

MAKING A *Difference*

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CEO REPORT

WE GOT TO DO THIS TOGETHER!

The events of January and February 2011 in Queensland made worldwide headlines. Not simply for the catastrophic nature of the events but also for the response that placed the value of community at the forefront of peoples minds and actions. Who wasn't proud to be a part of that? There was a massive amount of energy created by simply being a part of the response. People felt valued and significant as they reached out and did their small part. People receiving the support felt valued, respected and included as part of their own community.

Unfortunately, just a few months later, we are witnessing the retreat back to an increasingly individualistic and self-focused society. The emergency is over, but there are still many people experiencing disadvantage and brokenness. There always has been. It seems that we have reverted to self-interest and an expectation that "Community" organisations will, once again, take the forefront in caring for our people.

The staff of Silky Oaks Children's Haven have always recognized the value of responding as a team. Being there to support each other, to offer encouragement as we confront challenges, working through disappointments together and planning better responses next time. This sense of team creates a community of care that has an energy all of its own.

Clients who experience this gain healing not just through the services they receive but also through the sense of feeling cared for by a whole community of loving people.

An exhilarating dynamic of leadership for me has always been overcoming big challenges in the context of a team. It may take a few hours or it may take a few years, but time is not the point. The point is assembling the players and melding them into a team that loves each other and reaches its goals together.

This edition of "Making a Difference" highlights the growth and dynamism of Silky Oaks Children's Haven. You can imagine the challenges we face as we reshape existing programs and implement new ones.

Best of all, we get to do this together.

Darren



FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to another issue of "Making a Difference". Over the past few magazines we have been looking at the core values of Silky Oaks and in this issue we wish to once again give you a snapshot of these values in action. Throughout the magazine you will see examples of how these values are incorporated into the day to day activities of those involved at Silky Oaks. Maybe make a cuppa, sit down and have a read about the recent events and latest developments here at Silky Oaks.

Previous magazines can be viewed at www.silkyoaks.org.au. If you have any feedback we would love to hear from you at haven@silkyoaks.org.au or through the enclosed feedback sheet.



HAVEN BILLBOARD

Ignition Driving School Update

Ignition Driving School is experiencing a great time of growth as outside organisations recognise the unique learning experience that our driving school offers. We also have celebrated our first student driver passing his practical driving test and progressing to a provisional license. Ignition staff have also grown with the addition of Martin Jacobs as another part time driving instructor and the appointment of Warren O'Sullivan to the role of co-ordinator and instructor. You can read more about Warren in the staff profile article in this issue. More information on the driving school can be obtained at www.ignitiondriving.org.au.



New Haven playground

In the last issue of the magazine we reported on the addition of the new playground to the Haven campus. Since then we have also added a shade sail over the top to ensure a cooler and sun safe play environment for the children that use the playground.

Courtyard renovations

Landscaping work has been carried out in the entrance areas to the main reception, function room and medical practice. A new garden has been created and paving work done to create a courtyard. Soon to be added garden chairs and potted plants will complete the area. Whilst some challenges were faced due to the wet weather it has been worth the wait and we appreciate the patience of those who were onsite during this period.



Filial Therapy

Silky Oaks' Therapy Service offers filial therapy groups as well as training sessions on an individual basis to parents and carers of children aged 3 to 12 years. The parent group, also known as child-parent relationship training, is a nine week experiential course that runs for two hours on Wednesday mornings.

Child-centred play therapy has been used successfully since the 1940s by child therapists to help children resolve problems and develop their potential.

Filial play therapy was later developed by Bernard and Louise Guerney in the 1960s, and is a unique approach that emphasises the parent-child relationship as a way to alleviate child and/or family difficulties. Filial therapy is also used to strengthen parent-child relationships in order to prevent problems (van Fleet, 2000).

In many types of non-directive play therapy, the play therapist initially meets with parents or carers, and then works separately with the child for a number of weeks or months. Approximately every six weeks the play therapist meets with the parents to give feedback and discuss the child's needs and progress. The parents do not normally see what happens in play therapy sessions, these are private to the child. The child is free to tell the parent about his/her play therapy should he/she choose, however, in his/her feedback, the therapist focuses on themes and meanings rather than details.

