

The History of Diamond Valley/Eltham

Citizens Advice Bureau Inc.

(Renamed Diamond Valley Community Support Inc.)

1971 --- 2015

DIAMOND VALLEY
community support



Diamond Valley Community Support Shop 378a Level 3.

Greensborough Plaza Shopping Centre 3088.

Tel 03 9435 8282/03 9435 5440.

Written and Researched by Rosie Bray

December 2015

Edited by Meagan Beck

Life Members

Ellen Smiddy.

Janet Oppy.

Raïmonne Mc Cutchan

Judith Jennings.

Jean Kay.

Lorraine Mc Sweeney.

Anne -Marie Primmer.

Betty Matthews.

Joyce Mc Namara.

Benita Ewings.

Trevor Wilson.

Marj Stanley.

Robin Bailey.

Gwyneth Terry.

Betty Golding.

Charles Dedman.

William (Tom) Donnahoo.

Joy Skellern.

Chris Livingstone.

Richard Tonkin.

Stuart Fraser.

Marjorie Rowe.

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Volunteers Week 2006.

Foreword

I am pleased to write a few words as a foreword to Rosie Bray's history of the Diamond Valley Eltham Citizens Advice Bureau. Who would have thought that 44 years after the initial meeting in Montmorency the CAB would be going so strongly?

I am very impressed by the service that has been provided to the community. To think we only started with \$4.42. It is great that so many people from the community have been part of the CAB over the years.

Having been away from the area for nearly 30 years I have lost touch with the Greensborough Eltham area. It is not always possible to know what has happened to something you helped to set up. It is wonderful to read of the development that occurred and that the CAB has played a significant role in the community.

My congratulations to all who have contributed to the CAB and those who are still working to provide service to the community.

Graham Bride

October 2015

Dedicated to

**The community minded people who had the vision,
and the commitment to begin this service to help local people,
who were in need and may have 'fallen through the cracks'.**

And to the people who carried on this work.

Thank you all

Beginnings 1971

The Diamond Valley—Eltham Citizens' Advisory Bureau (renamed Diamond Valley Community Support) did not just happen.



It began with the seed of an idea when The Reverend Graham Bride (pictured left) with his wife Margaret came to live in Montmorency from Dandenong. Graham Bride began to speak to the local people and he could see the need of an organisation in the Diamond Valley and Eltham areas such as the one that he had begun in Dandenong in November 1969. When Graham Bride investigated further, he found positive evidence that there were people in the Diamond Valley/Eltham area with needs and no support.

This prompted him to consult with the Shire President of Diamond Valley.

A small advertisement in the Diamond Valley local paper invited interested people to attend a public meeting to organise a support group for the community. Over 50 people attended the public meeting at St Faith's Church Montmorency on April 16, 1971 at 7.30pm. The meeting voted unanimously that the area needed to form a community support group to help those who may have fallen through the cracks. A small collection was taken up and the Reverend Bride chuckled when he mentioned that \$4.42 was the total collection from this meeting. ¹



Diamond Valley Councillor, David McKenzie (1969-1971) (pictured left) chaired the public meeting.

Councillor McKenzie opened the meeting pointing out that, in the urban society some individuals can often be lost, and have nowhere to turn for help. It was his belief that social welfare should involve local municipal councils, as well as financial help from the Commonwealth Government. ²

¹ Interview with Graham Bride (by phone) February 14, 2015

² Information from the Minutes "Steps taken to establish a Citizens Advice Bureau " April 1971

The first meeting was the catalyst to establish an organisation in the Diamond Valley and Eltham areas, with the main aim 'to provide help for those with needs'. Many of those present were representative of organisations such as churches, service clubs, progress associations, welfare bodies, Red Cross and Good Neighbour Council. The meeting fully supported the establishment of a Citizens' Advice Bureau (C A B) in this area and recommended that appropriate action be taken immediately.

Other speakers at this meeting who reinforced David McKenzie's views were Mr. Hayden Raysmith from the Victorian Citizens' Advisory Bureau who spoke of the role that the Citizens' Advice Bureau can perform in the community. Mr Raysmith went on to say that 13 Citizens' Advice Bureaus have been established in the Melbourne metropolitan area over the past 4-5 years. Mr Ray Lucas from Box Hill Citizens' Adversity Bureau stressed that the aim of the previous bureau was to direct people needing help to the most appropriate agency. Mr Lucas continued by saying that over 1,200 people made use of the service at Box Hill, which was staffed by volunteers who had agreed to undertake a special 15 sessions course conducted by the Social Welfare Department, and Mr Lucas then stressed that the Advice Bureau should be located in a central place where people can access easily. The general opinions voiced at this meeting were that these aspects would need immediate attention.³

1. Training of volunteers.
2. Establishing the appropriate facilities for the Bureau.
3. Bureau should serve both Eltham and Diamond Valley Shires.
4. That the two Councils be asked to nominate a representative.



An organising committee of 10 people from each Shire representing organisations and individuals was then elected. The Reverend G Bride (Montmorency), The Reverend R. Gabb (Diamond Creek), Mrs J. Anderson (Montmorency), Mrs J. Corn (Eltham), Mr A. Horsley, (Montmorency), The Reverend G. Charles (Montmorency), Mrs A. Howden (Montmorency), Mr J. Mitchell (Lower Plenty), Mrs M. Parkhill (Diamond Creek), Mr T. Sheppard (Greensborough) (pictured left), Mr R. Parry (East Ivanhoe). Mrs E. Crammer (Briar Hill), Mr B. Baxter (Briar Hill), Mr D. Wilkinson (Greensborough), Mrs E. Smiddy (Watsonia), Councillor J. Andrew (Councillor Diamond Valley Shire Observer-- Watsonia).

The organising Committee held its first meeting on Friday May 7, 1971 at the Diamond Valley President's office .

³ Information from the Minutes "Steps taken to establish a Citizens Advice Bureau" April 1971.

The election of office bearers was held and those duly elected were:-

Chairman The Reverend Graham Bride. **Secretary** The Reverend Roy Gabb.

Treasurer Mr Tom Sheppard.

This small but enthusiastic committee began to attack the important aspects suggested in the initial meeting. A discussion took place about the various tasks of the C A B. It was decided that the best approach was to do a feasibility study to present to interested groups to give them a firm proposal of the aims and plans for the C A B.

Three sub-committees were suggested, resulting in the following people accepting positions.

Location---Mr B. Baxter. Convenor. Mr R Parry, Mr D Wilkinson, Mrs J. Corn.

Finance---Mr T. Sheppard. Convenor. Mr J Mitchell. Mr A. Horsley, Mrs E. Cramer.

Operational---Mrs J. Anderson Convenor. Mrs M. Parkhill, Mrs. A. Howden.

The Reverend G .Bride and The Reverend R. Gabb.

Correspondence received from both Shires showed that they were very interested in being kept up to date with progress and that Mr G. Newton would attend the meetings as an observer. There was also a letter from St Mary's Church Greensborough expressing interest. Mrs Ellen Smiddy filled the role of representing St Mary's Church.

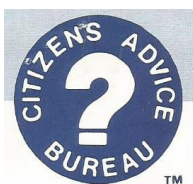
The meeting agreed that the \$4.42 collected at the previous meeting be kept in hand for incidental expenses such as stationery or postage. It was also agreed that letters be sent to both Shire Councils informing them of the progress to date of the proposed feasibility study.⁴

Meetings such as these were held at the various committee members' homes once a month and minutes were faithfully kept and can be viewed at the Greensborough archives.

⁴ Minutes of meeting May 7, 1971 at Shire of Diamond Valley Offices.

Early Years. 1972-1979

These were exciting years. Things were beginning to happen in the social welfare department.



There was a buzz in the air and the C A B members took heart that both Shires had pledged support. The group adopted the C A B logo with the question mark in the centre and it was all set to go. When correspondence arrived from the Diamond Valley Steering Committee for Social Welfare requesting a meeting with the Chairman, Secretary and the Convenors of the three sub-committees, Tom

Sheppard advised that the Social Worker from the Shire of Diamond Valley be kept entirely independent from C A B operations. Thus demonstrating, that although newly formed, the C A B would be its own identity, which proved to be good advice as the C A B grew.⁵

From the very beginning everyone involved thought that it was all positive, and there was a great need for a support group in the Diamond Valley/Eltham areas. Operations Convenor Judith Anderson reported that there had been a good response from the invitation for volunteers to attend a training course. Finance Convenor Tom Sheppard gave a sound run down that \$500 per annum would be the maximum amount to operate the Bureau. Mrs Margaret Parkhill and Mrs Judith Smart organised the volunteers' training. The first course was offered in July 1971.

All plans were made and ready to go, but for one important thing. They still did not have a 'place to call home'. Locations Convenor Bob Baxter, found that rents were cheaper in Greensborough (\$40 per week) compared to Eltham where the average weekly rent was \$60 per week.⁶ Other suggestions were a mobile office which was to be divided into two rooms to be housed at the vacant land next to the Greensborough Post Office, or a caravan which could be parked on the Greensborough New World Supermarket car park. Office space at the Old Shire Offices in Main Street Greensborough at \$800 per annum was another consideration. Auditor Richard Rhode offered to sub-let part of his office space in Valley Buildings Main Street Greensborough which was not being used. The committee discussed and investigated each option without coming to a decision.

