



We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our centre stands, the Bundjalung nation.



Hope Springs Eternal

NSW State Government Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disabilities and Homecare, and Minister for the Illawarra, John Ajaka (centre left) with (L-R) State MP for Tweed, Geoff Provest; LEGO Time facilitator Emma-lea with her children and LEGO Time participants Bowie and Oceana; PBNC Manager Angela Maxwell, and Karyn and Oscar of GameOn, after the minister's presentation of a cheque for \$1500 to the LEGO Time group. See story page 2 & 3.



our newsletter

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What's on at the Centre

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Minister's visit

On Wed July 30, PBNC was thrilled to welcome Minister John Ajaka, who visited to tour the centre. While there, John presented a cheque for \$1500 to Lego Time, a recently introduced addition to PBNC's Side by Side (SbS) programs for children and teens with autism and their parents/carers.

The visit had been organised by Geoff Provest MP, after he met last month with Angela and Lily to discuss funding options to match PBNC's hopes and aspirations. Geoff has always been very supportive of PBNC and believes it is a great model, and he was obviously successful in persuading the minister that it was worth dropping in here during the minister's recent visit to the Far North Coast.



(cont. next page)

For all back issues of Drift visit the PBNC website <http://www.pottsvillebeachnc.org.au/>



What is your favourite food?
Thai stir fries - we don't make them at home but friends cook them and we sometimes get take away.

Do you have a favourite book or author?
Robert Ruark - he only wrote three books...all of them about Africa.

Do you have a favourite movie?
One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest - Jack Nicholson (quote from Jack in the movie, "Who's the craziest - them or us?!")

What famous person would you choose to spend an evening with and why?

Julia Gillard - I would love to find out the truth behind everything that went on during her political career.

Whom do you most admire and why?

My three daughters - They are all hard-working, honest girls.

If you could travel to anywhere in the world, where - and why?
South America (Peru, Brazil, Argentina etc.) - Just because I haven't been there and I love ancient ruins.

What does PBNC mean to you?
Heaps! Volunteering gives me lots to do and I have met and made lots of friends.



(cont.)

John, Geoff and Warren (John's advisor and photographer), arrived earlier than expected, catching everyone on the hop, but Angela soon recovered her composure and took the group on a tour of the centre. The Tech Centre was a hive of activity; the Community Pantry was in full swing down in the Reef Room and courtyard; the Opp Shop was bustling; and the gardeners were busy in the community garden.

John Ajaka said he was very impressed with everything; however word got back that he was particularly interested in the garden, being a keen gardener himself, and he soon backed this information up by producing an enormous passionfruit from our garden which he had secreted away for his wife!

After the tour, the minister addressed the crowd of more than 70 PBNC workers, program participants and supporters in the Sandbar Room, commending staff and volunteers on their hard work, dedication and commitment and praising the centre as a model to be emulated everywhere.

PBNC will continue looking for renewable funding and we are glad that John Ajaka took the time to visit and now has an awareness of the multitude of programs and services that the centre offers and the huge amount of workers (including 215 volunteers) and Tweed Coast community members who use and support the centre ■



The Home Educating Support Group offers many stimulating and relaxing activities for children from the age of five who are on the spectrum. Students at PBNC learn in a fun-filled environment, choosing where they want to play and what they want to learn, all under the watchful eyes of parents and carers, who also join in many activities. On a typical day, they may be learning about dinosaurs, making clay dinosaurs and creating swamps in the sandpit.

The group's co-facilitator Kym is a single parent and mother

of three children on the spectrum. Her first experience of PBNC was when she participated in an Asperger seminar organised by Deb, co-ordinator of the Side by Side suite of activities for children and teens. Kym travelled all the way from Ballina to attend and was thrilled to meet many other parents and carers in a similar situation to hers. At the seminar, she found she was able to share information and stories with others in a non-judgmental environment, something she had rarely experienced before. Kym recently moved from Ballina to Pottsville to be able to participate in the wide range of activities available at PBNC, especially the highly supportive groups here for children and teens on the spectrum and their parents and carers.

"It's been amazing," said Kym, speaking of PBNC. "I've gained most of my support network, resources and contacts for everything, including diagnosis, from PBNC. It is an amazing neighbourhood centre, with the best Opp Shop, the best resources and the best support. Everyone at the centre, from the Opp Shop to the markets, is very friendly." Kym explained that life for a parent or carer of a person on the spectrum can be very difficult. It's very hard to find the time for study or work, she said, adding that having so many programs, activities and additional services available in one place (such as PBNC) makes life so much easier.

(cont. next page)

New additions to Side by Side suite

Two new activities, the Side by Side (SbS) Home Educating Support Group and LEGO Time, have joined PBNC's suite of activities for children and young people on the spectrum and their parents and carers. The new activities complement the already existing groups, the social support group Side by Side and the teen gaming group, GameOn.

The **SbS Home Educating Support Group is an Asperger home educating support group for home-schooled students** which aims to share resources and support families who have taken on the role of home educating and who are actively involved in the implementation of the program. The social difficulties of Aspergers can make schooling a minefield for families with children on the spectrum. Sensory difficulties and problems navigating the social landscape of school can lead to poor academic performance. Difficulties understanding what is appropriate socially can make spectrum children easy prey for bullies and school life can become a misery. This has led some families to withdraw their children from school and educate them at home through home schooling or distance education.

LEGO Time, an activity for school-aged children on the spectrum, is the other new program joining the Side by Side suite. Facilitated by Emma-lea, single parent and mother of two Asperger's children, Emma-lea had heard and read about LEGO play therapy and how beneficial it was for children on the spectrum. Guided Lego play provides an opportunity for these children to develop motivation and practise social skills, and to experience the power of creative expression and co-operative play. Children also benefit from meeting weekly at PBNC with their friends in comfortable child and family friendly surrounds.

Emma-lea had meetings with PBNC manager Angela, "who was very supportive and proactive and ran with it," said Emma-lea. After also discussing the project with Deb and Terry of the SbS groups and other interested parties, LEGO Time was born. The group was launched in September and has proved very popular, with six families, with approximately 16 children, currently attending.