In filial therapy, the parent learns to conduct a special type of play session with his/her own children. The therapist trains, supervises, and supports the parents to eventually conduct the play sessions on their own, at home. Parents learn to understand what their children may be communicating through their play about their thoughts, feelings, and struggles. In filial therapy the parents are involved as partners throughout the therapeutic process.

How Filial Therapy May Assist Children and Families

Filial therapy can help children to express their feelings and fears through the natural activity of play. Over time, children may:

- better understand and express their own feelings
- be more able to tell parents what they need, what is worrying them
- become more confident and skilled in solving problems as well as asking for help when they need it
- reduce their problem behaviours
- feel more secure and trust their parents more
- have a more healthy self esteem and increase their self-confidence.

Filial therapy can help parents to:

- understand their child's worries and feelings more fully
 - learn new skills for encouraging co-operation, setting limits and enforcing consequences
 - enjoy playing with their children and giving them positive attention
 - increase their listening skills and develop open communication with their children
 - develop self confidence as parents
 - become more able to trust their children
 - deal in new ways with frustrations in family life

Filial therapy can help parents and children to form closer and happier relationships. Parents and carers are the most important people in their children's lives, and filial therapy capitalises on this importance to bring about constructive and lasting change. New closeness can come to relationships as trust and understanding grows, and parents use their new skills long after therapy ends, thereby preventing many future problems.

If you are interested in attending a filial session or have any enquiries contact Sue Prince or Dianne Tucker on 3906 8888.



What is Acceptance & Commitment Therapy?

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT: pronounced as the word 'act', not as the initials), gets its name from one of its central messages: accept what is out of your personal control, and commit to action that improves and enriches your life. ACT aims to maximise human potential for a rich, full and meaningful life.

ACT does this by:

- teaching psychological skills to deal with painful thoughts and feelings effectively – in such a way that they have much less impact and influence over you. These are known as mindfulness skills
- helping you to clarify what is truly important and meaningful to you – i.e. your values – then using that knowledge to guide, inspire and motivate you to change your life for the better

The ACT View of Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a “hot topic” in western psychology right now: - increasingly recognised as a powerful therapeutic intervention for everything from work stress to depression - and also as an effective tool for increasing emotional intelligence.

Six core principles of ACT

ACT uses six core principles to help clients develop psychological flexibility:

- 1. Contacting the Present Moment** – means being psychologically present, consciously connecting with, and engaging in whatever is happening in this moment. We tend to get caught up in our thoughts and lose touch with the world around us. We may spend a lot of time absorbed in thoughts about the past or the future. Instead of being fully conscious of our experience, we may operate on automatic pilot, merely “going through the motions”. Contacting the present moment means bringing our awareness to either the physical world around us, or the psychological world within us, or to do both simultaneously.
- 2. Defusion** – means learning to step back or detach from unhelpful thoughts, worries and memories. Instead of getting caught up in your thoughts, or pushed around by them, or struggling to get rid of them, you learn how to let them come and go – as if they were just cars driving past outside your house. You learn how to step back and watch your thinking, so you can respond effectively - instead of getting tangled up or lost inside your worries.
- 3. Acceptance** – means making room for painful feelings and sensations. You learn how to drop the struggle with them, give them some breathing space, and let them be there without getting all caught up in them, or overwhelmed by them. The more you can open up, and give them room to move, the easier it is for your feelings to come and go without draining you or holding you back.

- 4. The Observing Self** – is the part of you that is responsible for awareness and attention. We don't have a word for it in common everyday language – we normally just talk about the 'mind'. But there are two parts to the mind: the thinking self – i.e. the part that is always thinking; the part that is responsible for all of your thoughts, beliefs, memories, judgments, fantasies etc. And then there's the observing self – the part of your mind that is able to be aware of whatever you are thinking or feeling or doing at any moment. Without it, you couldn't develop mindfulness skills. And the more you practice mindfulness skills, the more aware you become of this part of your mind, and become able to access it when you need it (the technical term for this, in ACT, is 'self-as-context').
- 5. Values** – are what you want your life to be about, deep in your heart. What you want to stand for. What you want to do with your time on this planet. What ultimately matters to you in the big picture. What you would like to be remembered for by the people you love.
- 6. Committed Action** – means taking action guided by your values – doing what matters – even if it's difficult or uncomfortable.