However, lack of a home base did not stop the brave hearted committee. Plans went ahead. The first course of trainees organised by Mrs Margaret Parkhill and Mrs Judith Smart concluded in November 1971. A directory of organisations, churches, clubs and groups was constructed under the competent leadership of Mrs Andree Howden. A promotional brochure was produced with the assistance of the Preston Technical School Art Section. An official bank account was opened in the name of Diamond Valley—Eltham Advisory Bureau. And a 'meet and greet' was arranged for committee members and course trainees to get to know each other at the home of Graham and Margaret Bride in Montmorency on October 22, 1971.

⁵ Committee of Management Minutes June 4, 1971.

⁶ Ibid

Good news brought smiles to the committee's faces, when the Shire of Diamond Valley offered office space in the Valley Buildings Main Street Greensborough at an acceptable rate.

Minutes of February 2, 1972 under Business (a) were recorded:-

“The Committee considered the offer of a room in Valley Buildings \$14 per week inclusive of heating and light with guaranteed occupancy for one year from March 1, 1972 and an extension to August 31, 1973. At that date, subject to demand for the room, the C A B may be offered a further three-year base on the same terms. Rent payable monthly.”

Horsley-Gabb. This offer was accepted.⁷

It was a great relief that at last the Executive, committee members and volunteers of the Bureau could commence to work in a permanent location. It was clearly underlined that the main aims of the organisation were: ---

1. To provide help for those in need.
2. To direct people needing help to the most appropriate agency.

Now that the Diamond Valley—Eltham Citizen's Advisory Bureau had their own location, things began to happen at breakneck speed. The layout of the office was the first consideration. Following the meeting on February 2, 1972 the lay out and office supplies were confirmed.

1. 2000, 6x4 white plain typing paper to be purchased.
2. Boxes for same to be made.
3. ½ drawer filing cabinet to be purchased.
4. 52 file folders to be purchased.
5. 2 tables, standard office 2'5" x 4'6", 2 drawers to be obtained from SDV. The offer from Mrs Plant, Briar Hill, to obtain these was accepted with thanks.
6. Enquires to be made to borrow some chairs from St Faith's Church to test the design for C A B before purchasing same.
7. Tom Sheppard to inspect partitioning available from the Shire of Diamond Valley and take appropriate action. ⁸

⁷Committee of Management Minutes February 2, 1972

⁸ Minutes Executive Organising Committee February 18, 1972

All these plans were made 'on a shoe string' and everyone entered into each stage with enthusiasm. It was then decided to organise the completion of the constitution and plan an opening date. A constitution was completed and ready to be formalised. A public meeting was organised on March 7, 1972, at Petrie Park Hall Montmorency for the purpose of electing a Board of Management and to formalise the constitution. Mr Ian Smith, Minister for Social Welfare (pictured right) was invited to be guest speaker. Invitations were sent to all organisations in both Shires.



A G E N D A

Chairman - Roy Gabb

1. Chairman's welcome and introduction of official table and special guests. (8.05 - 8.10)
2. Cr. D. McKenzie - 'How the C.A.B. came into being' - local history in the context of other C.A.Bs and community facilities. (8.10 - 8.20)
3. Mr G. Bride - 'The arrangements for opening the Bureau'. (8.20 - 8.30)
4. Chairman - pass constitution and elect committee of management. (8.30 - 8.35)
5. Introduction of Guest Speaker by Cr R. M. Vale. (8.35 - 8.37)
6. Guest Speaker - Mr I. Smith, Minister for Social Welfare. (8.40 - 9.00)
7. Vote of thanks to Guest Speaker by Eltham Councillor. (9.00 - 9.03)
8. Financing the Bureau - Mr T. Shepherd. (9.05 - 9.10)
9. Questions and Comments by those present. (9.10 - 9.30)
10. Close of Meeting by Chairman. (9.30)

Duly elected Board of Management members -:

Executive.

Chairman The Reverend Bride, **Vice Chairman** Mr Alan Horsley, **Secretary** Mr David Wilkinson, **Treasurer** Mr Tom Sheppard and **Auditor** Mr Richard Rhode.⁹

Later the Committee to Board of Management were elected;-

Mrs Sonia Small, Mrs Ellen Smiddy, Mrs Margaret Parkhill, Mrs Judith Anderson, Mr Alan Horsley, Mr John Andrews, Mr Ken Baldwyn.¹⁰

Opening Date. March 14, 1972 opening was by today's standards very quiet, but satisfying for the members who had worked so hard to achieve so much in so little time. Members were glad to read this article in the local paper.

Diamond Valley—Eltham Citizens' Advisory Bureau.

**Valley Building. 1st Floor, 83 Main Street
Greensborough. Suite 7B**

Hours. Tuesday/Thursday/Friday

10.00am to 1.00 pm.

Saturday 9.00am to 12.00 noon.¹¹

⁹ Committee of Management Minutes April 4, 1972

¹⁰ Committee of Management Minutes March 2, 1973.

¹¹ Ibid

Ellen Smiddy, foundation member of Community Advisory Bureau remembers.



Ellen (pictured left) clearly remembers reading in the local paper in 1971 that there was to be a meeting to look at the welfare needs in the area. The meeting was at St Faith's Church Montmorency. Ellen attended not knowing what to expect. She came away very impressed, convinced that this indeed was the beginning of an organisation that would assist people who were in need. And Ellen also remembers this time because she was expecting her son Michael. Ellen was soon selected as a representative of St Mary's Church Greensborough to the newly formed

C A B and became an active member on the initial committee. Ellen says that the early years were shaky at times and not without their problems, but she pays tribute to her fellow committee members for the professional skills which they had brought into the early C A B organisation. Going back in mind Ellen smiles and reflects that, in May 1972 there were only 12 calls for information. The questions, were they needed or necessary went through the minds of the trained volunteers at this time? However says Ellen, things did not 'stand still'. In 1973, C A B received a State grant of \$250 which pleased the Treasurer Tom Sheppard because it began Emergency Relief in a small way. In August 1973, the organisation was given permission to refer clients to the Diamond Valley Council for a Community Chest voucher. In that year also C A B with the help of marriage guidance organisations worked with other support groups to investigate the problems of married couples and children's concerns during these times. All these were great leaps forward. Ellen recalls that because of the open office plan, with only partitions to divide each section, it was almost impossible to keep the clients' confidentiality. This concerned all the volunteers. In 1973 a radio was purchased and was operating all day, with the idea that the constant noise would drown out any conversation behind the partition, therefore achieving clients' confidentiality. Ellen laughs when she remembers that the phone was set on foam hoping that the conversations would be smothered and more private.

Ellen did many tasks from publicity to assistant Office Manager in 1972¹² and Office Manager in 1973.¹³ At the Annual General meeting November 1980, Mr Alan Anderson paid tribute to Ellen for her contribution since the beginning, to the Community Advisory Bureau. The tribute went on to say that Ellen took on almost every task cheerfully, was an active committee member for eight years and it was always a pleasure to work with her.¹⁴

Ellen was made a life member in March 2010.

¹² Committee of Management Minutes July 7, 1972

¹³ Committee of Management Minutes April 6, 1973

¹⁴ Annual General meeting November 1980.

The first Annual General meeting was held at the Diamond Valley Council Offices Civic Centre Greensborough on March 20, 1973. The meeting was chaired by David McKenzie (MHR 1972-1975), who mentioned “extensions of social welfare services within local areas to be expected from Federal Government policy and congratulated local citizens on their voluntary work through C A B.”¹⁵

Councillors Andrews, Wearne and Horsley spoke briefly on the development of social welfare services in their respective shires. Special mention was made of the appointment of a social worker and the future of co-operation between all parties.¹⁶

The Election of Committee of Management were duly nominated and elected.

Mrs S. Small, Mrs E. Smiddy, Mrs M. Parkhill, Mrs J. Anderson, Mrs H. Joseph, Mrs V. Gillard, Mr T. Sheppard, The Reverend G. Bride, Mr D. Wilkinson, Mr H Horsley and Mr J. Andrews and Mr K. Baldwyn.

Mr Richard Rhode accepted the position of honorary auditor.

In his President’s report Graham Bride said, the Bureau (as it was called by the members) was staffed entirely by volunteers who had worked through early difficulties such as obtaining a telephone installed. Not having any privacy for interviews was another obstacle but, the volunteers cheerfully kept the doors open to those who needed help. Such was the humour in those days. Mr Bride went on to report “that 251 calls were made to the Bureau during the year. Approximately 1/5th of the calls required counselling assistance, which had to be sought in most cases from Agencies outside the Shires. In this regard, the appointment of a social worker by the Diamond Valley Shire would be of most value. There were now 41 trained volunteers (19 from the Shire of Diamond Valley, 22 from the Shire of Eltham).The busiest day was Friday.”¹⁷ Guest speaker for the meeting was Mr Max Dumais of V.C.O.S.S. who spoke about other regional services (Geelong, Ballarat and outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne).¹⁸The Reverend Bride thanked the guest speaker for his words of wisdom which encouraged the Bureau to go ahead and expand for the future needs of the Community.



