



## Rebuilding Expo – 28 November

After running nine very successful forums on planning, design, building and material issues the Strathewen and St Andrews Joint Rebuilding Group have a wealth of information to share.

The Group have now organised a Rebuilding Expo on Ryder's Flat in Arthurs Creek (opposite the CFA) on Saturday 28 November, 11 am to 4 pm.

The Rebuilding Expo will feature presentations by building experts who have impressed us with the depth of their knowledge about matters that are crucial to the rebuilding task.

The presentations are designed to assist owner builders as well as those looking to engage a local or volume builder.

The Building Expo will also be attended by the many Supportive Suppliers who have rallied around our community giving free advice, honest service and significant discounts.

Exhibits will include a wide range of building materials including systems suitable for BAL-FZ (the highest bushfire attack rating); earth construction, steel framing, brick, concrete and compressed block, plumbing, waste water solutions, alternate energy, fire and domestic water pumps, tools and equipment suppliers.

We've also arranged some amusements for the kids while you listen, talk and browse.

Some people are well underway with their building plans but many of us are still at the 'getting ready' stage. This will be a great opportunity to move forward. Our presenters and suppliers are sympathetic; they know what we've been through.

The Building Expo is about information, not the hard sell. It is a free event,

although a donation to our CFA Brigade for parking would be appreciated.

### Presenters timetable:

11.30	VBRR Rebuilding Team
11.50	Owner Builders
12.20	Building Commission - John Shaw
12.40	Electrician Solar - Luke Adams
1.00	Consumer Affairs - contracts
1.20	Sustainability Victoria
1.40	Green Plumbing - Rory Fort -
2.00	Enter Shop - Gary Flood
2.20	Steel Frame Association - John Shaylor Steel Frame Solutions
2.40	Nillumbik Mud Brick Association – Greg Slingsby
3.00	Fasham Homes - Brian Stacey
3.20	Bluescope Steel - Paul Jones
3.40	Interior Design

For further information contact:  
Callum Donoghue 0414 932 051 or  
Karl Apted 0418 350 345.

## Chookin

The chook-knitters have been busy over the last couple of months creating a huge array of multi-coloured life-size chooks. The cuddly Alpaca wool chooks will be presented to the Strathewen Primary School students on the 15<sup>th</sup> December at the school. Some of the chooks were on display recently and the range of colours and styles is amazing. Well done to all the students for their wonderful designs and well done to all the knitters. Each chook represents many hours of work and the quality of the work is outstanding! Thank you to Barbara Joyce for conceiving the idea, organising the materials, and directing the many knitters who have donated their time.

## Commemorative event to mark 7th February 2010

The Residents' Support Sub-committee has begun to plan an event to commemorate the first anniversary of 7<sup>th</sup> February. While the planning is still in its infancy, it is envisaged that the day will be marked with a short service for the residents and friends of Strathewen.

The venue has not been fixed, however, taking into account factors such as access and parking, it is likely to be held on the Strathewen oval. Plans for the service include; music, speakers (preferably local), sprigs of rosemary, the opportunity to leave messages of hope/wishes for the future (these may be sealed into a section of the Blacksmith's tree).

The service will be relatively short – around 90 minutes – so as not to impose on people's personal plans for the day.

Input from the community on what form the service might take would be very welcome. Contact Peter McLennan on 0414 308 557 or [peter@safeplay.com.au](mailto:peter@safeplay.com.au)

## VBRRA chief in town

The Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority chief executive, Ben Hubbard, met with the Association's Committee last week to discuss the Strathewen community's reconstruction needs and how the efforts of various agencies involved in the recovery effort could best be combined to achieve progress on priority matters.

The Committee stressed the importance of helping people to move back onto their blocks, as this would strengthen the community, remove the current uncertainty about future rental arrangements, and help focus efforts upon fixing up blocks and moving forward with rebuilding.

The value placed on getting private land cleared up and re-instated was also stressed, with land holders requiring access to expertise, and assistance in dealing with weed management, erosion control, and re-instatement.

Ben Hubbard stated that the Authority was prepared to work directly with the Hall Committee in getting the hall rebuilt, provided that the Hall Committee was properly managed and possessed the necessary skills.

The Committee will remain in direct contact with VBRRA in order to pursue Strathewen's priority needs.

## Blokes' Night is here

An informal group has been established to give blokes a chance to get together with others facing similar challenges, to discuss how things such as re-building are progressing, to exchange ideas, to talk about any issues, or to just catch up with friends and neighbours.

The evening goes for about three hours, and the conversation is supported by Colin Charles (Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement), Stephen McPherson (Nillumbik Health) and Glenn Little (Centacare).