A talented artist, Emma-lea is also the facilitator and originator of PBNC's Art and Play, play-based art activities for toddlers and pre-schoolers, which has been successfully running at the centre for more than three years. She has a background in visual art and is currently studying for the Advanced Diploma in Graphic Design. Emma-lea's artwork features on the LEGO Time and Art and Play brochures and on the front cover of Drift's May/June issue.

Emma-lea first came to PBNC in 2008 when she brought her two children, Bowie (now eight years old) and Oceana (now five) to Playgroup. She found PBNC a great place to connect with her community and found it provided her with access to other families with children on the spectrum. Emma-lea said she found it difficult to make and

keep friends outside of those she had made through the centre.

"PBNC has helped me and my two children with socialising and has given me more confidence in my role as a mother and in other roles at PBNC," Emma-lea said.

The SbS Home Educating Support Group and LEGO Time both take place in the Sandbar Room at Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre in Elizabeth St, Pottsville. The **SbS Home Educating Support Group** meets every Wednesday (except the first Wednesday of the month) from 1pm till 4pm. Phone Kym on 0401 078899 or Emma-lea on 0434 790969 to find out more.

LEGO Time meets every Monday (during NSW school term) from 3.30pm till 5.30pm. Ring Emma-lea on 0434 790969 or PBNC on 6676 4555 for more information on this group.

The whole suite of Side by Side Asperger Support Groups are PBNC activities, made possible by its social enterprise funds and support from PBNC volunteers and staff.

In addition to this, LEGO Time recently received a grant of \$1500 from the NSW Dept of Ageing and Disabilities (see story of Minister John Ajaka's visit in this issue) to assist with resourcing this popular and valuable group ■





Jett





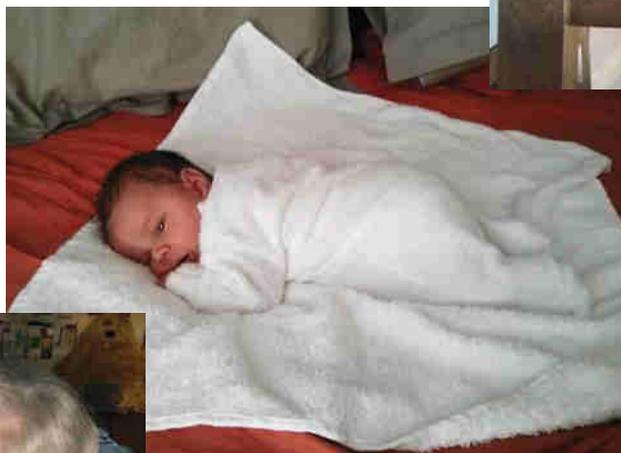
Jett jets in!



PBNC celebrated the 'royal wedding' of PBNC workers Erin and Drew (*Drift* Issue 2, Mar/April 2013), and now it celebrates the birth of 'royal' baby Jett, the first (known) baby born to parents who both work at PBNC. Drew is a Community Capacity Worker with PBNC, while Erin is a Family Development Worker with the Brighter Futures regional program running from PBNC. Drew and Erin are pictured with Jett opposite page top left.

Jett Bradley Stevenson jetted into this world on July 4, 2014, and he has already visited the centre several times since then. Many PBNC aunties and uncles were on hand and eager to hold Jett on his visits.

Jett joins a large extended family, as well as his PBNC family, and is a brother for Jasmine, 13 and Tyler, 9 (pictured above with Jett).





"I'd be a goner if it weren't for PBNC," says Garry, pictured here with Jo, PBNC's DHS Agent (and lifesaver!).

A cautionary tale

by Garry - Tech Centre, Admin and Tax Help Worker

With no history of heart or lung afflictions, I found that, for the last couple of weeks, I had been feeling breathless after climbing the stairs between PBNC's Opp Shop and the Administration building. Being a bloke, I ignored this.

On the Friday (one of my volunteer days at PBNC), I could not get from my bedroom to the laundry without stopping for breath. I came in to PBNC and made it as far as the Admin desk, feeling that I could not breathe. Luckily Jo, one of PBNC's Dept. Human Services agents, was there at the time, took one look at me, asked a couple of questions and convinced me to go immediately next door to the medical centre (located in HealthOne).

Staff at the medical centre attached the ECG and called for an ambulance and off to Tweed Hospital I went. There I had an enzyme test. My troponin level was high, so "off to Griffith Hospital for an angiogram test," they said. Luckily for me again, the consultant there said, "Hang on, he may have a pulmonary embolism which is causing the

ECG/trop anomaly. Give him a CT scan." So off to the CT scanner I go, and "No, that cannula is too small – we need a bigger one to push in the contrast dye." To cut a long story short, yes, it was several pulmonary embolisms so it's anti-clotting injections (self-administered) and Warfarin for me for the foreseeable future. Luckily again, I had no heart failure so they did not get to use me as a defibrillator dummy at PBNC!

If not for my Friday volunteering at PBNC, I would probably not have gone to the doc's and not woken up on Saturday if the clots had moved through my lungs to my brain.

The cause of the clots was Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) in the left leg and the only indication of this was a slightly swollen calf on the left leg compared to the right, and the cause of the thrombosis was me becoming sedentary after injuring my shoulder in a bike accident last Christmas Eve.

A lesson to be learnt from this tale is: Keep moving – don't stop altogether! I now get up and move around every hour, and am increasing to a 30 minute walk morning and evening as per the Heart Foundation guidelines.

www.heartfoundation.org.au

Dane

Dane was born in Young, NSW, where his mum and dad owned a pub. He remembers he had a good childhood. He has an older brother; they were both brought up in Young. The family moved to Pottsville before Dane started primary school. He said his mum had family in area and that drew them here. Dane enjoyed both primary school and high school, finishing in 2003. After leaving school, Dane did Cert 1, 2, 3 in IT Studies and has found it invaluable in both his workplace and personal life. He owns a laptop and a tablet. On completion of his courses, he joined a disability employment service and once again found his experience in IT helped him enormously.

