

Kilsyth Connections

Acknowledging and celebrating people in Kilsyth who are contributing their time, skills and life experiences to strengthen community connections in our suburb.

Read about some of them on this FREE 2024 calendar/poster!

Do a bit more in '24!

2024

January

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Council connections

Contacting your Councillors

yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Type 'Councillors' in search box on home screen.

Shaping Yarra Ranges

News about current Council consultations.

shaping.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/consultations

Yarra Ranges Local

Online and print newsletter of Council activities. Type 'yarra ranges local' in search box on home screen.

Community skills building

Council periodically offers free training and info sessions for community-minded individuals.

Past topics include volunteer recruitment, preparing grant applications and leadership. yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Experience/Events

Council grants

Small Grants Program supports individuals and groups for activities promoting greater social inclusion, well-being and participation.

Type 'community grants' in search box on home screen.

Volunteer opportunities

Type 'volunteer' in search box on home screen.

Kilsyth Memorial Hall hire

Type 'Kilsyth Hall' in search box on home screen.

Contacting Council

1300 368 333

mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

yarraranges.vic.gov.au



On and off the field
LUKE IVANOVIC
Kilsyth Football Club

► When he was only six years old, Luke Ivanovic started playing for the Kilsyth Football Club - in the under-eights team. Now 15, due to his on-field talents he is still 'playing up an age group' in the under-16s. He won the Club's goal-kicking competition in both teams in which he played this year.

His off-field achievements have also gained him admiration. Last year, the Club awarded him the Best Club Person for both Seniors and Juniors, a feat unusual for a player his age.

'I ran water for the players, was a runner and assisted in the canteen. Where they needed me, I was happy to help out,' Luke says.

'Obviously you want to win your games and win a flag, that's the main goal, but it's not all about what you do on the field. I want to be known as someone who is always willing to lend a hand wherever.'

kilsythfootballclub.com.au



Community visitor
DENISE MARSH
MiCare

► Denise Marsh's volunteering activities commenced at a kiosk at MiCare, the aged care facility in Kilsyth where she resides.

'I initially spent a couple of hours each week at the kiosk, serving coffee and biscuits, chatting with residents and visitors and generally helping out,' says Denise.

'It was rewarding work, but most importantly it kept me connected with people.'

'Following the loss of my husband, Ron, I took an extended break from the kiosk. My life had changed and I needed to grieve as well as rest.'

'After some time MiCare approached me and asked whether I might be interested in trying something new,' recalls Denise.

MiCare told Denise that there was a need for volunteers to visit people still living in their own homes in the area. She agreed to try out this kind of contribution, starting with one resident. She enjoyed the interaction from the very first visit.

'I get a sense of achievement each time I go there. I consider volunteering a real privilege,' Denise says.

micare.com.au



Sowing seeds of personal growth
KAROLINA BAUMAN
Kilsyth South Baptist Church

► The Covid-19 pandemic lockdown did no favours to the community garden at the Kilsyth South Baptist Church. Volunteers who normally tended the vegetables and kept the weeds at bay were sorely missed. No surprise that the garden became over-run.

In early 2023, church member Karolina Bauman put up her hand to take on the rejuvenation of the community garden, an outreach project of the church.

Karolina, who has previously studied horticulture, is keen to build up a community of fellow gardeners at the Liverpool Road location.

She is hoping that the garden will become a place for church-goers and the wider Kilsyth community to enjoy the benefits of fresh air, planting, growth, generally working the soil — and sharing the results.

Anyone interested in visiting the community garden is invited to contact Karolina via the Kilsyth South Baptist Church office on (03) 9762 8954.

ksbc.org.au



Fun raising
SAM ROBINSON
Kilsyth Primary School

► When browsing Kilsyth Primary's website, the school's motto for children emerges strongly: 'Be The Best You Can Be'.

Parent volunteers live by the same maxim in relation to contributing to the life of the school and in upholding its underlying values and strategies.

One such volunteer is Sam Robinson, mother of two students there, and an enthusiastic fund raiser (and fun raiser!).

'I help out at the breakfast club weekly, I've helped on excursions. I'm involved with other parents in organising the graduation celebrations for the six graders,' Sam says.

Sam, who has volunteered at the school for seven years, is on the committee which deals with the school's oversight and policy. She is also on the fundraising committee.

