

Barrier Breakers Inc

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TRARALGON LIONS CLUB

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Special Points of Interest:

- Mental Health Council of Australia Grant.
- Change to Barrier Breakers Rules.
- AGM.
- Supported Accommodation.
- Research



Supported Accommodation- An Urgent Need

Barrier Breakers Inc has forwarded a proposal to obtain Government funding to meet the need for supported additional accommodation for people with mental illness in the Gippsland region.

This proposal is supported by Community Housing Ltd, Mind Australia, SNAP Gippsland Inc, GARSS.

A block of 6 accommodation units in Traralgon have been put on the market. This architect designed, double brick block of units was originally built by the State Government in Washington St, Traralgon, directly behind the former Central Gippsland Hospital to house Doctors. When the hospital closed the units were sold. These units are also right next door to the new mental health administration

building, and a fourteen bed facility that was built recently for mental health patients, who were no longer in need of acute care and are adjusting to community life.

The complex comprises of 2 x 2 Bedroom units, 3 x 1 Bedroom units, and 1 x 3 Bedroom unit. These units are still in excellent condition and present little renovation expenditure. They are also on sufficient land to enable more units to be built.

There are no other units of this kind so strategically placed. Nor is there any available land for building purposes that is so close to all the supported facilities needed, i.e. Hospital, Support Groups, Case Workers and mental health administration.

An application for federal funding for this proposal was made during the recent

Gippsland by-election campaign and commitments of support were given by all the major party candidates.

Additionally, a proposal for state government funding was recently presented at a meeting with the senior Advisor to the Minister for Mental Health.

Even if the associations funding proposals are unsuccessful, their presentations have certainly highlighted the urgent need for additional supported accommodation for people with a mental illness in the Gippsland region. We are determined to maintain this momentum and keep up the pressure on both the state and federal governments. Accordingly, the Secretary would be happy to hear from anyone who can add anecdotal evidence of the need for accommodation.



Traralgon Rotary Club

Annual General Meeting

Barrier Breakers Inc will be holding its AGM on 10 September 2008. The meeting will commence at 7pm at the Kath Teychenne Centre 11-13 Breed Street Traralgon. The business of the meeting will include a recommendation from the Committee to amend the Rules of the Association. The principal amendments will change the Committee structure to that of a Board.



Derek Amos -Secretary.

A co-founder of Barrier Breakers Inc, is a former Victorian Member of Parliament of long standing (representing the Central Gippsland electorate of Morwell) who held many leading positions, including Ministerial portfolios and Parliamentary Chairman of a number of all party Committees.

For twenty years he was the principal of one of Australia's leading corporate relations consultancies.

Although now retired from professional life, he continues to serve the community on government and non-government Boards and Committees.

Ten More Lessons in Life

1. Bills travel faster through the mail at twice the speed of cheques.
2. A conscience is what hurts when all of your other parts feel so good.
3. Eat well, stay fit, die anyway.
4. Men are from Earth, Woman are from Earth. Deal with it.
5. No man has ever been shot while doing the dishes.
6. A balanced diet is a piece of cake in each hand.
7. Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.
8. Opportunities always look bigger going then coming.
9. Junk is something you've kept for years and throw it away three weeks before you need it.
10. There is always one more imbecile than you counted on.

VALUABLE RESEARCH INTO MENTAL HEALTH

At the time of writing, our Reichstein Foundation research project into the extent and effectiveness of mental health services in the Gippsland region is nearing completion.

This work involved basic research, analysis and writing up and publishing the analytical data in a report. The project also involved research into the region's primary mental health care providers and the compilation of a data-bank, which described their services, location and contact details.

As this work has identified a number of significant gaps in the extent and delivery of mental health care in the Gippsland region, we now wish to identify opportunities for improvement and to make recommendations to government in support of those improvements. We also wish to undertake more work on our data-bank of service providers and to share this information with them and the general community.

Accordingly, we applied for further funding to extend our project and we are pleased to announce that a federal government grant of \$11,000.00 has been allocated to us through the Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA).

We are hoping that this grant can be complimented by further funding through a grant application we have made to Monash University under their research grants program. Watch this space for further news on this important project.



1300 WSG NOW (1300 974 669)



IS THIS REFORM AT LAST?

The state government has release its discussion paper on a review of mental health care in Victoria. This follows the development of the National Mental Health Action Plan by the Council of Australian Governments to which the Victorian government committed a minimum of \$472 million over a five year period for its implementation. It also follows a state government commissioned report by the Boston Consulting Group, which identified that up to 50% of people with a mental illness in this state do not receive appropriate care.