Norm Wearne (pictured left) served as a Diamond Valley Councillor from 1969-73. He was involved with the Bureau when it was formed in 1971. Norm was employed as Manager Community Services at Shire of Eltham (1976-82) still connected with the Bureau. In his retirement, Norm volunteered to work at Community Information Diamond Valley from 1996-2007. When asked why, in his retirement he chose to return to an organisation that he had been part of right from its beginnings in 1971, Norm replied “that he could see value in the Bureau’s day to day’s workings and he wanted to give something back to the community.”

¹⁵ Annual first General Minutes March 20, 1973.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Presidents Report A.G.M. March 20, 1973.

¹⁸ A.G.M. March 20, 1973.

The second Annual General Meeting held on March 26, 1974 at the Eltham Shire Offices was chaired by Councillor. L. Clarke from the Shire of Eltham, who outlined Eltham Shire's increasing interest in the work of C A B.

Committee of Management (C o M) duly elected were:-

The Reverend Dalling, Mrs P. Young, Mrs S. Small, Mrs E. Smiddy, Mrs M. Parkhill, Mrs J Newell, Mrs S. Bajada, Mrs F. Wilkes-Johnson, Mr T. Sheppard, Mr D. Wilkinson, Mr A. Horsley, The Reverend G. Bride.

Richard Rhode was reappointed honorary auditor.

Chairman, Graham Bride in this report paid tribute to Mrs Elizabeth Smart and Mr Jim Poulter for their professional advice. He went on to say that the phone calls for assistance rose from 251 the previous year to 434 in 1974, clearly signifying that the Bureau should extend its services such as opening an office in Eltham, to meet the needs of the community. At the conclusion of the meeting guest speaker Mrs C. Benn was thanked for her informative information describing the work of the Family Centre Project Centre of the Brotherhood of St Laurence.¹⁹

The third Annual General Meeting was held on March 19 1975 at the Diamond Valley Civic Centre, chaired by Councillor Alan Goldsworthy, President of Shire of Diamond Valley.

Elected C o M members: The Reverend W Dalling, Mrs Susan Miller, Mrs Judith Anderson, Mrs Sonia Small, Mrs Ellen Smiddy, Mrs Elizabeth Smart, Cr Faye Wilkes-Johnson, Mr John Brown, The Reverend Graham Bride, Mr Jeff Bulmer, Mr Tom Sheppard, Mr David Wilkinson .Rhode and Associates were appointment honorary auditors.

Graham Bride in his Chairman's report said that the Bureau had a distinct advantage over a number of other welfare activities because service is given by ordinary citizens to each other. He considered that the interviewee related to this type of service. Phone calls had increased 25% from the previous year to a total of 567, and there was now Marriage Guidance Counselling provided on a half day a week, under the care of the Church of England Marriage Guidance Council. The Reverend Bride also welcomed Mrs N. Baragwaneth as part time Counsellor to the Bureau. Guest speaker Mrs N. Baragwaneth was thanked for her informative talk on marriage counselling.²⁰

The years from 1975-1979, marked a period of significant growth and development for the Bureau, as the following will show.

After prolonged negotiations with the Shire of Diamond Valley the C A B was allotted a Government grant for the establishment of a Community Welfare Centre. On August 4, 1975, the Bureau transferred locations to share accommodation at 113 Main Street Greensborough with the

¹⁹ Minutes second Annual General meeting March 29, 1974.

²⁰ Minutes third Annual General meeting March 15, 1975

Early Childhood Development Complex. The building had been used as a doctor's surgery, and it offered a greater space to expand its C A B services, particularly in the areas of Marriage Guidance Counselling and family problems, which were prominent problems at this time. Total statistics for the period February to December 1975 were 1072 contacts (Telephone 687, Visit 384 and correspondence 1). These figures went beyond all expectations, clearly showing the Bureau's expansion and need, since it had opened in 1971.²¹This was also the time that funds became available to employ a Social Worker part time to co-ordinate the function of the Bureau, to provide a measure of professional backup support to the Bureau volunteer staff and to plan the development of in-service training.

The 4th Annual Report records that the Bureau considered the appointment of Mrs Elizabeth Smart as part time Social Worker (for a 12 month trial period, retirement expected in 1976) to be a valued contribution to the Bureau's future development. At this meeting the Bureau acknowledged the hard and valued work of Tom Sheppard who was retiring as treasurer. Tom was foundation treasurer who saw the Bureau grow and he left it with a good financial base for the future. At this time J. Poulter (D.V. Social Worker) resigned and was not replaced. Mrs Evans a part time Social Worker for E.C.D.C was employed for an extra eight hours per week which enabled her to carry the chronic multi-problem cases already in touch with Mr Poulter, but she was not to take any new cases. At this time a new system of recording was introduced by the Bureau whereby more detailed case records were kept.²²

In her first report to the Bureau, Elizabeth Smart writes that within a month, the role of the Bureau volunteers had changed appreciably. Previously clients were referred to appropriate agencies for help and expectation was that counselling/casework would be done elsewhere. Now, volunteers were part of the welfare system offering an ongoing service. More clients were coming for help and it became clear that a referral alone was not possible. Mrs Smart went on to say that there were too few local facilities in this area; at times some form of crisis intervention could not be avoided. It was important that follow up contacts had to be made, which was practically impossible with the current system.

August 1975 became a period of adjustment and change, so clients seen that month would be included in the following report. Because of an increase in problem calls from the Bundoora area, from February 11, 1976, a Bureau interviewer would be on duty at the Bundoora Hall, 10am to 12 noon every Wednesday. This was a joint venture planned in conjunction with the committee organising "Contact". During this period under review a Welfare Officer was available at Eltham Municipal Offices to see clients with problems, where as there was no welfare worker at the Diamond Valley Centre.²³

²¹ 4th Annual Report 1976.(David.J.Wilkinson—chairman)

²² Ibid

²³ Social Worker Mrs Smarts report (Sept 1---Dec 24, 1975)

At the end of the fifth year in the operations, the C A B had achieved much, expanding the range of its services. The big leap forward was that now the Bureau was open most days of the week throughout the year. The number of calls received in the past year was a sixfold increase to that of the previous year. The volunteers were considerably more skilled and were more able to cope with increasingly difficult and sensitive requests for their help. This has not been managed unaided. In the Diamond Valley-Eltham Citizens Advisory Bureau Fifth Annual Report, thanks were extended to the Shires of Diamond Valley and Eltham for their co-operation and financial support.²⁴

At the retirement of Mrs Elizabeth Smart, Mrs Janneke Hall (1977) accepted the position of Social Worker (part time).²⁵

With the construction of the Greensborough Shopping Centre complex, the Committee of Management lobbied the Diamond Valley Shire Council to insert a proviso into the building permit allocating 1,000 square feet of space to community services at a peppercorn rent of \$1 per year. In 1978, Shop 201 became the premises of the DVECAB, to be co-shared with two other community agencies. In 1989 due to steady and continuing growth the Bureau took over sole occupancy of Shop 201, changing its name to better reflect the service provided and to align the agency with the peak body, Community Information Victoria (CIVic)²⁶

In Janneke Hall's first report (Dec 1978) it was noted that,

"From the time the Bureau moved to the new premises in the Greensborough Centre, the number of visits to the Bureau increased from an average of around 20 per month to over 70 (an increase of 35%)." All agreed that the expansion was largely due to Shop 201 being accessible to the public. The volunteers at the Bureau also noted that the types of queries asked by the public were more of a general nature, such as bus time tables/ train routes etc.²⁷ This demonstrated that there was a definite need for general public usage which pleased everyone. With this great expansion and interest in general, it was clear to all that the Bureau should employ a paid co-ordinator.

Jan Dodds (20 hours a week), a former interviewer, was appointed Co-ordinator of the bureau on the first of September 1979, for a period of 12 months. Jan's appointment was made possible by the Diamond Valley and Eltham Councils agreeing to seek funding under the FACS Information and Co-ordination Grant program. During Jan's appointment, the system was streamlined and improved. Statistics were examined more closely and more on-the-job administration and personal back-up for interviewers was provided, which increased morale, and involvement of interviewers experienced in training.

²⁴ Fifth Annual Report.

²⁵ Sixth Annual Report.

²⁶ Diamond Valley Community Support History.

²⁷ Social workers report December 1978.

At the end of Jan Dodd's 12 month term, Jo Osborne was appointed Co-ordinator.²⁸



Jo Osborne (pictured left), formally a teacher enjoyed three and a half years at the Bureau. During her time there Jo was part of upgrading the development of strategies for recruitment, training and support for younger volunteers. Jo said in an interview (23/9/2015) that she valued the involvement that she had with dedicated people like David Griffiths and Nikki Isaacs during her time as coordinator.²⁹

In the Annual Report 1979, President (C A B) Alan Anderson said a sad farewell and paid tribute to Social Worker Janneke Hall who joined C A B in 1977 and since that time had established a training ethos and program for interviewers that were equal if not better than other C A B's in Victoria. Janneke accepted an appointment with P.I.T. She was replaced by Nikki Isaacs.