'We help organise activities during the year with the aim of having fun and raising money,' says Sam.

'For example, we'll have a footy day just before the Grand Final, a Father's Day stall, and a Milo and biscuits stall at morning recess,' she adds.

For Sam, the emphasis is about the smiles on children's faces as much as on financial outcomes.

kilsythps.vic.edu.au



An afternoon of music
CHARLES DE LONG

► A lifelong passion for good music was the impetus for Kilsyth resident, Charles De Long, to organise a local afternoon concert for residents and other music lovers.

Charles, himself a trained tenor and performer, conceived of and staged a public concert of excerpts from grand opera, operettas, musicals and light classics.

He also did most of the organising, hiring the Kilsyth Memorial Hall, arranging for publicity and printing of tickets, posters and programs. He also took the bookings!

He invited some fellow musicians to participate: two singers, a flautist, and an accompanying pianist.

The result of these dedicated efforts was a successful function in November 2022 with more than 100 attendees enjoying music by Mozart, Puccini and Verdi plus songs made famous by tenors such as Pavarotti, Lanza and Caruso. A rare treat indeed in Kilsyth!

The success of the occasion is a demonstration of what can be achieved through the efforts of one enthusiastic resident.



Happy dogs
SHELLEY LARGE

► A dog-lover, Kilsyth resident Shelley Large (pictured above with Diesel) had long identified the need for an off-lead area for the enjoyment of the many canines in the community.

A comprehensive community consultation held in Kilsyth in 2014 came at a most opportune time for her.

She became involved in the consultation, making a significant contribution to the project's final product: a 68-page document. A framework for future activities, projects and services in Kilsyth, the plan remains a touchstone for residents and groups in planning and goal setting for the suburb.

Shelley's belief in the value of an off-lead area for dogs and her enthusiasm in promoting the concept in the community plan led in 2016 to Yarra Ranges Council making the oval at the top end of Elizabeth Bridge Reserve in Durham Road available for this purpose.

Copies of the Community Plan 2016-2018 can be obtained by contacting the Kilsyth Community Action Group.

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Treasure hunt
GLORIA PRICE & MICHAEL JENKINSON
St James & St Peter Anglican Church

► Every month for the past ten years Gloria Price and Michael Jenkinson have made their respective ways on a Friday afternoon to the St James and St Peter Anglican Church.

There they meet other team members in order to prepare for the church's 'Open Shed' garage sale the following day.

The crew moves potential treasures stored in the shed onto open ground and undertakes other tasks in readiness for next day's buyers.

'Being involved gives me great pleasure,' says Gloria. 'You get to meet lots of people, parishioners and other members of the Kilsyth community.'

According to Michael, 'When you are retired, you need to have something with a purpose that gets you out of the house. That's one of the best things about volunteering. Sitting at home doesn't do your health any good.'

Open Shed is on the first Saturday of each month (except January), 9am to 1pm at the church at 686 Mt Dandenong Rd, Kilsyth.

kilsyth.melbourneanglican.org.au



New settlers
JENNY THLACEU
Chin community in Kilsyth

► In recent years, many thousands of people have left Myanmar (also known as Burma) due to the persecution of ethnic and religious minorities.

Families and individuals flee to nearby countries and then apply for acceptance to Australia. A significant number of such refugees have settled in Melbourne's outer east, including Croydon, Mooroolbark and Kilsyth.

Kilsyth Community Action Group (KCAG) has been active in supporting the local Chin community. (Chin people are an ethnic group native to Myanmar's Chin State. There are many Chin sub-groups.)

Since their arrival, Chin residents have initiated a number of local cultural events, and participated in others including the Kilsyth Festival.

KCAG has assisted the Australian Chin Community Eastern Melbourne (ACCEM) in arranging venues for sports tournaments. It has also supported ACCEM with funding applications and engaging with governments and other authorities.

The photograph above shows homework tutor Jenny Thlaceu at the homework club in Mooroolbark.



Passionate about reading
HILARY MILSOME
Japara Book Club

► Hilary Milsome loves reading books. And she also loves talking to people who love reading books.

'I was speaking with a Japara community worker in 2020 when I said in passing that I wished there was a book group at the centre,' says Hilary. The worker responded with 'Well, why not start one?'