When you put all of these things together, you develop 'psychological' flexibility. This is the ability to be in the present moment, with awareness and openness, and take action, guided by your values. In other words, it's the ability to be present, open up, and do what matters. The greater your ability to be present, open up and do what matters, the greater your quality of life – the greater your sense of vitality, wellbeing and fulfilment.

Adapted from Russell Harris (2006)

http://www.actmindfully.com.au/upimages/Dr_Russ_Harris_-_A_Non-technical_Overview_of_ACT.pdf

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TEAMS AT WORK

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The metaphor of the dog in the rain is from ACT – it illustrates how our mind creates our distress:

The story is of how a person locks both their dog and their partner out in the rain.

The dog and the partner wait all day – the big difference is in how the dog and the person greet you on return.



The dog is totally present in the moment – he is overjoyed to see you and happy to be inside and warm – the person's mind is caught up in all the resentful thoughts and memories of being locked out all day – his experience continues to be as if he is still locked out.

He/she is only angry and not at all appreciative that you are home, he is inside, and he is now warm!

Silky Oaks' Supported Accommodation Program.

This support program has been developed by Silky Oaks Children's Haven in Queensland for families who are homeless or 'at risk' of homelessness. It was developed as a response to the needs of the growing number of parents referred for housing and support. The program commenced over 25 years ago as an initiative of Silky Oaks, initially with four units for accommodation and expanded to the provision of houses in the community as **Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)** funding became available to our agency. Families are supported in affordable units/houses allowing them to deal with the matters impacting on their lives.

Many theories have influenced the development of the program, however this article will be confined to a description and discussion of a practice method and program for families not coping financially with living independently in the community.

The support program aims at helping parents to become more capable and effective as parents and individuals and functioning as healthy families with a better quality of life. The program is a responsive program adapting to clients' needs and incorporating new ideas to address these needs. This program is multi-faceted and includes advocacy and information to help families receive services they need such as appropriate child care, counselling, therapy, learn improved and safe parenting skills, establish children in schools and ensure families are coping financially with family needs when living in the community.

Client group

The families are referred to Silky Oaks because they are homeless or at risk of homelessness, with many living in violent family situations. Most parents are expressing and demonstrating difficulties in parenting their children safely. Clients are referred by housing departments/organizations, refuges, hospitals, government and community agencies. Indigenous families and families from a range of diverse cultural backgrounds are supported through this program

Most families have several factors in common – they are financially poor, socially isolated, mobile and have experienced poor parenting in their own childhood with

a history of disrupted education. Many of these factors are inter-related: for example, because the families are financially poor, they are often unable to pay their rent consistently and become homeless, mobile and isolated as they move from house to caravan to homelessness. Their life experiences lead to low self-esteem and this is encouraged by the images of 'normal life' on television and in magazines that they cannot match. They rarely have extended families to assist them in times of crises.

The parents may be withdrawn or angry as a result of their disadvantaged life situation and experiences. They frequently demonstrate a lack of motivation, loss of physical energy and difficulty in coping with practical issues, as their energy is directed inwards to cope with their emotional needs. The client group includes more single mothers than single fathers or two parent families.

Length of stay in the accommodation

The tenancy is negotiated with the family and Silky Oaks' support workers for an initial three months but most often this time has to be extended. It often takes time for the family to trust the workers and allow them to work with them and it is often only at the end of the three months that they will want to discuss issues that are affecting them.

The families are crisis prone and frequently contact the workers when crises arise. It is a demanding role for the support workers as they have to prove themselves to be reliable, dependable and caring, often ignoring aggressive and testing behaviour at first.

Practical work with families

New clients identify their goals and areas of need with which they require help including – budgeting, shopping, child behaviour, discipline, advocacy, relationships, health, child development, study and employment. Some of these will be discussed briefly.

Assisting clients to **manage their finances** helps them to take control of their life as they budget



TEAMS AT WORK

for rent, schooling and other expenses. Household and school expenses can place the family in crisis financially. Budgeting to pay debts often including past housing debts, helps the parents to feel more capable and independent as they learn to prioritize needs and adjust to their expected income, thereby preventing further homelessness.