Blokes' Night is to be a regular fortnightly event on Friday nights. The next Blokes' Night will be on **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November from 7.00 pm onwards at Strathewen Community Centre**. Beer and Pizza will be provided. All blokes are welcome and encouraged to bring a neighbour.

Other opportunities for bringing blokes together are being explored including small discussion groups, DIY workshops including 'Make your own Esky', farm fencing, and welding.

## Strathewen Public Hall Assn Inc

The Hall Committee is now up and running, and needs your help!

Do you have any memorabilia, photos etc. relating to the Hall's history?

Can you assist by providing short term storage – a number of timber tables have been donated to the Hall Association, which require storage?

Most importantly, please join up as a member of the Strathewen Public Hall Association Inc – there's no charge this year! We will need community input into the reconstruction of the community's hall, so become a member and make sure you can have a say when decisions are being made!

Contact Kathy Brown on 9714 8864 or on [miscellany@ozemail.com.au](mailto:miscellany@ozemail.com.au) if you wish to become a member or you can help with memorabilia or with storage.

## Community memorials

The need for community memorials was recognised through the community visioning workshops. The Association Committee has endorsed the formation of a Memorials Working Group to research best practice, explore concepts and develop proposals for community memorials in Strathewen. The Working Group will be made up of representatives from SCRA, Nillumbik Shire Council, VBBRA, and others as required.

The Committee recognises that there will be many expressions of remembrances throughout the community, at personal, neighbourhood and whole of community level. The concept of memorials may include events, places and physical structures and will recognise the range of losses across the community.

The memorials development process will be centred on community engagement to ensure that any memorials will meet the needs of our community.

Expressions of interest will be sought soon for participation in the Memorials Working Group, and for involvement in a Community Reference Group, where initial ideas can be talked about and further refined.

For further information contact Steve Pascoe on 0407 326 770 or [steve.pascoe@knox.vic.gov.au](mailto:steve.pascoe@knox.vic.gov.au)

## Environment activities

The Environment Recovery Working Group is busy organizing activities to back up the recovery work being done by Nillumbik Shire Council and Melbourne Water.

Our Furry Animals night with the children was a great success and has led to the planning of a night walk with Tony Fitzgerald, the Kinglake National Park Ranger and representatives from the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November at Dom & Celestes' 15 Rankines Road starting at 7:30PM. RSVP to Georgia Ramsay 9433 3210

Erosion continues to be a concern and you can see Nillumbik's 'soft engineering' approach of using logs and hay bales to slow the water down along the roadsides. They have provided us with an explanation of how best to place the logs and have set up photo points to study the success of their work. Contact us at [scra@tpg.com.au](mailto:scra@tpg.com.au) if you would like a copy of the information.

Weeds are going to be a real problem and we will almost certainly see new weeds that have been come in with the relief fodder and the heavy machinery.

Our aim is to achieve support for landholders with the full cost of contractors and herbicide. The difficulty we will all face, other than obtaining funding, is how to recognise these new weedy plants – especially the pasture weeds. *Chilean Needle Grass* looks like some of the native tussocks when it's growing, and like the native spear grass when it's flowering, and identifying it can prove a real headache. To help you, there is a field day on pasture in St Andrews this week and we are planning another one in early December.

### **Re-establish your garden**

Plantmark are kindly giving out Greenpass cards to bushfire affected residents to help them re-establish their gardens. Plantmark are a wholesale nursery and supplier of plants at trade prices. It is usually only available to suppliers of the nursery industry, not the general public.

The Greenpass card will entitle you to the purchase of plants at trade prices and the card has no expiry date. This gives you the chance to re-establish your garden when you are ready to do so over the coming years.

A Greenpass can be obtained by calling Jane Darling from Plantmark on 8787 4150. She will require your name, Bushfire Referral Card number and postal address to send the card to you.

The closest outlet to our area is 30 Mahoneys Road, Thomastown. (Melways 8 G 11). They are open Monday to Friday 7.30 am to 5 pm and Saturday 7.30 am to 12.30 pm. Their advice is to have some idea of what you would like to buy before going because there are many suppliers in one location and can be a little overwhelming.

### **Plum puddings**

Do you have your plum pudding ready for Christmas dinner? If not you might like to come along and make one with Agnes Perry and helpers. Agnes is famous for her delicious puddings! Look out for a text message providing a date and venue soon!

### **Comedy Festival**

The Residents' Support Sub-committee has begun work on a comedy festival. It will be held on a weekend around the beginning of April 2010.

The 25th Melbourne International Comedy Festival is helping us to contact comedians with an invitation to donate their time. How big the Strathewen festival ends up being depends upon the comedians' response. We are hoping to fill a Saturday and Sunday with an afternoon and night show each day at two venues, Arthurs

Creek Hall and either the new sports pavilion or the community hall at Strathewen.

