer. We have used the BMRSG donation and a donation from the Jessie Street Library for this purpose to ensure our refugee and asylum seeker students are not disadvantaged by not having computer access outside school.

Using donations in this way has enabled me to allocate additional funds to our student assistance budget to cover all the schooling costs for our community detention and bridging visa students, to date this year, the school has spent about \$35,000 on this

support.

Thank you also for your donations to the Public Education Foundation's Friends of Zainab scholarship fund. That is now becoming a significant scholarship fund for young refugees, and is certainly one of the best things I have ever initiated. The more donations, the better will it serve these young people in their education!

UPDATE ON EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

From Maureen Williams, Event Manager

Mayfield Garden Tour 20th October

The trip to Mayfield Gardens was very successful with a full bus of 45 people. We had a great day, members had an opportunity to get to know each other, see the wonderful gardens, have lunch and support BMRSG. It was decided that we should go to Mayfield again in the Autumn. So, if you missed out this time, there will be another opportunity! Thank you to all who came.

Christmas Raffle

What an amazing response we have had to our raffle! Thank you to everyone who has taken tickets, we have had to print a second lot. As you know, the raffle will be drawn on the 5th December, so if you could return the stubs and money before the 20th November, that would be helpful.

Just to clear up a misunderstanding – the Christmas Hamper is actually a Gift Hamper – and not a food hamper. It is full of wonderful items for women, men, children and even pets! There are also several gift vouchers. These items have all been donated by generous local businesses. It is a fantastic prize!

Second prize is an imported leather ladies handbag and third prize is a handmade quilt.

Christmas Stall

This will be held outside the Leura Cellars on Leura Mall on the 5th December, starting at 9.00am.

We need donations of Christmas foodstuffs and handmade gifts. We are also having a re-gifting table! So, if you have items hidden in the back of your cupboard, - that have been given to you and are not to your taste – please think about donating them – someone will like them!

If you are unable to get them to us, we can arrange to have any items collected.

Please contact me:

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Editor Marie Standen