With assistance from Japara staff, Hilary did so. The first meeting of the group, with Hilary as convenor, was held later that year.

'We've gone from an initial seven people to our current membership of eleven – about the right size for a group such as this,' says Hilary.

'We get our monthly titles from the CAE which chooses and delivers books from a list we submit to them annually.'

'At meetings the book we have all read that month is discussed as well as other books members have recently read.'

'The social aspects of the group are also important and over time friendships have developed,' said Hilary.

japarahouse.com.au



Active citizenship
MIEKE ALEXANDER

► Mieke Alexander is an active Kilsyth resident with strong views on the value of community. These are reflected in her close involvement with various projects over recent years: 'When people come to know each other there is less prejudice and judgement. You do not have to agree with everyone but you can still work together towards a common goal,' she says.

Mieke's introduction to activism began with her advocacy for the creation of a children's playground. Although that project did not proceed, her community spirit remained undimmed.

The next project was prompted by her awareness of older people who were facing issues in retirement. 'Many were rather fearful of what lay ahead,' says Mieke. She subsequently organised a 'transition to retirement' expo.

Mieke is particularly pleased about her contribution to the creation of the Garden of Contemplation, a 2022 initiative located behind the Bridge House at Elizabeth Bridge Reserve, Durham Road.

'The garden is designed as a quiet place for everyone. In particular, it is an acknowledgement of adults and children who have experienced domestic violence.'



Citizen advocate
VALERIE MAYER
Casey Grandmothers for Refugees

► Following a long career in secondary teaching of English and History, Valerie Mayer went in a different direction. She returned to study and gained qualifications in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, subsequently working at Box Hill TAFE and later at Swinburne University's Croydon campus.

It was during this period that Valerie learnt firsthand of the unique challenges facing students learning English as a second language.

'I was in awe of them. In addition to acquiring a new language, establishing a home and getting a job, some were also dealing with major migration issues as refugees,' says Valerie.

'It became clear to me that I needed to help advocate on their behalf so I joined the Casey Grandmothers for Refugees,' a grassroots movement organised at local levels according to federal electorate boundaries. Participants are not exclusively grandmothers.

Members meet regularly to discuss and take action on issues relating to visas, detention and appropriate supports for refugees and asylum seekers.

grandmothersforrefugees.com



Bring on the Cheerios
KEITH RICHARDSON
Gladesville Primary School

► Little did Keith Richardson imagine that after his professional career ended he would happily be spending some of his time each week serving up bowls of Cheerios, spreading toast and making Milo drinks for primary school children.

There are no sleep-ins for Keith on Friday mornings when he makes his way to Gladesville Primary School in Gladesville Drive, Kilsyth to volunteer at the school's Breakfast Program, headed up by the school chaplain, Sarah Backo (pictured above with Keith).

Keith has been a volunteer at the school for just over a year, having put up his hand following an appeal by the youth pastor at his church.

'I feel we all need to help out, if possible, when a need arises,' Keith says.

Sarah is keen to explore expanding the Breakfast Program to the wider community.

Those interested in volunteering at Gladesville Primary are invited to contact Sarah Backo at the school on (03) 9728 1877.

gladesvilleps.vic.edu.au

2024

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KCAG connections

Kilsyth Community Action Group (KCAG)
Mike O'Meara (Chair) - 0412 458 551
Shelley Large (committee member) - 0421 615 943
mail@kilsythcommunityactiongroup.net
C/o Japara Living & Learning Centre
54-58 Durham Road, Kilsyth 3137
Find us on Facebook
kilsythcommunityactiongroup.net

Attend a meeting!
Kilsyth Community Action Group (KCAG) is a community-based, independent, and non-political organisation established to give voice to the views of Kilsyth people as to how they would like to see their suburb develop.

Residents, workers, traders and others are invited to our meetings which are held on the second Thursday each month (except January) from 6.30pm to 8.00pm at Japara Living & Learning Centre. For further information please get in touch, see above.

Festival family fun
This year's Kilsyth Festival and Craft Fair is on Sunday 26 November 2023 from 10.00am to 4.00pm at the Elizabeth Bridge Reserve, Durham Road, Kilsyth. The Craft Fair will be held at Japara Living & Learning Centre opposite.

Festival organisers at KCAG would like to hear from people who wish to be involved in some way in the 2024 Festival, date to be advised.