Many of the parents need information about **child development** as they may have unrealistic expectations of their children and their needs. **Safety and play** are also an important topic as young toddlers in this group of families have the highest accident rates of all children in the community. Many of the parents lack the ability to interact creatively with their children or their surroundings and have missed learning many basic skills of living.

All staff are involved in **advocacy** as many of the parents are afraid of 'the welfare' and of all people in 'authority'. They avoid hospital and school appointments because they see them as structures of authority. Supporting parents in these appointments and meetings generates more positive feelings between hospital staff, teachers, parents and children – emphasising the importance of health and education. Some families present with child protection concerns requiring the learning of safe parenting or the involvement of the Child Protection team. Parents are supported through these interventions and many parents have moved on to enjoy parenting their children safely.

Therapy sessions are available from Silky Oaks' Therapy Program as well as **counselling** from our trained accommodation program staff. Issues are identified where change is possible and needed. Interventions are made to fit the family and the aim is to start the family moving in the right direction and then encourage and support them as they move towards their goals. Family members are taught the steps in problem solving and goal setting as they examine all options and their possible consequences. Many families are reconstituted families with a long history of broken relationships and diffused family boundaries.

Other practical support includes cash, food, clothing and furniture to assist in establishing the families again.

Parenting courses and support groups

Parents living in our accommodation and those who have moved to live in the community are offered 'group' access weekly, enjoying socialising, learning skills, working at crafts, listening to guest speakers and enjoying outings. Lunch and child minding is organised by Silky Oaks' staff helping parents feel that 'they belong'.

Parenting information is provided at our weekly group meetings. Many established parenting courses use concepts and language which have no relevance to the parents due to their lack of education and poor communication skills. Information is selected to respond to the needs of the attending parents and to reduce their feelings of alienation.

Our parenting course was designed by the social worker to meet parent needs and their children's needs using Maslow's five levels of needs: physical survival needs, physical safety needs, the need to be loved and belong, the need for self-esteem, and the need to be self fulfilled (*Maslow, 1970*).

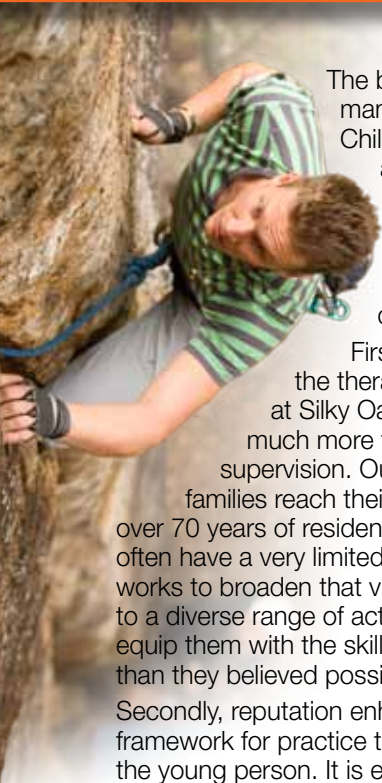
Information is provided on behavioural problems, safe discipline, communication skills, conflict management, stress management, relationship skills and grief and separation. Helping parents to improve **communication skills** reduces their isolation and situations of conflict. In these groups they learn respect, trust and appropriate social interaction with others. Learning how to **recognise stress** warnings and respond appropriately can often avoid violent behaviour in families.

Gaining some understanding of the dynamics between themselves and the family also helps them to recognise needed areas for change. Clients become more receptive to education and support as they become emotionally stronger. The cycle of disadvantage is prevented from continuing with their children as parents are more able to take responsibility for decisions and actions themselves and their life becomes less chaotic. There are some families however, who have been so affected by the past that they may always need to be helped and supported through the crises of life. Through the building of trust with the workers and experiencing positive feelings about themselves when they are treated as persons of worth and value, many are able to move to a more positive view of themselves.

Many of the parents who have participated in our supported accommodation program move on to do voluntary work at their children's schools and other community activities. Others go on to study and follow a career after gaining confidence and raised self esteem through achieving goals and independence. Some have gone on to study teaching, welfare work or parent aiding and some complete their disrupted schooling caused by past traumatic childhood experiences.