Dane started volunteering at PBNC in 2004, helping out in Admin doing site inspections (Work Health & Safety), collecting the mail and other admin tasks, as well as assisting in preparing the site list for Sunday markets and assisting visitors to the markets. He has been a volunteer for 10 years and continues to this day to help out at PBNC's Sunday markets (held on the first and the third Sunday of each month). Currently Dane works at the Recyclers' Op Shop in Tweed on Mondays and Thursdays. He has been there for five years and finds the work rewarding and likes the people he works with.

Dane is a very keen and successful tenpin bowler. He has been playing for 11 years now, playing in the National Titles for Disability Tenpin Bowling in the Queensland team for four years, and he is somewhat of a local hero in the bowling community, having notched up 41 games on the championship circuit. Dane has played all over Australia in the following towns: Ashmore, Brisbane, Kedron, Chermside, Robina, Toowoomba, Hobart, Canberra, Melbourne and Tweed Heads.

In 2012, Dane went to Malaysia with his brother and a friend. Guess what they managed to find - a bowling alley! Then in 2013, he went to Bangkok with his mum and brother and - yes, you guessed it - they found a bowling alley. This time Dane reckons he 'flogged' his mum and brother!



Family is very important to Dane and he can't wait for his brother to come home from a European trip in November. His brother lives in Brisbane and he likes to catch up with him as often as possible.

Dane said he feels really good when he comes to work at PBNC. "Everyone is really friendly and helpful," said Dane, "and it's good to be coming to work where Mum works (Dane's mum is Jo, an agent at PBNC's DHS agency). Over ten years of working at PBNC, I have become better at doing my tasks and better at helping people," Dane added. Jo says that Dane's social skills and feelings of inclusion have increased through his association with everyone at PBNC ■

Thank you

To Dane and John and teams at the organisers' tent and the sausage sizzle at Pottsville Beach Market Sunday August 3, 2014

Many thanks from the 'lady who fell' on her way to the market. Anticipating the fun of the market, I walked quickly. Looking ahead and not watching where my feet were going, I tripped as I stepped from lawn to footpath. I crashed down, face first. No damage to my face or glasses, no broken bones ... just a nasty graze on my hand and bruised knees.

Thanks to the lovely man walking by with his toddler son in a stroller, who helped me up. Thanks to the lovely people at the PBNC market coordinator's tent who treated my bruised ego kindly.

Special thanks to Dane who escorted me so carefully to the first aid station, and then back to the coordinator's tent. Special thanks to John who swung into action with the first aid kit.

Thanks to the lovely people at the sausage sizzle who cleaned and bandaged my wound so expertly.

Pottsville truly is a caring community

Many thanks once again

Sherrard

Merilyn Opp Shop

Merilyn is an alert, determined woman of 70 years of age with a fierce fighting spirit. Merilyn has a heart condition and a bad back, which is often very painful. She initially worked in Reception in the Tech Centre, but found that sitting in the one place and rarely moving was not good for her back. She moved to the Opp Shop where she sorts clothes, assists customers and works on the counter. This work allows her to alternate between sitting and standing. It is work Merilyn enjoys – the companionship, working in a team and keeping her mind active.

Merilyn has a wealth of qualifications including a Diploma in Social Sciences (specialising in youth work), Certificate 3 Working with People with Disabilities and a certificate in Ceramics, Art and Glass Making, and she also has wide experience working in the fields of youth and disabilities.



Merilyn continued studying and working for many years, and now, at 70, she is happy to have found a place such as PBNC, where she can do meaningful work and, at the same time, have a workplace where her health needs are understood and catered for.

Originally from Sydney, Merilyn relocated to Cabarita Beach in 1997 as her two sons had recently moved there. She was happy to be out of the rat race and live in a quieter, safer place, she said. She began volunteering at PBNC in 2009, as she was becoming bored with continual study and wanted to give back to her community.

“PBNC is a safe place for me to meet new friends; it’s a place where I feel needed and part of the community,” said Merilyn.

Support for those with diabetes

The Diabetes NSW Pottsville Support Group is a very popular group for those with diabetes and their families or carers. The group is convened by Ruth Clarke, supported by PBNC, local Diabetes Educators and Australian Diabetes Council. Ruth and her husband Bill are long term volunteers at PBNC. Ruth works in Admin and Bill is a keen gardener and waterer.

Demand for this activity remains high largely due to Ruth’s resourcefulness with the incorporation of interesting activities, resources and fascinating guest speakers. The aim of the group is to help people to understand diabetes and to receive and share the latest information about diabetes and related services and events. Its monthly meetings are relaxed, friendly and informative and feature guest speakers and health educators who talk

about a range of varied topics relating to the group’s preferences, interests and overall health and wellbeing e.g. Michel Quirk, a Diabetes Educator, who will host a general discussion at the meeting on Wednesday September 3, and Dr Zekhri Palushi, a well-known local doctor now based at HealthOne, who will speak about his transition from Albania to Australia on Wednesday October 1. The group will hold its break-up party on Wednesday, November 5. Meetings are held in the Reef Room (downstairs) at Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre in Elizabeth St, Pottsville, from 2pm till 4pm on the first Wednesday of each month (from February to November each year). Participants are asked to bring a plate of diabetes-friendly food and a gold coin to help cover costs.

To find out more about the Diabetes NSW Pottsville Support Group, contact Ruth Clarke on (02) 6676 0411.

James

James earned the nickname of 'the Energiser Bunny' due to the fact he can be seen rushing here and there as he goes about his many tasks such as moving furniture, lawn mowing, community pantry setup and dismantling, and liaising between PBNC's various work areas.