Mr Anderson went on to say that he was sorry to say goodbye to Mrs Judith Anderson, who since 1971 had been a dedicated and hard worker, unashamedly committed to volunteers. Judith was a member of the first committee and helped to set up each department from finance to roster system. Judith at times held the positions of secretary and president. She was an active interviewer, and during 1979 she was appointed co-ordinator of Heidelberg C A B. Both ladies were wished well for the future.³⁰



The C o M were grateful at this time for the support given by the Diamond Valley Lions Club in erecting two phone booths in early 1978 and later transferring them to the new pilot boards for training purposes.³¹

²⁸ Eighth Annual meeting 1979.

²⁹ Interview by phone with Jo Osborne 23/9/2015.

³⁰ Eighth Annual Meeting 1979.

³¹ Seventh Annual Report 1978.

Hula McGregor Remembers.



Mrs Hula McGregor (pictured left,) joined the Bureau in the early 1970's and became a General Committee Member in 1978. She thought that the newly formed C A B sounded interesting and when she joined was very pleased to have Elizabeth Smart as the Social Worker. Hula said that the training was well done with everyone 'putting their heart and soul into the task.' She said that they looked

after problems such as domestic violence and family finance. There were light moments of fund raising, which gave everyone a laugh. Hula had always been involved in Community work. She worked with the children from Churinga for many years, served for 20 years voluntary work at the Heidelberg Courts and at Mont Park (section cutting). In her interview Hula said that there was a great bond between the volunteers, because they knew in their hearts that they were making a difference and helping some people in the community.³²

Interesting facts between 1972-1980.

- ❖ Since 1972, a total of 108 volunteers had been on roster at the Bureau.
- ❖ At any one time, there were between 26 and 36 on roster out of an interviewer force of between 40 and 50 people. The turnover remained reasonably constant with about 10 leaving yearly (for one reason or another) and being replaced by an average of 10 newcomers.
- ❖ There were always about 12 interviewers in training.
- ❖ Throughout 1979, Margaret Nichols (a former interviewer), provided a valuable one day a week counselling service.

All these events may seem trivial, but they were above all expectations when the Bureau first opened its doors to service the community.³³

³² Interview with Hula at her home in Greensborough March 2015.

³³ Eighth Annual Report 1979.

Growing Years 1980-1990

The 1980's began with enthusiasm and opportunism. This was mainly due to the new location which proved to be comfortable and convenient. The Bureau programs were 'full on' for both the volunteers and clients. There were now forty one volunteers on roster, six clerical volunteers and seven committee of management volunteers, clearly showing how badly this service was needed in the area. The Bureau began opening on Friday evenings from April 11 1980.

Due to the rapid growth of the Bureau, the Constitution had been re- drafted (change to the constitution to provide a more relevant and appropriate legislative framework for the 1980's).³⁴



The Legal Referral Service, initiated by Richard Tonkin (pictured left), who was one of the first family lawyers to become an accredited specialist under the Law Institute Specialisation Scheme, commenced on Friday May 2 1980. Richard Tonkin was ably assisted by fellow solicitors Peter Cleeland, Michael Webb, Mark Steele, Laurie Jamieson, Don Lampe, Doug Cole, John Beckwith, Peter Dedrich and Stephen Harris. There was one solicitor on duty on a Friday night, from 6pm to 8.30pm. There were some nights when the service was known to operate longer. Statistics showed that the Legal Referral Service saw 187 clients between May 2, 1980 and September 2, 1981 on a Friday night, with Family Law the major category, followed by taxation, rental and employment. An average of eight attended each session.³⁵ The Annual Report 1981-1982 reported "The Legal Referral Service—Use of this Service continues to grow. Two volunteer Solicitors are now on duty on a Friday night". It was found that the main problems continued to be Family Law, followed by taxation, rental and unemployment.³⁶ With a full diary each Friday night the C o M considered that the scheme was well worthwhile.

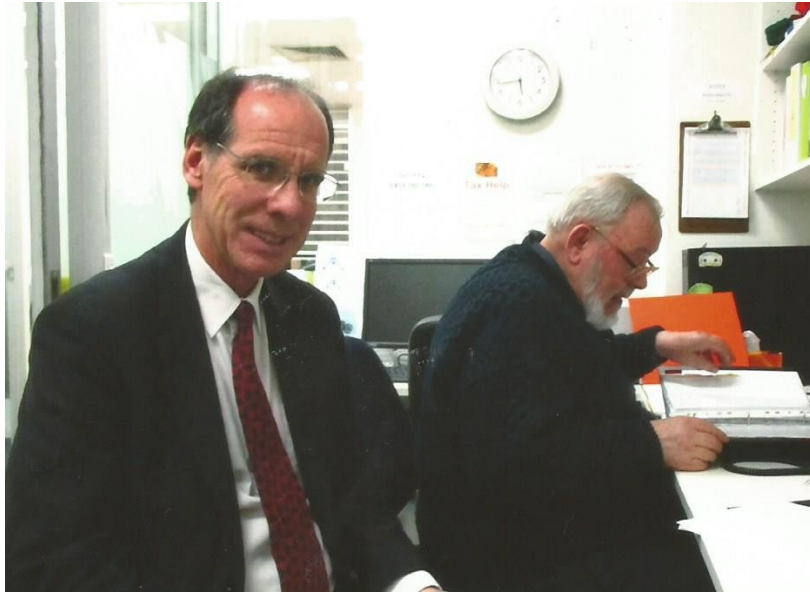
In 1983 the Legal Referral Service volunteer Solicitors decided to change their rostered night to a Thursday evening, beginning on March 8, 1983, 6pm to 8.30pm. This seemed to be more convenient for both clients and solicitors. The service continued to grow, peaking in 1993/94 at 598 clients.³⁷

³⁴ Ninth Annual report 1080/1981

³⁵ Annual Report October 1980-September 1981.

³⁶ Annual Report October 1981-September 1982.

³⁷ Annual Report 1993-1994.



Legal Volunteers Andrew Minahan and John de Koning at work (September 2015)

During June 1980, the Bureau had the services of a volunteer professional counsellor, Eve Lewis. The service was available on Mondays 9.30am—12 noon and Wednesdays 11.00am –2.00pm. Four of the six sessions were taken up by clients on a weekly basis and one on a fortnightly basis, a total of eight people receiving counselling. Committee member Sue Webb also undertook the task of providing an initial assessment of professional counselling services in the Diamond Valley and Eltham areas. (Eve Lewis resigned March 30, 1981).³⁸

In September 1981, a weekly session of counselling had been provided by psychologist, Chris Morgan from the Diamond Valley/Eltham Community Health and Welfare Centre at Eltham. The sessions were an opportunity for people to seek advice, support or referral from a psychologist in an informal, non-threatening context. No records or notes were taken so it was a completely relaxed atmosphere. This program was successful.³⁹

Bureau members were shocked at the sudden death of Committee Member Alan Anderson. Bill Rowe gave an accurate tribute at the 1981 Annual General Meeting, when he described Alan as a man of complete integrity and his contribution to the C A B and committee was invaluable. Condolences to former committee member Judith Anderson and their five children were extended by all.⁴⁰

The Bureau continued to operate an emergency financial relief fund in order to assist members of the local community who were undergoing financial hardship. However, significant changes had occurred in the funding, and the Bureau was often short on funds to meet the needs of the needy people. The C o M, through the Diamond Valley Council Community Chest were very grateful to

³⁸ Annual Report 1993-1994.

³⁹ Tenth Annual Report Oct 1981-Sept 1982.

⁴⁰ Annual General meeting Oct 28 1981.

receive the stall holders' fees from the Greensborough Community Market, (which was operated by a small committee of stall holders.) Although the demands on the relief scheme rapidly increased, several donations from individuals and local services helped to relieve the financial concerns at this time. The 1982-1983 Council allocation increased to \$3,000 which not only helped financially, but reflected the council's approval of the existence of the Citizens Advice Bureau in general.⁴¹

The Victorian Association Citizens Advice Bureau (V A C A B) invited the Bureau to become involved in a pilot program to establish a uniform method of statistics collection, so that the statistics could be used state wide. The statistics would be available to the government and other agencies, where they could show the short falls and the success of our system. After initial teething problems, the collection of statistics is now accepted as routine. With John Fitzmaurice and Robin Hore collecting and sending facts and figures to the V A C A B on a monthly basis.⁴²

The Bureau was happy to welcome two fully qualified Social Workers on a voluntary basis to do ongoing case work. Ms Eileen Hooper and Mrs Sue Gavan worked under the supervision of Social Worker Nikki Isaacs and Chris Morgan.⁴³

On January 27, 1984, the Bureau became incorporated under the Association Act 1981 according to the amendment of July 1983. The Bureau still retained registration under the Hospitals and Charities Act as a Benevolent Society.⁴⁴



On October 22, 23, and 24, 1982, the C o M paid host to the Third Annual State Conference with Gwyneth Terry (pictured left) as the Citizens Advisory Bureau Conference Convenor. The events were held at the Eltham Community Centre, and it was acclaimed by all as a great success. The theme for the Conference was "The Client" (reflecting the needs and views of the client). A great deal of the research and preparing work was done by the delegates in assessing the services provided. Areas were examined which could be improved for the persons asking for help, with the idea of expanding the services. Nearly all the sixty five Bureaus were represented, including a delegate from the A.C.T. Speakers from Self Help groups represented the "Clients", giving the receivers point of view which added to the debates. The Self Help groups also presented twenty displays which interested the delegates. The Swing Choir from Eltham College performed during the Sunday Morning session. Thanks were extended to Gwyneth Terry (who became President Victorian Association of C A B'S in 1988) for her

⁴¹ Eleventh Annual Report Oct 1981-1982.