This article was written by Bronwyn Herbert – Silky Oaks' Program Manager and was published in The Journal of the Australasian Housing Institute – Housing Works February 2011.





The board of governance and the management team of Silky Oaks Children's Haven have chosen to make a considerable investment of effort, time, money and other resources into our own REMAP (Reputation Enhancement Model Activities Program) service. Why have we done this?

Firstly, we continually strive to improve the therapeutic practice and outcomes at Silky Oaks. Residential care involves so much more than a bed, food and appropriate supervision. Our vision is to see children and families reach their full potential. Our experience, over 70 years of residential work, is that our young people often have a very limited view of their potential. REMAP works to broaden that view and expose our young people to a diverse range of activities designed to encourage and equip them with the skills and confidence to achieve more than they believed possible for themselves.

Secondly, reputation enhancement theory provides a framework for practice that has a very positive view of the young person. It is empowering for the young person and takes a strengths-based approach to assisting young people in achieving developmental outcomes. This is consistent with our values at Silky Oaks.

Thirdly, REMAP engages our young people in a range of activities that have the potential to become lifelong passions or hobbies. Our young people begin to identify themselves with and through these activities. Moving their view of themselves from a primary identity as being a "child in care" to a "mad, keen surfer" or "passionate amateur photographer/filmmaker".

Fourthly, reputation enhancement avoids assuming that the path to a successful and fulfilling life is the same for every young person. This allows a young person considerable freedom and flexibility to determine a unique pathway, developing a positive sense of identity and a healthy self-esteem along the way.

A Snippet of Reputation Enhancement Theory

Reputation enhancement theory posits that individuals carefully choose the image or social identity they wish to present and promote in their community, going to great

lengths both to develop and maintain this image (Emler, 1984). Reputations, therefore, are not just the impressions that individuals hold of themselves, but rather collective phenomena and products of social processes (Emler, 1990). In order to have a reputation, people must be connected to others in a relatively stable community of mutually acquainted and conversing individuals (Hopkins & Emler, 1990).

In order to persuade others that they belong to a particular social category, individuals communicate their social identities through intentional, visible behavior (Emler, 1990). An integral argument of reputation enhancement theory is that individuals have public reputations; this is the social goal of their conduct (Emler, 1990). Social visibility can occur in a number of ways: by directly witnessing the acts of others, by gossip and exchange of information about the activities of others, and by Reputation enhancing goals, self-disclosure either in conversations, or in self-report measures (Emler, 1984). That is, according to Emler (1984), individuals are both students of reputations and promoters of their own reputations. This promotion is important because of the credit it attributes to individuals within their social community (Emler, 1990). It is this credit that strongly influences individuals' abilities to attain goals and secure material benefits. As a consequence, Emler (1990) claimed that it is necessary to establish and maintain a certain reputation as this serves to either promote or constrain social interactions with peers and affects one's ability to achieve goals.

Individuals generally choose to be defined in terms of one specific kind of social identity rather than another (Emler, 1984). For example, adolescents may wish to define themselves as law-abiding, as athletic, as an academic, or as a delinquent.

Finally, REMAP is fun. The range of activities pursued through the program are planned with a strong therapeutic framework and well defined outcomes for the participants. Staff delivering the program are experienced youth workers who understand how to work with young people in a way that is supportive, encouraging and developmental, especially in the midst of a challenging activity. What our young people initially grab hold of is the chance for a fun time surfing, rock climbing, bush walking, kayaking or film making. What they end up with is an experience that moves them closer to realizing their full potential.

STAFF PROFILE

Warren O'Sullivan

Silky Oaks enthusiastically welcomed Warren back onto staff in January as Co-ordinator for Ignition Driving School and REMAP (Reputation Enhancement Model Activities Program). After working previously with Silky Oaks as a youth worker during 2007-8, Warren took up a youth worker position with Safe Places for Children before becoming a house leader within the company. After 18 months, Warren accepted a position with Youth and Family Services Logan. This position involved case management of clients aged between 11 and 25 who were at risk of being, or were involved, with alcohol and other drugs.