Each show will feature two or more comedians, international and Australian. Alternatively, if only a small number of comedians respond, it may end up as one night of comedy rather than a festival.

The Resident's Support Sub-Committee is going to try to find enough suitable comedians, or other fun activities, for the primary school kids to have their own afternoon of entertainment.

A community dinner may be held on one night of the festival.

This event is only at an early stage of development - any ideas to the Residents' Support Sub-committee, please!

## Family Fun Day

Despite the cold windy weather, a huge crowd turned out for the Family Fun Day.

Children enjoyed face painting, sumo-suit wrestling, numerous races and organised activities, and plenty of nice things to eat. The adults also participated in many of the activities on offer including the hotly-contested Backgammon Tournament.

Good food, great coffee and even better company made it a day to be remembered.

Big thanks to all those who helped in particular Holly, Rachel and Susan from Nillumbik and a special thank you to Georgina for getting the whole thing up and running.

## Last BBQ night for 2009

On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December, the BBQ night will have a Christmas theme and Santa will visit us. St. Vinnies has offered to provide toys for the children aged 0-14 (and over if they can source some older age presents). These will be given out on the night. Wear something with a Christmas feel to it.

You are all most welcome to come along and have some fun on this evening. Who knows what Santa may bring?

This will be the final BBQ night for 2009, but we'll be back in the New Year, so watch out for an announcement!

## Women's discussion group

Barb Gregory and Turid Johansen have been working with Colin Charles from the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement to set up a Women's Discussion Group.

The intention of these groups is to provide a forum for open discussion between the participants. There are no strict structures or protocols, just the opportunity to catch

up with friends, meet new people, share experiences, and have a chat.

While still in the early days the level of interest has been very encouraging. Anyone women who are interested can contact Colin Charles on 9265 2111 for further details.

## Animal Memorial Service

About 25 people gathered at the Pascoe's property on Chad's Creek Road on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November to remember the animals that died as a result of the Black Saturday fires.

Clem Taplin from St Margaret's Church, Eltham and Anne Sells from St Matthew's Church, Panton Hill very kindly took the service in a 'very special place' under the trees at the top of the Pascoe's hill. The sun shone and the breeze blew gently as we paid tribute to our precious four-legged and feathered friends. Stories were told, tears were shed and stones were laid around the tree in memory of those no longer with us.

Following the memorial, we continued to exchange stories over afternoon tea and hopefully all returned home in the knowledge that we are not alone in our sorrow.

*May the gentle rain visit this place with its  
greening of life,  
May the winds of freedom move in delight  
among the trees around it  
And connect its breathing and growing  
with the spirit of the animals.  
May the sun light it and warm it with love  
every day,  
Just as we have loved them,  
And they have loved us.  
Let us go in peace.*

## Community Events

As an Incorporated Association we are highly conscious of the legal responsibilities which attach to the Association's community events. When the Association conducts an event our public liability cover or insurance organised by the Nillumbik Shire covers participants and our Association. Some SCRA community events may be held on private property but formal risk assessments must then be managed in accordance with Shire requirements and to standards acceptable to the SCRA Committee.

## SMS Service

We have managed the use of the SMS service so that residents can know with some certainty that messages are sent on behalf of the SCRA or when relayed from a third party, are felt to be of high significance for all members of the association. Therefore we do not advertise private events or convey private messages using the SMS service.

## Reminders:

### Old fence wire.

This can be neatly stockpiled on the tennis court slab at the Strathewen Primary School site. The wire must be clean of fence posts and wooden droppers. We'll crush it and load it when we get enough.

### Fencing Trailer

Our fencing trailer funded by the Diamond Creek Rotary Club is ready for use. It is equipped with a Stihl post hole digger, 2 kva generator, post boring wood drill, gas fired steel stake driver, electric jack hammer, 2 wire spinners, wire strainers, and appropriate small tools.

Fencing trailer bookings are managed through the Strathewen Landcare Group by contacting Eric South who will also run through how to care for and safely use the powered equipment.

Contact Eric on 0423 263 003.

## Tool Library

The Tool Library supported and managed by the Warrandyte Rotary Club is open Saturday and Sunday mornings from 8.30am. Membership forms available from the community centre or the tool library. If you need tools during the week contact Malcolm Hackett 0427356803.

Power tools and specialized equipment will be added when possible and as demand increases so don't hesitate to point out particular needs. The list of tools currently available is provided below: chainsaws, crowbars, wheel barrows, rakes, post hole and square mouth shovels, sledge hammers, pinch bars, star picket drivers, fence strainers, yard brooms, axes, mattocks, pitchforks, hammers, nails, screws, rivet guns, cordless drills, tin snips, hand saws, mash hammers, fubars, drill bit sets, leather gloves, dust masks, ear muffs, safety glasses, torches.

## Committee Contacts

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