⁴² Twelfth Annual Report Oct 1982-1983.

⁴³ Thirteenth Annual Report 1983-1984.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

wonderful organisation, and, to both Shire Councils for undertaking to pay the cost of hiring the Community Hall.⁴⁵

In her third and final term of office, Gwyneth Terry wrote in her Annual Report 1984-1985 that during the last twelve months there had been a change of paid staff. Co-ordinator Jo Osborne left to take up a position in Kew. Mrs Deidre Harrison was appointed as part time Coordinator. Social Worker Nikki Isaacs was also farewelled as she accepted a position at the Bundoora Extended Care Centre.

It was decided not to replace Nikki Isaacs's position, but instead to provide counselling staff from the Community Health and Welfare Service to work out of the Bureau each morning. They would be undertaking clients' case work each morning and providing support to the volunteer staff. This proved to be a positive arrangement for all concerned. It gave clients the opportunity of personal, family or marriage counselling at the Bureau, and the staff the opportunity of case discussions with professional staff.⁴⁶ A learning curve for all involved. A vote of thanks was given at this meeting to Mrs Audrey Mills, co-ordinator of the Greensborough Community Market and to those stall holders who help us in every way by giving relief to those in need.⁴⁷ A sad loss to the Bureau was the death of Mrs Nancy Gordon on July 17 1984 whilst holidaying with her husband in Scotland. Nancy worked conscientiously and gave her time freely to the Bureau for over 4 years.



1986 was a year when there was a re-shuffle of paid staff. This was mainly due to the resignation of Deidre Harrison in the January.

Avril Benson (pictured left) was appointed Co-ordinator in April 1986. To accept this position Avril had to stand down from her position on the C o M.

Due to the dissolution of the joint Shire Service, the professional support service provided from the Diamond Valley/Eltham Community Health and Welfare Services was drastically reduced during 1986. This was the time of careful budgeting to provide the services for needy people. Grateful thanks were extended to the Shires' representatives, Cr John Cohen and Cr Val Simpson for their support of C A B at this time.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Eleventh Annual Report 1981-1982.

⁴⁶ Fourteenth Annual Report 1984-1985

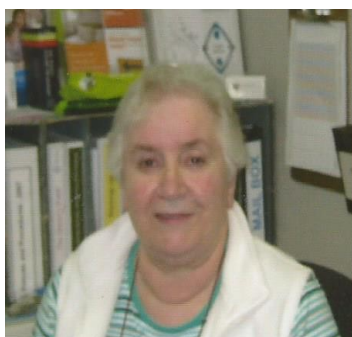
⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Fifteenth Annual Report 1985-1986

These four ladies began as volunteers in 1986—1987 all for different reasons, and are still active volunteers today. All ladies are life members and they all call it warmly “The Bureau”.



Anne-Marie Primmer (pictured left) began volunteering at the Bureau in 1986. As an active legal executive with a strong legal background she felt that she could give something back into the community. Anne-Marie says that she has always enjoyed each task, such as statistics, etc, that she has done during her time at the Bureau and values the friendships she has made while volunteering there. Anne-Marie is a busy person, cooking, decorating cakes and winning top show prizes. She also trains dogs.



Betty Matthews (pictured left) also began at the Bureau in 1986. Betty saw a small advertisement in the local paper for volunteers. But the wrong phone number was printed in the advertisement. Betty persisted and managed to find the correct number. Betty found the training was helpful and used every day to help people who came for help. Betty took over from Robin Hore as Roster Secretary and continued that task for 20 years, and she served as a member of the C o M for many years.

Both Anne-Marie and Betty were part of the statistics team.



Former Primary School teacher Benita Ewings (pictured left) started volunteering with the Bureau in 1986. Benita began with the Bureau by chance, when a friend suggested that volunteering at the Bureau could be “just the place for you”. Benita soon found out that it was. Asked why? The answer promptly came back, “it has helped me to understand others’ needs, as I have always had the desire to help people.” When not at the Bureau, Bonita is busy as a leader at the B.S.F Bible Studies.



Joyce Mc Namara (pictured left) began at the Bureau in early 1987. Joyce found a gap in her life when her mother died, She saw the advertisement in the local paper, and drew her daughter’s attention to it. Daughter Lynette said “give it a go Mum”, Joyce replied “I can’t do that”. But she did and has enjoyed each roster. Joyce ended by saying that she feels satisfaction that she has been able to help people who need help and support.

President's report in the 1987- 1988 Annual report showed that with the increase in enquires and general growth of the Bureau, the committee had to look at increasing the hours of paid staff to provide continuity of the service. Consequently, the Co-ordinator's hours were increased from 20 hours to 30 hours a week. Because of the increased hours, Avril Benson resigned from her position as Co-ordinator (April 1988) to spend more time with her husband who had just retired. However Avril continued to give her time volunteering at the Bureau and accepted the task of Promotions Officer.⁴⁹



Mrs Janet Oppy (pictured left), was appointed Co-ordinator (April 18 1988), and Mrs Judith Jennings as Information Officer. During a recent interview via email Janet said that "in the ten years that I was Co-ordinator there were many changes in the types of enquiry, the most noticeable being an enormous increase in Emergency Relief requests. Other services that came and went over the time were housing services, counselling, legal advice, tax help, youth services and employment services."⁵⁰ Mrs Oppy laughed when she said that she originally walked in the doors of the Bureau having recently moved from New Zealand. She required information about local Kindergartens for her daughter. Mrs Oppy was very impressed with the welcome and the organised administration she decided to join.

The Bureau welcomed Patricia Ferguson (Family Therapist), who began to work on Friday afternoons as a general counsellor in July 1988, and farewelled Dr Janet Hall (Psychologist) who had worked half a day a week for the past 12 months who resigned in September 1988. Thanks were extended to Janet for her wonderful work.

Diamond Valley Council correspondence, offered the Bureau "a permit for Lot L P 127763 Para Road to use part of an existing decked car parking building erected thereon for the purpose of a Community Sunday Market". Stall holders paid \$6.00 a day from 9am to 1pm to begin Sunday, April 12, 1989. This was discussed at the C o M meeting February 8, 1989, and accepted with thanks to the Diamond Valley Council.⁵¹ Except for public holidays and an occasional partial closure, the Bureau was open continuously from 9.30am to 4.pm daily, from Monday to Friday for both visits and telephone calls. A telephone answering machine was connected for out of hour's calls, referring the caller to Lifeline in case of an emergency.

Ten year certificates were awarded to Judith Jennings and Doreen Laughton, and Life Membership to Richard Tonkin and Marjorie Rowe at the Annual meeting 1988-1989.⁵²

⁴⁹ Sixteenth Annual Report 1987-1988.

⁵⁰ Email 16/5/2025.

⁵¹ Committee of Management Meeting February 8, 1989.

⁵² Seventeenth Annual Report 1988-1989.

Consolidating Years 1991-2000

The President's report in the 20th Annual Report 1990-1991 began

, "This year stands out as a milestone in the Bureau's twenty years of service to the community, in that the recorded statistics of inquiries has broken the 10,000 barrier. Because of the excellent venue in the shopping centre we are able to provide information in the form of pamphlets outside the Bureau for those people who wish to browse and not necessarily enter the premises. This information is not recorded in the statistics, so that numbers will be higher than those recorded."⁵³

The Bureau began to be wider known; this was mainly due to the promotion and publicity officer, Aileen Whalley and a very strong enthusiastic team of helpers who organised display stalls at:-Alcohol and Drug Awareness week (August 1991) and Recreation Week (October 1991). As part of Senior Citizens Week an information stall was on display at the Senior Citizens Centre Greensborough (October 1991). Each display had the relevant information to match the subject and age groups.⁵⁴



Advertising Drug Awareness Week August 1991.

⁵³ Twentieth Annual Report 1990-1991.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

The Bureau received a 50% cut in funding from Community Services Victoria (C S V) in 1991. The income from the Greensborough Community Market stall fees not only provided much needed funds for Emergency Relief, but it is now the largest part of the Bureau income. The Bureau was also very grateful for the financial support from both Shires at this time.⁵⁵

Greensborough Community Market Pictures below



⁵⁵ Twentieth Annual Report 1990-1991

The Management Committee were very grateful to the market co-ordinator, Mrs Audrey Mills for her continuing commitment and energy in co-ordinating the market on behalf of the Bureau.⁵⁶

Records show that for the year 1991, enquires made to the Bureau totalled 11,474, an increase of 1,830⁵⁷ from the previous year. The category and needs of inquiries made it clear that during the early months of 1991 a budget service was needed in the area. The Bureau went into action, and four interviewing staff underwent training on helping people to manage their household budget. This service was not in conflict with Financial Counselling, but an extra service to help the community who need advice on their day to day living. Sometimes the state of the community's household financial affairs distressed the volunteers who felt helpless. It was noted that when the volunteers trained as Community Information Workers, they never envisaged that they would see the pain of a family's financial distress, or that so many people on pensions and benefits were finding it so hard just to survive. Thus they could also see in action the real need of the Bureau and how it was able to supply some help to community members when they could not get help elsewhere.⁵⁸



Rai Raimonne Mc Cutchan (pictured left) volunteered with the Bureau in 1991. She had worked as a school teacher and micro-biologist, so in her retirement, Raimonne felt that she still had some of her skills to give to community work. A music teacher friend suggested that helping at the Bureau might be the solution, and it was. Raimonne has seen many changes, from the card system to computers. She remarked that each change has shown forward thinking and made it better for volunteers and the community.