Given that around 20% of the population will suffer from some form of mental illness, we have long argued that mental health care has been the poor Cinderella of the government health system, with the tragic result of millions of sufferers just slipping through the cracks. With the national cost of mental illness now exceeding \$20 billion annually, governments around Australia have now been forced to act,

hence the proposed reform of the mental health system in Victoria.

The Victorian government has embarked upon a state-wide series of meetings with communities concerned about mental health issues and who want to comment on the government's paper, entitled, "Mental Health Matters". It has invited comments on the proposed reforms with submissions due to close at 31 July. However, as the government's consultation with the Gippsland communities has been scheduled for 4 August and therefore after the closing date for submissions, Barrier Breakers has persuaded the government to extend the closing date for submissions to 15 August. This will enable a better understanding of the government's proposed reforms and enable community groups to be better equipped to respond.

Committee Members Profile- Ian Johnston

Ian Johnston- Treasurer.

Ian is the Managing Director of McMillan Partners Accountants and Advisors and has over twenty years experience as a chartered accountant in the Latrobe Valley. Ian's knowledge and experience is invaluable in providing advice and guidance on matters of business. Ian has a passion for mountain bike riding and will be seen heading bush at every opportunity.



Valley Signs

A room full of people - Soul Synchronicity

A room full of people
And the loneliness grows
How lost and empty I feel
But it seems nobody knows

To all those around me
My confidence is clear
Little do they know
I'm filled with anxiety and fear

Bright and bubbly I am
Or on the surface at least
But as the laughter continues
My fear and anxiety increase

I'll get through these moments
As hard as it seems
Maybe one day I'll be confident
Like the girl in my dreams

To all who have felt this
You will know how I feel
That the fears and the dreads
Are so horribly real

BUT I won't let them win
ME they will not control
Because better days are ahead
I feel it in my heart and my soul
Acknowledgement – Beyond Blue

One man's personal journey through anxiety and depression

My flight to Doha was uneventful in business class, I arrived tired but looking forward to working there for a large American company. I was particularly looking forward to staying in the Marriott hotel. My contact greeted me and informed me that I was being taken straight to my apartment instead. That's when my stomach touched the floor. For the past 20 years I had lived my life on the go, obtaining lucrative contracts but with uncertainties just around each corner, and this was the last straw.

My driver took me to the apartment, it was nice and clean and had all the mod cons but for some reason my mind had decided that I had been let down. I managed to overcome this anxiety by going shopping for food and keeping myself occupied. Later that day I went to bed but could not settle. This lasted for 5 days, on the sixth day my body had enough. It seemed like there was an explosion in my head, my vision blurred and I was shaking uncontrollably. I managed to get to my next door neighbour. He took one look at me and phoned the company nurse. What happened next is all a blur, all that I know is that I was on a medivac back to my home land.

On arrival I went to my GP. He unsuccessfully tried to treat me, this period went on for about 6 weeks, and eventually I collapsed at the GP's surgery. He immediately phoned the hospital and I was admitted into the mental health unit (that was April 2003). I underwent ECT, counselling and have taken part in cognitive group therapy together with the use of medication. I have overcome my depression but the anxiety stayed with me. It is still with me to a lesser extent, but I know how to deal with it.

I had up until then been invincible but with constant work related stress and a family death I had reached my saturation point. I now look at life in a totally different way, I conduct my business affairs in a more relaxed way and I try to be more family oriented. It has been a long hard road.

I am back at work and enjoying my new outlook. To the people who are suffering with depression and anxiety there is a way out, you must not give up and be prepared to accept what you have is just a little hiccup in your journey of life (not easy I know). For every crash you have you come back that little bit stronger, God knows how many I had but I came back. All in all I am a better person morally and spiritually now, but what a way to get there!

Acknowledgement – Beyond Blue



*"Be the Change
that you want to see
in the world"*

Mahatma Gandhi

Why We Like The British - FROM BRITISH NEWSPAPERS

Commenting on a complaint from a Mr. Arthur Purdey about a large gas bill, a spokesman for North West Gas said, "We agree it was rather high for the time of year. It's possible Mr. Purdey has been charged for the gas used up during the explosion that destroyed his house." (The Daily Telegraph)

Irish police are being handicapped in a search for a stolen van, because they cannot issue a description. It's a Special Branch vehicle and they don't want the public to know what it looks like. (The Guardian)

A young girl who was blown out to sea on a set of inflatable teeth was rescued by a man on an inflatable lobster. A coast guard spokesman commented, "This sort of thing is all too common". (The Times)

At the height of the gale, the harbourmaster radioed a coastguard and asked him to estimate the wind speed. He replied he was sorry, but he didn't have a gauge. However, if it was any help, the wind had just blown his Land Rover off the cliff. (Aberdeen Evening Express)