As co-ordinator of Ignition Driving School, Warren's enthusiasm is clearly evident and he is keen to improve community and agency awareness within the Logan and South-East region with the assistance of his previous contacts. Warren is also excited by the growing nature

of Silky Oaks and believes that new roles will be created following the expansion of the organisation. Similarly, as REMAP increases over the coming months, Warren is enthused by the challenges and learning opportunities that this program presents. Warren has said, "my current position with Silky Oaks could not have been more suited if I were to tailor make it myself. I am enjoying the culture and staff relationships within the organisation. There are a lot of good people here. I can manage the load and this enables me to give more time to my other love, which is being with my beautiful wife Jo and three children".



A word from the Director

2011 has certainly started at great speed with a lot of events occurring within the first few months of the year.

January and February were extraordinarily busy as we welcomed more than 25 new families to the centre and welcomed back 60 existing families.

To further encourage relationship building between the centre and home, we held a parent information evening on March 2nd at which over 35 parents attended. The evening was a terrific success with parents in fits of laughter at our sing song introductory performance. Parents relaxed in the cool of the night whilst sitting in the playground enjoying a slideshow presentation of their children at play and listening to our centre director, Tracey and assistant director, Mandy, discussed the recent changes, including updates about the Early

Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and Queensland Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines.

After a delicious supper, parents attended informative presentations by their children's teachers where they learned more about how the EYLF's five learning outcomes are taught and achieved in each age group. Parents were provided with handouts to help support their understanding of practices within each room.

Another eventful morning was had mid February when Jeff from "Tune for Tots" came to the centre and performed a range of familiar and new songs. The children had a wonderful time singing, dancing, clapping, and wandering around the centre to a myriad of tunes.



Around the Rooms

Fun and Games in the Nursery

The children have been having no end of fun playing with lots of water, making boats float, and scooping up the water with cups then pouring it into the water wheels – all of these activities encourage children to identify cause and effect. They have also loved painting with various implements as well as using play dough, construction, home corner with the babies, and lots of sand play, just to name a few.



Music and Cooking in the Cuddly Koalas

We have started two new projects in the 'cuddlies', one on music and movement and the other on food and cooking. Many of the children really enjoy music and dancing and we thought this would be a great opportunity to expand on their interest in this area by introducing the children to a variety of music from around the world and different dance styles as well. In conjunction with this musical world tour, they will also study and cook various foods from different cultures. During our recent Australia Day celebrations we cooked damper with the children - they had a ball and loved eating it!



All About Me in the Busy Bees

We have begun our first project for the year 'All About Me'. This is a way we can get to know who we are and learn more about everyone in the room this year. It is also a way we can discuss with each other the differences about us all and what makes us special, from the colour of our hair and eyes to who makes up our family composition.



Chinese New Year in the Pre-prep

We had lots of fun with our dragon dance after creating the head and body using a variety of collage materials. We danced to Chinese music wriggling and winding our way around the room. The children also enjoyed trying chopsticks to eat their fried rice!



Five cent pieces go a long way

This year we have been collecting five cent pieces in the opp shop to support the Pyjama Foundation and have already raised over \$200. The Pyjama Foundation Love of Learning Program ® is a literacy-based mentoring program for children in care. Volunteers from the community- known as Pyjama Angels- are recruited, screened, trained and supported to help the children improve their literacy skills. We have put aside boxes of great quality books, and new pyjamas have been purchased. Donations of pyjamas of any size from 0000 to adults, for boys or girls, will be gratefully received and can be dropped off at the sorting shed. At our volunteer's morning tea in June, we will gladly donate them to the Pyjama Foundation and then the recipients for next year's five cent pieces will be decided.

We would like to thank you all for yet again supporting another great cause.

Lyn's Story

Recently we had a phone call from a grandmother, Lyn, who wanted to express her gratitude to Silky Oaks for helping put huge smiles on the faces of her grandsons. Lyn's daughter and grandsons had been going through a tough time and they had moved in with Lyn and her husband. Lyn's daughter had been to the opp shop and was thrilled to be able to purchase two bikes and school uniforms for her sons. The boys were incredibly excited about the bikes and very quickly became skilled at riding around the yard. Lyn is so grateful that the opp shop gave her daughter the opportunity to meet some of the needs of her children, provide such a wonderful experience and fill their world with a little bit of joy. Lyn has expressed her desire to support the opp shop in the future with donations of her own.