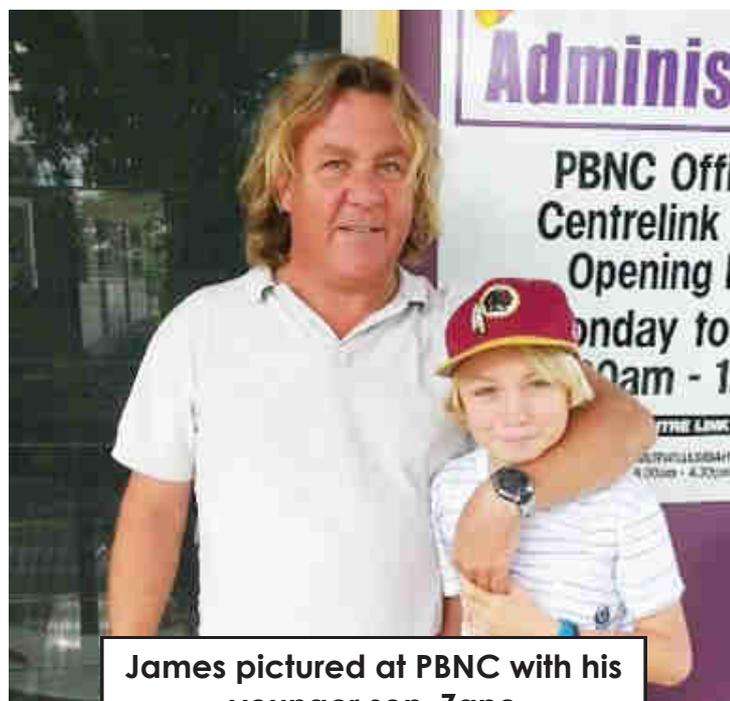
James was born in Sydney and grew up in its south western suburbs. His childhood memories include spending holidays in a caravan on the South Coast at Gerringong, surfing and having lots of family fun with his two brothers and one sister. After leaving school, James completed a four-year cabinet-making apprenticeship at Ultimo TAFE. He then moved to Cronulla and worked for the next eight years designing and developing hairdressing salons, one being the famous Jon Bailey's in Double Bay, Sydney.

In 1997, James married and his first son, Dylan, was born in Cronulla. The family moved to Jervis Bay on the South Coast and their second child, daughter Tahlia, was born in 2000. Then it was time to move again, ten months later, this time to Burleigh on the Gold Coast where James managed Taubmans / Bristol paint shops. In 2003 their third child, Zane, was born.

The last family move was to Pottsville eight years ago. Shortly after moving here, the marriage broke down and James became a single father. Sadly James' parents passed away soon after and he was left with no direct family in the area, just his three children.

Despite the pitfalls, James continued working for about three years. Only in the last couple of years has he been a 'stay at home' dad, as well as volunteering for the last year at PBNC. He has also been busy gaining Certificate 2 in Community Services and is currently studying for Cert 4. To help with his studies, PBNC donated a computer to James, which he says he finds invaluable.

When he completes his community services studies, James hopes to work in a generalist neighbourhood centre such as PBNC. "I love liaising between 'upstairs' and 'downstairs',"



James pictured at PBNC with his younger son, Zane

said James, explaining that 'upstairs' is Admin and 'downstairs' is the Opp Shop and second hand furniture store. James plays a valuable part in keeping things running smoothly, as he has the time, the motivation and the energy to liaise. James also enjoys liaising in his community, working on bridging the gap between young and old.

In his other job as a dad, James has found that children from single parent families without a dad at home like coming round to his place and seem to enjoy having a male influence. He has also encouraged local lads to visit PBNC's Men's Shed/Furniture Store, where they have really enjoyed talking with the men there. James' own children have learnt about community participation and contributing to the community by assisting at the Opp Shop and Furniture Store during school holidays.

James first came to PBNC through a referral process to complete some mutual obligation hours. This obligation ceased after a couple of weeks when he began studying, but James chose to remain as a volunteer as he loved the work and found PBNC a great place to practise skills he was acquiring through his study, and to use the skills he already possesses. "PBNC has given me a sense of worth and strong community connections, and as a result of this, my family life has also improved," said James ■

“PBNC is a place where everyone feels valued” - Maree M, Admin worker

“It’s a safe, secure, friendly place”
Bill H (92), Men’s Shed/
Second Hand Furniture
Store team leader

“PBNC has helped me to keep my technological skills updated and has enabled me to meet a lot more people – it’s a very friendly, helpful and informative centre” – Gina, Admin

“It’s something to look forward to”
– Kylie, Opp Shop worker

“I enjoy being able to think by myself”
– Yoshi, Community Garden

“Even though we do serious work, it’s a fun place to be... the people you work with, the people you meet...”
- Julie Watson, Finance Worker/Volunteer Coordinator

“I knew no-one when I relocated to Pottsville, and I believe I could never have made so many friends or fitted into village life so quickly without PBNC” – Chris, Admin/Drift

“ [PBNC is a] remedy for loneliness”
Margaret K – Opp Shop worker 2000-12 (dec.)

“Thanks so much to PBNC for giving me this great opportunity to pay off my fine – it’s been great to work here” – Work Development Order participant (anonymous)

“PBNC has given me a life purpose” – Maree, Opp Shop worker and *Get Fit Keep Fit* facilitator

“I’d be lost without the Tech Centre” – May Tibbett (83), longest attending Tech Centre participant

“PBNC is a truly fabulous environment for practitioners, clients and their families” – Lesley Bakker, Counsellor

“It’s worthwhile getting out of bed (on my volunteering days)” - Dave, Maintenance Crew

“PBNC is a perfect example of what every town needs – there really is something for everyone” – Terry, Community Garden

“What a fantastic, informative event the *Resources for Autism Spectrum Families* seminar was” – Karyn, parent and participant in Side By Side, PBNC’s support group for children and teens on the spectrum and their parents / carers

“It has given me a sense of belonging” – Doug, Community Garden worker

Background artwork styled on an original by Magpie which is displayed in PBNC’s Starfish Room

"I'd be a goner if it weren't for PBNC" - Garry, Admin/Tech Centre/Tax Help (see story page 8)

"I look forward to my Thursdays with SYM - it's my favourite day of the week" – Toni, Stretch Your Mind participant

"Love, love, love the Toy Library and whole-heartedly recommend this service to everyone"
- Rowena, Toy Library participant and In-home Educator

"There's no lethargy...it's very energising ...and different every day"
- Angela Maxwell, Manager

"It has provided me with a broader social circle and a sense of community belonging" – Libby, Student on Placement

"My interactions with the community and the staff at PBNC make Wednesday mornings a highlight of my week"
- Mitch, DHS Indigenous Specialist Officer & Community Engagement Officer

"PBNC has helped me and my two children with socialising and has given me more confidence in my role as a mother and in other roles,"
- Emma-lea, Art and Play facilitator and LEGO Play (for children on the spectrum) facilitator