Long time volunteer and life member, Robin Bailey (pictured left) who began with the Bureau in 1992 retired in 2009. Robin was always willing to fill in when needed by the roster Secretary Betty Matthews. She also served on the C o M, as part of the Statistics Team and Tax Help. Everyone wished her a great retirement.

⁵⁶ Twentieth Annual Report 1990-1991

⁵⁷ Twenty First Annual Report 1991-1992.

⁵⁸ Twentieth Annual Report 1990-1991.

The Bureau celebrated twenty one years of service to the community on March 6, 1992. Many friends joined in to share a large birthday cake (pictured below) to mark the occasion. This was the moment when the group remembered those who had the vision to recognise the need for information and help in the community.⁵⁹



At the end of September 1992, the Bureau, after some budget saving, fulfilled a long dream to be able to purchase computers and to computerise the information file. Now the information was easier to update, and more easily available to share with other agencies, and to pass on information to the Shires. It also meant providing relevant up to date information to the public, and best of all, the duplication of information became unnecessary.⁶⁰ To add to this, there were great gains in the technology department in 1993 when the Bureau entered into an agreement with the Shire of Diamond Valley Community Services Department, to update the Database every three months. The advantage of this agreement was that the information was available from many outlets in the community. Everyone involved was optimistic that the new technology, although always a challenge, would provide a user friendly professional information service to members of the community.⁶¹

The Bureau for the first time offered Tax help to assist in completion of simple Tax returns for people on low incomes. Six staff underwent training by the Australian Taxation Office for this task, and although not a large number of clients attended, the Bureau members believed that this service was worthwhile. Statistics showed the success of the service when it only operated from 1.7.92 to 31.10.92 and sixty five clients took advantage of this service. This was proof that the service must continue⁶²

After six years of counselling on a Friday afternoon, Pat Ferguson resigned due to work commitments (February 1993.) In May 1993, the Bureau welcomed Megan Roberts from Eltham

⁵⁹ Twenty First Annual Report 1991-1992.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

Counselling Service on a voluntary basis. Megan provided counselling for all relationships and family problems, available on Monday afternoons. Megan resigned in 1994 and she was replaced by Lauren Smith.⁶³

Peter Leith from North East Migrant and Mature Age Employment Action worked from May 1993 as an outreach service on a Tuesday morning. This proved to be a successful support service at this time, with Peter contacting thirty five clients.⁶⁴

On December 12, 1993 the Diamond Valley Community Market made a less than dignified move (with two days notice) to its new location at Watsonia Railway Station Car Park. The hurried move was due to three major factors.

1. The major building works being carried out in the market's old location as a re-development of the Greensborough Shopping Centre. Huge dump trucks raced treacherously through the centre of the market. People watching were fearful that this situation was an accident waiting to happen.
2. Local shopkeepers complained that the market was competition for their Sunday trading.
- 3: There was never enough car parking.

The new site at Watsonia Railway Station was a challenge to all involved.

- The stall holders took up more room than was allotted to them by permit.
- The site was not market friendly; the surface was asphalt (hot in summer and cold in winter).
- There was no shelter from wind or rain.

However, most of the stall holders stayed positive and tried to be patient.⁶⁵

The market was moved back to its old location in Greensborough (which now had a part undercover section) in December 1996 to everyone's delight.⁶⁶

Over the previous two years, the uncertainty of the tenure at Shop 201 has been disrupting to say the least. The lease was to expire in March 1994, and as it was prime rental property, there were moments when the Bureau faced a change of location. Statistics showed that general inquiries in 1993-1994 were 1100 per month, and that the Bureau must be located at a place of convenience to the community. Eventually, and after long negotiations between Lend Lease (Greensborough Centre) and the Banyule Council, the Bureau was given permission to remain in its present location, much to Bureau members' relief.

⁶³ Twenty Third Annual Report 1993-1994.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Twenty Third Annual Report 1993-1994.

⁶⁶ Twenty Fifth Annual Report 1996-1997

The shop was completely refitted to the Bureau's specifications, with the cost shared between the City of Banyule and the Bureau. This was achieved to everyone's satisfaction.⁶⁷



Shop renovations in progress at shop 201. 1996. (Pictured above).

A major decision was made in 1995 to change the official name to Community Information Diamond Valley. This followed from the State Association changing its name to better reflect its role.⁶⁸

*Community Information
Diamond Valley*



Another major change at this time was the restructuring of the paid staff. For many years the positions of Co-ordinator and Information Officer were the only paid staff. As the Bureau increased its community service and programs the running of the agency became an unrealistic task. In 1995, the committee had a planning day to examine the work areas and their resourcing. The result of this meeting was to do away with the Co-ordinator's position and allocate the task in two new positions, Office Manager (Mrs Janet Oppy) and Development Manager (Mrs Judith Jennings). Heather Cutcliffe accepted the job of Development Manager.

News of the death of valued staff member Aileen Whalley who had been a tireless member of the Bureau for the past eleven years saddened the Bureau members. She was sadly missed by all who knew her.

⁶⁷ Twenty Fourth Annual Report 1996 (there was no 1995 report)

⁶⁸ Ibid.



The highlight of 1996-1997 was the official reopening by Julian Stock pictured left (former Chief Commissioner City of Banyule) of the refurbished premises at shop 201 Greensborough Shopping Centre. It was general agreement that grateful thanks be extended to the City of Banyule and Lend Lease for their support which enabled CIDV to maintain its high profile position within the shopping complex: and also thanked them for the contributions they both made to the refurbishing costs. This was a great time of remembering their humble beginnings with \$4.42 in the bank and looking forward to the future of helping the community.⁶⁹

Newly refurbished shop 201. (pictured below)



Heather Chapman, (pictured left) replaced Heather Cutcliffe as Development Manager in December 1997. Heather Chapman was particularly successful at training the volunteer staff and she was known for her cheerful presence. She contributed a great deal of time as a volunteer interviewer, member of the C o M and Development Officer. When Heather resigned to go on to her new job at court network, she was wished her well in her new venture.⁷⁰ On leaving the Bureau, Heather Chapman recommended that instead of two part time positions of Office Manager and Development Officer, there be one full time position of Manager. The C o M agreed that this was in the best interest at this time.⁷¹

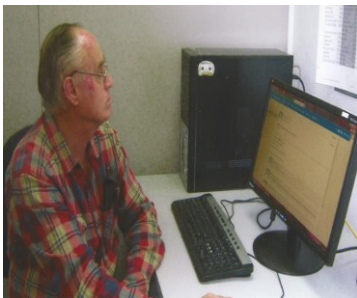
⁶⁹ Annual Report 1997

⁷⁰ Twenty Sixth Annual Report 1998.

⁷¹ 25 Years of Information in The North East Annual Report 1998.



Joy Skellern (pictured left) arrived in Australia from New Zealand in 1988. Her father was working in the C A B in New Zealand and that's where her interest began. Joy was on probation at C A B Greensborough when her father came for a visit where they met Gwyneth Terry, Janet Oppy and Judith Jennings; they all had a good chat. The year was 1996. Since then she has been President for 4 years, Secretary for 2 years, and on the C o M for eleven years. Joy still enjoys working occasionally at the Bureau and says that the fellow Bureau volunteers have always been friendly and it has been wonderful to have been able to help the community.



Trevor Wilson, (pictured left) was looking for volunteer work in 1998 after he retired from working as an analytical chemist. Trevor lives locally and he says that enjoys the networking that is part of some of the tasks at the Bureau.



Volunteer at the Bureau since 1998, Lorna George (pictured left) is a local lady who has always enjoyed helping people. Lorna remembers the time of joining because her father had become ill and she was doing a University course. Lorna had to give up her University course, and she thought to keep her brain active that she could volunteer at the not so old C A B. Lorna says that every day that she is on duty is different. She still loves turning up on roster.

Margie Hammond (pictured right) is another volunteer who began with the Bureau in 1998. Margie initially heard about the C A B when she worked with Lorna George's daughter (Melanie) at Open House Ivanhoe. Margie says that the best part, is to be able to help people, and the worst is seeing people in need. Margi still does a roster at the Op Shop.