All in a day's work at the Silky Oaks Opp Shop

At the Silky Oaks Opp Shop, our wonderful volunteers are our most valuable asset. Each of these volunteers has a lifetime of experiences. Sharing our stories is a part of what makes the opp shop experience so enjoyable.

Elaine Van der Burg, a regular volunteer at the opp shop, was sharing part of her story. Elaine is the youngest of 14 children, seven boys and seven girls and she was an aunty before she was born. She and her husband, also one of 14, have two children and six grandchildren. While discussing Elaine's story, Leonie Gould, a regular Silky Oaks customer, entered the shop and shared that she is also the youngest of 14 children. Leonie was also an aunty before she was born and grew up in a family with seven boys and seven girls. Leonie has five children, three grandchildren and three step grandchildren. Although Leonie has since moved to Kingaroy, she still visits Silky Oaks whenever possible. It is at this point in the conversation that Judy Vale also comes in for a chat. Coincidentally, Judy is a mother to 14 children- ten boys and four girls with the last two being twins. Judy lives in Wynnum West and has 40 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. She has been shopping at Silky Oaks since the beginning and describes the opp shop as one of her favourite shops.

In the late 1960's, school was out forever for some girlfriends from Northmead High School in Sydney. As is so often the case, they went their separate ways and their paths didn't cross again. Until one day, two of our volunteers who didn't normally work together found themselves filling in for others that were unwell. The combination of Lexie's uncommon first name and Judy reverting to the use of her maiden name began to unravel that these two ladies had in fact been friends in high school and had been reunited after four decades. We rejoice with these ladies and how great our God is that He should bring this about.



These are just a few of the many stories that come about when volunteering or shopping at Silky Oaks. We would love for you to join us in grabbing a bargain, sharing your stories, catching up with old friends, or making some new ones. We also take this opportunity to thank our wonderful volunteers and customers who make Silky Oaks such a great place to be.



Fashion Parades



Friday 11th March saw Silky Oaks host our first young adults fashion parade. Many came and enjoyed pizza and pavlova served by our fantastic waiters for the evening, Tom and Ben Darnell. Audrey Tonges, our 2010 volunteer of the year, created a variety of outfits providing a brief snapshot of fashions available at the opp shop. The positive feedback on the outfits presented acts as a credit to both Audrey and the fabulous models that graced the catwalk. Thanks again to Audrey and all those involved in making the evening the great success that it was.

At the time of this magazine's publication, we are busily preparing for our upcoming Thursday 12th and 19th May fashion parades and looking forward to bringing you photos and details of these events in our next issue.

Also, once again, Silky Oaks will be supplying the clothing for the Women's Hour fashion event held at Wynnum Gospel Chapel on Wednesday 24th August. Join them at this event to and enjoy a delicious Devonshire tea whilst viewing another series of outfits arranged by Audrey.

Another new and exciting event on the Silky Oaks calendar is a fashion parade for Working and Young Mums. This night of fun and fashion will be held in the Function Room at Silky Oaks on Saturday 8th October at 7pm. Bring your friends and enjoy coffee and dessert for only \$6.



COMING UP IN 2011

June 2 - Volunteers Morning Tea

June 25 - Car Boot Sale

July 23 - Car Boot Sale

August 27 - Car Boot Sale

PSALM 46

¹ God is our shelter and strength,
always ready to help in times of trouble.
² So we will not be afraid, even if the earth is shaken
and mountains fall into the ocean depths;
³ even if the seas roar and rage,
and the hills are shaken by the violence.
⁴ There is a river that brings joy to the city of God,
to the sacred house of the Most High.
⁵ God is in that city, and it will never be destroyed;
at early dawn he will come to its aid.
⁶ Nations are terrified, kingdoms are shaken;
God thunders, and the earth dissolves.
⁷ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.
⁸ Come and see what the LORD has done.
See what amazing things he has done on earth.
⁹ He stops wars all over the world;
he breaks bows, destroys spears,
and sets shields on fire.
¹⁰ "Stop fighting," he says, "and know that I am God,
supreme among the nations,
supreme over the world."
¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.



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Children and Families reaching their full potential

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