"PBNC has given me the opportunity, the time and the tools to use and develop my skills" – Tony C, Community Capacity Worker and *Drift* graphic artist

"PBNC is a place where I can access all kinds of services" – Dave, Maintenance Crew

"I think I will never find a better place to work" – Ken Johnson, Family Development Worker with Brighter Futures (based at PBNC)

"From the moment I walked in the door at the Neighbourhood Centre I could see what an amazing community service it provided" - Linda M, Tech Centre

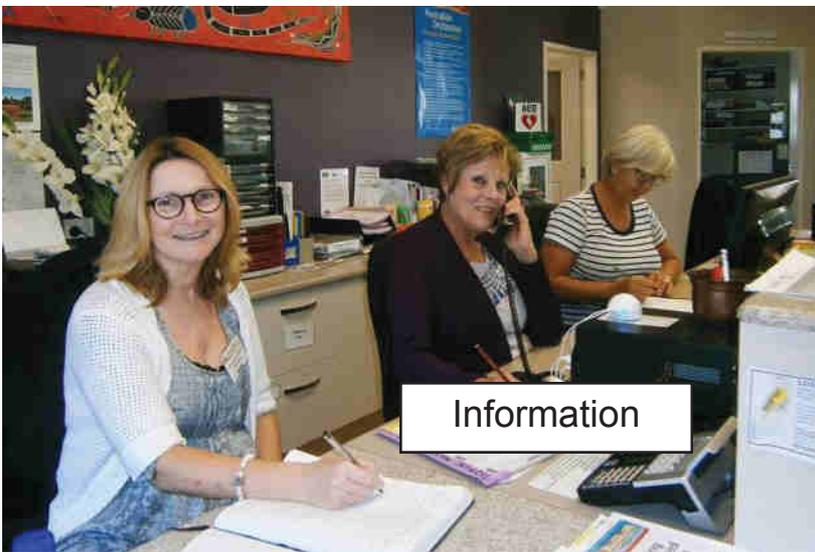
"It's a place where I get to do work I enjoy, with people I enjoy, and that makes me very happy"
- Lily C, Admin/*Drift*

"I have rheumatoid arthritis and I find PBNC is an awesome place for me to be"- Kym, Opp Shop

"...an amazing neighbourhood centre, with the best Opp Shop, the best resources and the best support" - Kym, Side by Side Home Educating Group co-facilitator

“Life’s like a box of chocolates - you never know what you’re gonna get!”

... said Tom Hanks in the lead role of the movie *Forrest Gump* (quoting his mum). For admin workers at PBNC’s Front Desk on a working day, life is a bit like that...workers never know what queries, problems, joys, or other experiences they are going to get.



Information

Each day begins with signing in and greeting fellow workers; checking the communication book and checking phone messages; checking for pens, paper and message pad and getting ready for anything.

The Front Desk is the first point of call for visitors and customers to PBNC, so admin workers welcome each person and aim to assist with **information, referral and advocacy**.

Information People may request information about various topics including bus timetables and routes; maps; legal aid, tax help, DHS (Centrelink); emergency aid; play groups, the Opp Shop; the Secondhand Furniture Shop; Toy Library; Tech Centre and groups such as Side by Side Aspergers groups and Diabetes

Support Group. The **Welcome to Pottsville** kit is given to newcomers to the area and gives them information about what goes on at PBNC and in Pottsville in general.

Referral Sometimes a request needs to be taken further and referral is necessary. For instance, when parents express a need for a parenting course they would be introduced (referred) to a PBNC Community Capacity Worker (CCW), who would discuss their needs and sign them up for the next 1 2 3 Magic and Emotion Coaching course or Brighter Futures, or to another service in our region.

Advocacy People sometimes come in and express distress in a particular area of their lives. They feel unable to take action themselves. Workers stay calm and listen. They may take the person to a quiet space and inform the CCW, who will take up the case and follow through (cont. next page..)



Referral

(.cont.)

where necessary, eg by making a phone call to the appropriate person or service. Admin workers also assist with a range of administrative tasks. Many have special skills and experience from previous jobs in fields such as accounting, journalism, graphics and drafting. Others wish to develop their skills and confidence in a Front Desk role and are keen to learn.

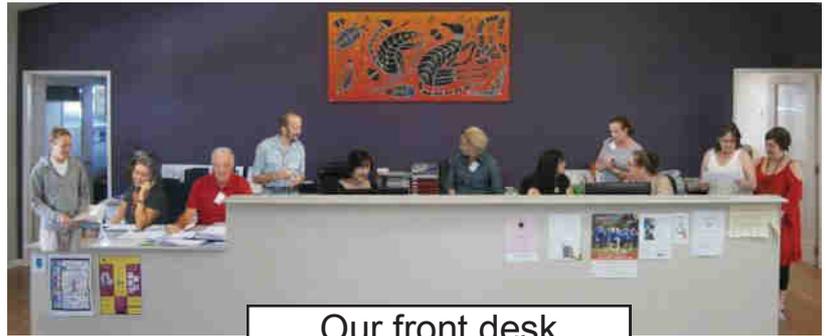
Another aspect of working anywhere at PBNC is catering, and much of the catering for centre events is done from the Admin



Money Matters



Finance / Volunteer Support



Our front desk

building by admin workers. Many cups of coffee and tea are consumed each day; many biscuits with cheese and gherkin; many meetings catered for; and many grocery items ordered and bought.

With such a wide variety of tasks and customers, life on PBNC's Front Desk really is like a box of chocolates...

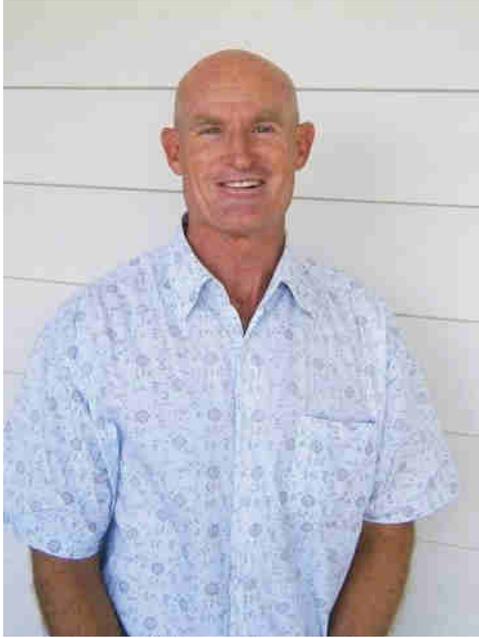
...you never know what you're gonna get!