Whole hearted thanks were extended to Mrs Judith Jennings (pictured left) who retired on July 23, 1998 for health reasons. After being a volunteer interviewer, Judith became Information Officer in 1988. She did a magnificent job organising all the Bureau's information using the McIntyre indexing system, an enormous task, and later went on to computerise the information to 'Comlink'. Judith was very hard to replace and she earned the respect from both volunteers and paid staff.⁷²



In April 1998, Janet Oppy (pictured left) left the Bureau after 15 years. Janet volunteered as an interviewer for the first five years. She worked in the positions of Co-ordinator, then Office Manager, going on to become Information Manager (part time). Tributes flowed about the big hole that Janet left when she left. The agency owed Janet Oppy a huge debt of gratitude for her work and her absolute commitment to the community and staff.⁷³



The position of Manager was advertised in January 1998 and was offered to Ms Patricia Lauria, (pictured left)) who joined the Bureau on April 14, 1998. Patricia came highly recommended from the Darebin Community Legal Service where she had worked as Administrator for the past two years. Prior to that appointment Patricia had valuable experience as a Counsellor, Community Development Worker and Co-ordinator at various agencies.⁷⁴ Patricia resigned in January 2000 to further her social work career.



Dina Biancotto (pictured left) was born in the Netherlands where the family found post war Netherlands 'bleak'. Dina's family decided to immigrate to Australia for a better way of life. Dina was 17 years. She worked in administration at LaTrobe University and retired from there in 1999. The same year, finding herself at a loose end, Dina 'found' the C A B Greensborough through the shop at Greensborough shopping centre, and has enjoyed the fact that she was able to help people. Dina is an active volunteer, mainly helping at the Op Shop.

⁷² 25 Years of Information in The North East Annual Report 1998.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Twenty Seventh Annual Report 1990.

The year 1999, saw a change of name from the Diamond Valley Community Market to Greensborough Community Market. It also celebrated its twenty first year of operation. Those who could remember, the market that started in a hilly, dirt paddock and after some challenges had developed into an indoor/outdoor all weather market able to operate all year round.

Audrey and Bill Mills who organised the market from day one decided to retire. Both Audrey and Bill were missed as their presence had always been reassuring to all over the years. Everyone wished them a happy retirement.

The most important development during 1998-1999 was the reorganisation of paid staff.



Greensborough Community Market 1995

Challenging Years 2000-2010

This was a time of lots of changes and challengers which kept both office bearers and volunteers busy.

The Bureau welcomed Marian Weaving (pictured right) as new Co-ordinator in March 2000. Marian, who had worked as a volunteer for about eighteen months and was familiar with the workings of the Bureau, just slid into the position without any trouble.



During this time the needs for Emergency Relief leapt dramatically, mainly due to the steep increase in household utilities (gas and electricity) and school fees and uniforms. With funds running low, the Bureau relied heavily on support from local organisations. Acknowledgements and grateful thanks were extended to the excellent work done by Food Share (Greensborough and Eltham) and its volunteers.⁷⁵

These projects from other agencies were fully supported by the Bureau.

- ❖ Volunteers of Banyule piloted an ancillary service in November 2003.
- ❖ Victims Assistance Outreach Program commenced in March 2004.
- ❖ The “Centre Voice Project” which was a joint initiative of Banyule City Council and Nillumbik Shire Council that was funded by the Department of Human Services. “Centre Voice” addressed youth issues around the Greensborough Plaza and Main Street by building relationships and understanding between young people and the broader community. The project was successfully launched at the Greensborough Plaza with the theme “Getting People Together”. To carry out this project for CIDV, Vicki Wells was employed as the Youth Access and Information worker for a period of eight months.⁷⁶

Each of these programs was successful at the time, and the CIDV felt some sort of satisfaction at being part of the wider community.

Sadly, Carmen Taylor, a much valued member of the Information Team passed away. Carmen had worked at C I D V for over twelve years, both as an interviewer and information worker. Carmen’s optimistic and gentle natured presence was missed by all.

⁷⁵ Annual Report 2001.

⁷⁶ Annual Report 2004-2005.



Richard Duffy (pictured left), accepted the job of Development Manager in 2000. Richard worked tirelessly, converting the data base system to streamline the Bureau's technology⁷⁷ He retired in 2002.

Caroline Watson replaced Richard Duffy in 2002. She accepted a new position in 2005 taking the best wishes of everyone with her



Cheryl Bahen (pictured left) became interested in the Bureau when she saw an advertisement for volunteers in the local news paper, and began volunteering on the year 2000 and she is still an active worker. Not only does Cheryl work a weekly roster at the Bureau office, also she has been the roster secretary for the OP Shop since it opened in December 2013.



When Gemma Sprague (pictured left) retired from the nursing profession she felt that she had been given so much help from the community in the past that she wanted to 'give some back'. Gemma and her husband Brian and children had always lived in the Greensborough. The children had gone to local schools and she loved the area. So volunteering in the Greensborough area was 'just for her'. Gemma walked through the doors of the Bureau in the year 2004 and she has enjoyed every day of volunteering. She also works on a roster at the OP Shop and is the secretary of C o M .



Astrida Radeck (pictured left) was born in Latvia and came to Australia in 1949, spending her first years at the Bonegilla Migrant camp. Astrida's parents did not speak English and she can remember the hardships of being a refugee. There was plenty of poverty for the family in those days, but Astrida said that there was always love within the family, for which she is truly thankful. Astrida went into the nursing profession and on retiring she joined the Bureau in 2001, because she felt that having such a background that she might be able to help someone.

⁷⁷ Ibid.



Former State School Principal John Blackman (pictured left) retired in 1994, and was looking for some community work to do. John joined a Walking Club and then met Jo Osborne (former Bureau coordinator) who suggested that he might be interested in the voluntary work that the Bureau. John took to it like a duck in water. He became part of the Tax Help and Legal areas of the community work and latterly helped to construct the operations of the Opp Shop. John joined the Bureau in 2003. John's wife Judy is a volunteer supervisor at the OP Shop

Sonia Gilderdale (pictured right) retired in 2002, and began to look for an interesting useful voluntary job to do. She found it at the Bureau. Sonia had management experience and administrative skills so that she was glad to broaden her base at the Bureau. She said that she liked to be able to help people and see good results. Sonia also works at the OP Shop



Hatrice Kurtoglu (pictured right) began working as a Counsellor in 2003 on a Tuesday, 10am to 12 pm. Hatrice provided counselling for clients with various psychological and personal problems such as depression, anxiety, behavioural problems, and drug and alcohol abuse. Hatrice resigned in 2006 to take up a permanent position with another organisation.⁷⁸



One of the major advantages of being a small, locally based community organisation is the ability to both listen and respond quickly to community needs. This ability was highlighted during 2002 by the extension of hours of operation to include Saturday mornings and by the addition of two new ancillary services *Gamblers Help* and *North East Housing Service*. Saturday morning opening was welcomed by the clients, in particular those who work throughout the week.⁷⁹

In 2003 Patricia Butcher was welcomed as the new Bookkeeper.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Annual Report 2005-2006.

⁷⁹ Annual Report 2001-2003.

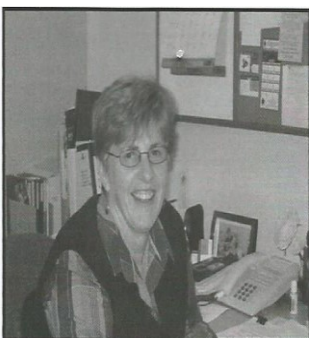
⁸⁰ Annual Report 2002-2004.

Rita Barnes (pictured right) had many years of volunteering at Glenroy Community Information Centre before she began at the Bureau in 2004. Rita became a temporary member of the staff part time when Marian Weaving contacted her to keep the data base current when Caroline Watson was on sick leave.⁸¹ Rita on the State Wide Data Base and a volunteer at Glenroy Community Information Centre for many years had no trouble at all in 'filling in'. Rita became the permanent Information Officer in 2007, and she has seen many changes in her job, but she takes it all in her stride and makes the information and transition as easy as possible for all concerned.



Helen Besley,(pictured left) retired from T A F E after 17 years service and she was looking for an interesting volunteer job. The year was 2001. Helen met Robin Bailey who suggested that the Bureau could be the answer, and it was..Helen was pleased that she was able to bring some of her skills to help the community. Helen became a trainee for the group in Eltham, and she is still an active volunteer at the Bureau.

In January 2006 Marian Weaving was offered and accepted the opportunity to return to full-time University study to complete her degree. Her resignation was received with regret.



Anne Lockett (pictured left) accepted the position of coordinator, beginning in April 2006.⁸² While at the Bureau, Anne was well aware of the community family needs. The report below reinforces her concerns. Anne Lockett resigned after seventeen months at the Bureau because her husband had retired and they intended to travel in their retirement years.

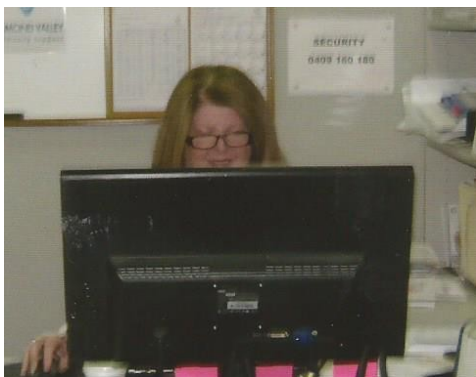
⁸¹ Annual Report 2003-2004.

⁸² Annual Report 2006.

Anne Lockett in her annual report 2007 states.