Drift Newsletter Production

Mal McKay

Acupuncturist at PBNC



A service provider for community health, Mal began delivering his services as an acupuncturist from the Dolphin Room in the Ebbitide building at PBNC in January this year.

Life for Mal revolves around his family and enjoying Pottsville's precious surroundings of beach, creek and outdoors with them, but when away from the family, his other main interest is health and wellbeing. He has been involved in complementary medicine for the past 20 years, and has been in practice in various locations from Burleigh Heads to Pottsville for the last eight and a half years. Mal lives locally and saw the rising need for a community-health-based practice, as well as an opportunity to give something back to the community.

At PBNC, he provides a Traditional Chinese Medicine Acupuncture service made accessible to all through reduced

scheduled fees. Each of these treatments is tailored around the individual's health needs.

Acupuncture is a form of complementary and alternative medicine and a key component of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). It aims to correct imbalances in the body by stimulating specific acupuncture points through channels known as meridians. Acupuncture is used to treat a range of conditions, and is most commonly used for pain relief.

Mal graduated in 1998 with a Diploma Applied Science (Acupuncture), ACNM, Brisbane, and is currently completing his Masters in Chinese Herbal Medicine. Working as a remedial massage therapist till 1998, Mal built a solid foundation for his work within the health sector. From 1994 onwards he was self-employed as Company Director of Lets Live Australia, through which he has established five clinics.

His passion for Traditional Chinese Medicine has seen him continue in practice and establish, with his wife Therasia, health programs and public seminars in areas of pain management, digestive disorders, hormonal imbalances, female and male infertility programs, work stress related disorders and general health issues. There have been many rewards in his role as an acupuncturist over the years, but the greatest rewards have been in supporting sixty births. This past year has seen him take on a new role as a Lecturer and Clinic Supervisor in Endeavour College of Natural Medicine Gold Coast's campus.

Mal and his family came to Pottsville Beach eight and half years ago from the Gold Coast to bring the children up in a more family-friendly environment. They have come to appreciate the strong community spirit Pottsville holds, which they were wanting as a family. "You can exist as part of a community at different depths depending on your involvement," Mal said. "I have found that the greater the commitment, the greater the rewards are. I was aware of the community spirit that is aligned with PBNC and wanted to be a part of it."

To find out more or book an appointment, ring Mal on 0420 437156.

One of Mal's many clients happy with the results of his treatment is Janice Reid of Pottsville. Here's what Janice, a recent client, says.

"I suffer with fibromyalgia and severe sciatica. I was ready to have an epidural for the sciatica and also surgery if the epidural didn't help with the pain and difficulty I had with standing and walking.

"After several visits with Mal McKay at Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre I saw a dramatic improvement. My sciatica is so much better and the acupuncture has also helped with my fibromyalgia. I have also had sleep problems for as many years as I can remember, but now that has improved. Mal is a very compassionate, caring and gentle acupuncturist. I highly recommend him."



Peter

Secondhand Furniture Store

Peter B, so called to distinguish him from several other Peters at PBNC, is a team leader with the Secondhand Furniture/Men's Shed crew, where he works on Thursdays, Fridays and Market Sundays (the first and third Sunday of each month).

On these days Pete can be found in the furniture store, where he sorts and repairs furniture, chats with customers and assists with their requests, and organises delivery of bought items by PBNC's delivery team. Outside of his work at the centre, Pete enjoys kayaking, camping and all kinds of fishing including game fishing.

Pete has been working at PBNC since he relocated to Cabarita Beach from the Gold Coast to be closer to his family in 2010. He is a boat builder with more than 30 years' experience, having done his apprenticeship on Sydney's Northern Beaches and then working on the Gold Coast.

With work in this field (mainly in luxury powerboats) declining, Pete came to PBNC through a volunteer referral placement and loved the work and the people so much that he decided to stay. "They're a terrific bunch of people at PBNC, and I find it's really, really rewarding helping people. It (PBNC) is a very busy, vibrant hub where I can do work that I really enjoy," Pete said.

Pete is pictured chatting to locals and regular customers Lisa Bartlett (centre) who is trying out the merchandise, and Karen Frankel. Karen said she loves the furniture store, as does Lisa, and often donates furniture to PBNC as well as buying 'new' furniture there. "It's the most rewarding job I have ever had," says Peter ■

Get Fit, Keep Fit

Get Fit, Keep Fit (GFKF) is PBNC's very popular gentle exercise program. Vera Herd introduced the program, previously called *Light Aerobics*, to PBNC in 2000 and it soon became very successful. Sadly Vera passed away this year after a battle with cancer. She is sorely missed, particularly by those participants who had been with her since the program's inception.

However, Vera had been mentoring PBNC Opp Shop worker Maree H (pictured right) to take over facilitation of the group, and in February 2013 when Vera retired, Maree took up the reins. Under her guidance and under PBNC's banner, with the new name of *Get Fit Keep Fit*, the group continues to go from strength to strength, as do its participants (38 at last count).

Maree said the classes, as well as being a great way to keep fit, are a good way to meet others in Pottsville and surrounds. Lots of friendships have been formed within GFKF, and many participants meet for lunch every two months; enjoy a large and festive Christmas party each year; and have coffee together after the sessions.

Everyone can benefit from regular gentle exercise and GFKF caters for most people. However it is particularly beneficial for mature aged people (the youngest in the group being in her fifties and the eldest in her 80s). Total Balance personal trainer, Cath Downing has attended the classes and reviewed the exercise program, ensuring that they are safe and suitable for older people. Cath has introduced some new exercises and commended Maree on her safe facilitation methods.

Get Fit, Keep Fit sessions take place twice a week in the Sandbar Room, from 9am till 10.15am on Tuesdays and Fridays, with \$3 donations gratefully received from participants. Ring PBNC for more details on 6676 4555.



About Maree

Maree joined PBNC in 2001, after she and her husband relocated from Brisbane to Pottsville on retirement. They had purchased a house just across the road from PBNC, so Maree, seeking to meet people and put her skills to use, wandered across and became a volunteer. She had worked for 26 years at the busy Rocklea Fruit and Vegetable Markets in Brisbane, where she did administration work including stock control, so initially she was looking for an office position at PBNC. However in those days PBNC was in its infancy and there were not many volunteer positions in admin, so Maree became an Opp Shop worker. She enjoyed the work so much that she did not want to move to admin when the opportunity arose. In the same year, Maree became a participant in the light aerobics class now known as Get Fit Keep Fit, where she soon became a very keen supporter, becoming its (volunteer) facilitator last year. Maree said she had never taken a class before but did not want the group to disband.

"I've met a lot of lovely people at PBNC," said Maree, explaining how friends she has met at the centre support each other and help create a strong local network. "PBNC has given me a life purpose. I feel the work we do here really helps others," said Maree. "I'd be lost without PBNC – it would be a dreadful life!" ■

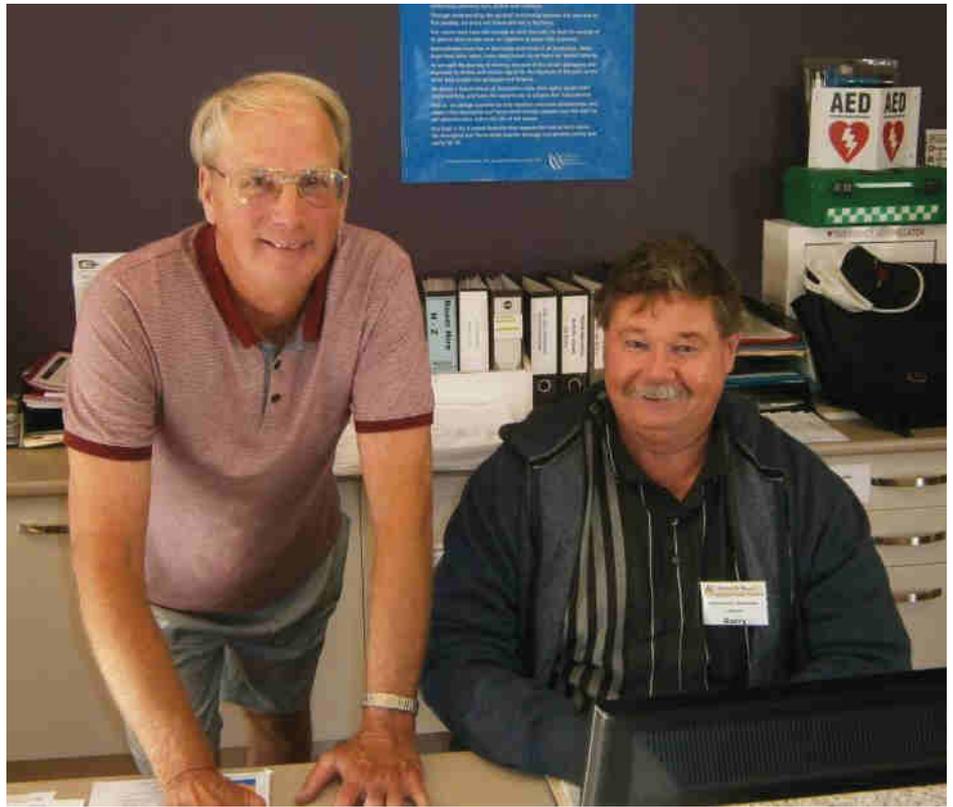
Free help at tax time

Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre (PBNC) is again offering **FREE** Tax Help. Until the end of October, the centre's ATO qualified volunteers, Dave and Garry (pictured right) will assist people to complete their tax returns.

If your tax affairs are simple and you earn less than \$50,000 a year, you could be eligible for this assistance.

Tax Help is delivered from PBNC's Technology Centre, Elizabeth St, Pottsville.

For more information or to make a booking, contact Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre on **(02) 6676 4555**.



Janice (Opp Shop Worker) with granddaughter Gemma Kate Eggin, born 7/8/2014, to Danielle and Johnny Eggin. A sister for two-year-old Bradley.

New medical centre

Do you know there's a new medical centre in Pottsville? The Central Pottsville Medical Centre has recently opened its doors and is providing medical services on the site of the former medical centre in Pottsville Plaza, 5 Coronation Avenue, Pottsville.

Two female doctors, Dr Aruni and Dr Smetana, and one male doctor, Dr De Silva, are available, and visiting specialists include a cardiologist, paediatrician and dieticians. GP services include men's, women's and children's health; aged care; skin checks; travel medicine; pregnancy care; chronic disease management; adolescent health and mental health. Pensioners and children are bulk billed.

Phone 6676 0055 to make an appointment or find out more.

Linda Tech Centre



Linda (left) with a
Tech Centre customer

“It was a haven in a Telstra storm,” says Linda of her first encounter with PBNC’s Tech Centre. “I moved to Pottsville from Melbourne in 2009 and Telstra kept telling me I couldn’t have a broadband connection. In the end I got the connection but in the meantime, the Tech Centre was my digital lifeline!”

“From the moment I walked in the door at the Neighbourhood Centre I could see what an amazing community service it provided. Years ago I worked as a volunteer coordinator at a community radio station in Melbourne, so I know the highs and lows of running a community enterprise. I knew immediately that here, in my new home town, I was witnessing an outstanding success story.”

Her busy work life as a vocational education and training consultant meant that it was 2011 before Linda joined the volunteer team at the Tech Centre. Linda is there one morning a week helping people improve their computer skills. Linda has her own online business, *Global Spiritual Studies*, so if you want to set up or

redesign a website, she’s the woman to see! “I’m self-taught, so I know how frustrating mastering technology can be. I enjoy showing people the easy, quick way to do things – and in plain English!” says Linda.

You’ll also find Linda at the Pottsville Markets as resident Tarot reader and promoter of ancient sacred site tours in the UK and Ireland. “I’m addicted to travel...for the past 40 years I’ve spent short and long periods in the UK, Europe and South America. You learn so much about the world and yourself when you move out of your comfort zone and rise to all the challenges that travel so often throws at you.” In 2005 Linda published a book, ***Ticket, Passport and Tarot Cards***, in which she uses her travel stories to explain the meaning of the Tarot cards...a novel way of bringing her twin passions of tarot and travel together in an educational way.

Linda also dabbles in video production. You may have seen yourself on one of the three videos she’s produced for PBNC – the opening of the new building in 2012 and the Christmas parties in 2012 and 2013. Keep your eye out for her behind the camera at this year’s party! ■



Linda with new grandson Regan, born 10/7/2014, to Sylvia (Linda’s daughter), and Don Fraser.

Monday

Technology Centre
9am - 4pm

Opp Shop
9am - 4pm

Toy Library
9.30am - 12.30pm

PlayTime Group
Sandbar Room
9.30am - 11.30pm
(school terms)

LEGO Time
Sandbar Room
3.30pm - 5.30pm
(school terms)



Tuesday

Technology Centre
9am - 5pm

Opp Shop
9am - 1pm

Toy Library
9.30am - 12.30pm

Get Fit, Keep Fit
Sandbar Room
9.00am - 10.15am

Scrabble
Starfish Room
10am - 12pm

Art and Play
Coral Bay Room
10am - 11am
(school terms)

Wednesday

Technology Centre
9am - 5pm

Opp Shop
9am - 1pm

Toy Library
9.30am - 12.30pm

Diabetes Support Group
Ph: Ruth (02) 6676 0411
(1st Wed each month)
Reef Room
2 - 4pm

PBNC Home Educators
(excludes 1st Wed of
each month)
Sandbar Room
1 - 4pm
(school terms)

Thursday

Technology Centre
9am - 5pm

Opp Shop
9am - 1pm

Toy Library
9.30am - 12.30pm

Furniture Shop
9am - 1pm

PlayTime Group
Sandbar Room
9.30am - 11.30am
(school terms)

Stretch Your Mind
Reef Room
12.30 - 2.30pm



Friday

Technology Centre
9am - 1pm

Opp Shop
9am - 4pm

Toy Library
9.30am - 12.30pm

Furniture Shop
9am - 1pm

Get Fit, Keep Fit
Sandbar Room
9.00 - 10.15am

Pottsville Toddler Tunes & Stories
Sandbar Room
10.45am - 12pm
(school terms)

Wordsflow
Sandbar Room
12.30 - 3.15pm
(school terms)

Saturday

Opp Shop
9am - 1pm

Side by Side
Aspergers Support Group -
From 1pm
Ph: Deb or Terry on
(02) 6676 0483

Sunday

**PBNC Markets, Opp Shop,
Furniture Shop, Trash &
Treasure (7am - 1pm) and
Community BBQ -**
1st & 3rd Sun each month.

Next markets (2014):

Sep 7 & 21

Oct 5 & 19

Nov 2 & 16

Dec 7 & 21

Regular Services & Programs

PBNC ADMINISTRATION

Monday to Friday 9.00am - 4.00pm

BRIGHTER FUTURES

Monday to Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm

DHS (CENTRELINK)

Monday to Friday 8.30am - 1.30pm

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

1st Wednesday each month 2pm - 4pm - Reef Room
Ph: Ruth (02) 6676 0411

MEN'S SHED AND SECONDHAND FURNITURE SHOP

Thursday/Friday 9am - 1pm; Market Sunday 7am - 1pm

GET FIT, KEEP FIT

Sandbar Room - Gentle exercise for Seniors
Tuesday 9.00 - 10.15am, Friday 9.00 - 10.15am

OPP SHOP

Monday & Friday	9am - 4pm
Tue, Wed, Thu, Sat	9am - 1pm
Market Sunday	7am - 1pm

PBNC TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

Computer Lessons, Internet Access and Equipment Servicing

Monday	9am - 4pm
Tues, Wed, Thu	9am - 5pm
Friday	9am - 1pm

POTTSVILLE PLAYTIME GROUP

Sandbar Room
Monday & Thursday 9.30am - 11.30am (school terms)

ART AND PLAY

Coral Bay Room (next to Reef Room) Tuesday 10 - 11am,
(school terms)

COUNSELLORS

Counselling by appointment most days. Contact Admin for more details.

TAX HELP

(Seasonal) July to October - See ad on page 11

STRETCH-YOUR-MIND

Reef Room - Thursday 12.30 - 2.30pm

TOY LIBRARY

Monday to Friday 9:30am - 12:30pm

WORDSFLOW

Sandbar Room - Friday 12.30 - 3.15pm (school terms)

SCRABBLE

Tuesday 10am - 12pm

TODDLER TUNES AND STORIES

Sandbar Room - Friday 10.45 - 11.45am (school terms)



Australian Government
Department of Human Services



DHS (Centrelink) Agency

Monday to Friday
8.30am - 1.30pm

Applications to join our association are always welcome - just ask for an application form from one of the friendly front desk crew or call
PBNC 02 6676 4555

Consortium of Neighbourhood Centres



Brighter Futures North Coast (CONC)
A regional child and family support program

Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm
Upper Level Admin Building
Ph 02 6676 2277

Side by Side (SbS), GameON (GO), Lego Time & Home Educating Support Group

are social support groups for children & young people with Aspergers & their parents/carers. SbS - 1st Saturday 1pm each month; GO - 3rd Saturday 1pm each month; Lego Time 3.30-5.30pm Mondays; Home Educators 1-4pm Weds (excluding 1st Wed each month). Phone **Debbie** or **Terry** on **02 6676 0483** for more info.

Tweed Coast U3A conducts classes at PBNC e.g. *Quilting, Booklovers, Gardening, Art, Cryptic Crosswords.*
Ph 07 5523 3901

Email: tweedcoastu3a@gmail.com



Community Pantry
every Wednesday
Coral Bay Room
10am - 12pm

Contact PBNC Admin Office for more details or bookings
(02) 6676 4555
or visit the website
www.pottsvillebeachnc.org.au