Community Information Diamond Valley receives funding for Emergency Relief Program from the Federal Government Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The Magistrates' Court of Victoria also supplies funds from the Heidelberg Magistrates Court which are used to support the emergency relief work. CIDV supplies some additional funds (from management of the Greensborough Community Market) and still the amount is never enough. The "Back-to-school" program is always being utilised to help families faced with financial hardship when school resumes each year. Telstra provides vouchers to assist low income people with phone accounts. An Emergency Relief Sub-committee (Trevor Wilson, Astrida Radek, Cheryl Bahen and Betty Matthews) met regularly throughout the year to discuss and amend the procedure for emergency relief.⁸³

Angela Snow, (pictured right) had already been volunteering at Kew, where Anne Lockett was manager. Anne suggested that as Angela was already trained, that she may like to transfer to the Greensborough office. Angela began volunteering at Greensborough in 2006 and has been President of the Committee of Management (C o M) since 2009.



In June 2007, Anne Tattersall (pictured left) was asked by Angela Snow (President of C o M) to volunteer for administration assistance one afternoon a week to update brochures, policies and procedures. When Anne Lockett and Caroline Watson both resigned at the same time, Anne was asked to take over the running of the office as part time coordinator. Anne's background is as a P.A. in advertising

At the Annual general Meeting President Trevor Wilson announced that Vicki Wells would be (working four days a week) would be taking over the role of Co-ordinator from October 1, 2007. Vicki had a good understanding of the role that she had accepted, because she had been working as a volunteer since 2000. For the first time since it began in 1980, the future of the volunteer legal service looked uncertain. The Annual Report 2007 said that the number of volunteer

⁸³ Annual Report 2006-2007 (separate document)

Solicitors was decreasing and it was harder to fill a weekly roster. The 2009 Annual Report showed that there were not enough volunteer Solicitors to carry on at C A B Greensborough and clients were sent to West Heidelberg Community Legal Service and Banyule Support and Information Service. Bureau members were relieved that the situation did not last long and the C A B Greensborough legal service began again in April 2009. ⁸⁴

Both Anne Tattersall and Rita Barnes, who were occupying the Administrative Officer and Information Co-ordinator positions on a temporary basis during the interregnum, were made permanent part time with new position descriptions written better to reflect both their duties. ⁸⁵



Peter Kahane (pictured left) began working as a volunteer personal counsellor at the beginning of 2007. He set up the consultations that have continued, ranging from a 'one off' to ongoing of 6 months periods. Some of the clients had depression and anxiety, while other had deeper problems which needed help. Peter retired from his position at the Bureau in December 2009 to set up his own business. He returned in May 2010, not being able to work full time. Peter is still involved in the Bureau as a member of the C o M.

With the new building developments in the Greensborough area, the Greensborough Market was once again asked to move. After a few meetings, it was scheduled to be moved to War Memorial Park Greensborough. After much discussion with the stall holders' it was considered that the area would be far too small, let alone allow for growth. On the first Sunday in September 2008, the Greensborough Market began operating at its present position at Car park 1 and 2 of La Trobe University Kingsbury Drive Bundoora. Market Managers were Chris Natoli and Colin Davis (pictured right).

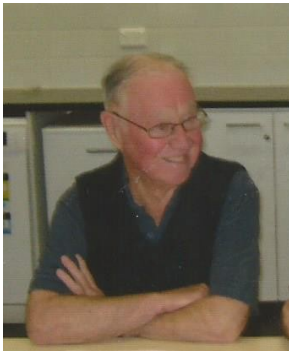


Special thanks were extended to Patricia Butcher who had been working as a bookkeeper without a Treasurer for some time. ⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Annual Report 2007.

⁸⁵ Presidents Report Annual Report 7/8.

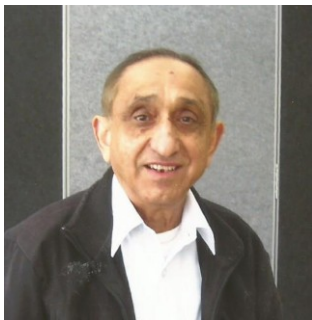
⁸⁶ Annual Report 2007.



At the 2008 Annual General Meeting The Bureau was pleased to welcome new Treasurer, John Gluyas (pictured left),⁸⁷ John was no stranger to the Bureau, he had already been part of the Tax help program. Figures had always been a big part of John's life, from working in the family news agency to working as a public accountant. John and his wife Pat lead a very busy life with their church activities. John also plays tennis and the flute.



Willi Raab (pictured left) was born in the Netherlands and arrived in Australia in 1954. After she retired from employment Willi was interested in doing some kind of volunteer work. Willi's neighbour Gemma Sprague supplied information about volunteering at the Bureau. Typical to her character Willi said to herself "I will give it a try", which she did. The year was 2008 and she is an active volunteer and still enjoying every moment of each roster.



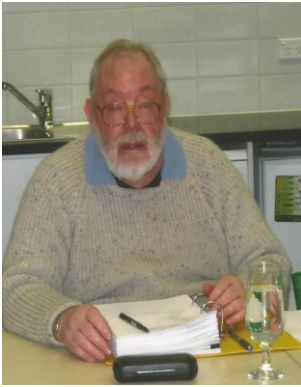
Ratilal Pranjivan (pictured left) was born in India, moving to Fiji at the age of nine in 1954. The family then decided to move again, this time to Australia, arriving in September 1995. Ratilal had a history of community work, he always liked helping people. When he retired from the retail business, he walked past shop 201 at the Greensborough Shopping Centre, stopped and walked in. Ratilal enjoys the voluntary work in both the office, the OP Shop and being a C o M member

Co-ordinator Vicki Wells moved on at the end 2008 when she and her family went to live in Woodend.



Colin Macklin (pictured left) replaced Vicki Wells as the new Co-ordinator, beginning in February 2009. Colin's mother migrated from Scotland in 1961 and married his father, where they farmed at Arthurs Creek before coming to Watsonia in the mid-sixties. The family later settled in the Greensborough area. Colin attended the Watsonia High School. He knew everyone in the area, from members in bowling, cricket, and tennis clubs. Colin had a great network. In no time at all he was familiar with the workings of the Bureau.

⁸⁷ Presidents Report Annual Report 7/8.



John de Koning (pictured left) was born in Holland and he came with his family to settle in Melbourne in 1956. John studied Law at Melbourne University, passing his Law Degree with Honours. In August 2009, Colin Macklin, (because Richard Tonkin who had looked after the Legal Service had retired,) asked John if he could sort out the Legal Service for the Bureau. John said that it took some time, but he enjoyed doing it. John went on to be trained as a volunteer interviewer. John is still an active solicitor and also a member of the Board of Management

DIAMOND VALLEY
community support



In 2010 there was a name change from Community Information Diamond Valley to Diamond Valley Community Support, to reinforce that the Bureau had become more than just an information service.⁸⁸

One of the services provided for free public use was the computer access room in shop 201. The room contained six computers which allows basic pc, email and internet access. The room was open from 9.30 am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Each person was allowed one hour. The user signed in and was asked their post code number, to help with statistics. Many students used the room to type their essays. Prints were processed at a small charge.⁸⁹



(Pictured left) The public working in the 'free to the public' computer room in shop 201.

⁸⁸ Annual Report 2011.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Into the Future 2011-2015

Tammy Nates (pictured right), (Information Volunteer) since 2010 faithfully collects database information for the information data base. Tammy makes sure that the information given to the clients is correct.



Christine Martin (pictured left) began at the Bureau in 2011. Christine had lived in the local area for many years and on retiring wanted to contribute something back to the community. Volunteering at the Bureau gave her an opportunity to use the skills and experience that she had acquired over the years of employment. Christine also works at the OP Shop

2012 became a busy time of expanding programs. The Bureau now offered personal counselling with two volunteers, Lorel Wall and Mary Hamilton. They brought with them an experienced supportive approach that benefitted numerous clients. Another addition to the programs was Charmaine Perera, who began as the Employment Counsellor; assisting clients write their resumes, and even holding mock interviews to help both young and old unemployed people. Charmaine retired to have more time with her family and was replaced by Donna Brown who continued to encourage those needing confidence and help at this time.

Special thanks were extended to accounts coordinator Belinda Green who retired in 2012, and welcomed new accounts coordinator Kellie Preston (pictured right).



The Legal Service was well used on a fortnightly basis serving one hundred and forty clients for the years 2011/2012.⁹⁰

Margaret Taggart began with the Bureau in 2013. Margaret's desire to help the community in some way was the reason for walking through the door of the Diamond Valley Community Support. When asked "What is the best part?" Margaret was quick to reply "A grateful smile after being able to help someone is really heart warming." She went on to say that the wonderful staff was so giving of their time and she loves being part of it all."

⁹⁰ Annual Report 2012.



The Bureau was well represented at the funeral of Gwyneth Terry OAM, JP, (pictured left) who died on June 14, 2013. The funeral at St John's Anglican Church Diamond Creek was held on June 21st. Being a staunch Welch woman, Gwyneth had requested that part of the service be said in her own Welsh language. Gwyneth served the Bureau well, bringing in changes and reforms where they were needed for many years.

She was also a Life member.



One of the very important programs offered to the community is that of Employment advisor. Szareena, (pictured left) who has over six years experience, volunteers once a fortnight to assist with resumes, cover letters and general advice on employment. This has been a valuable program to people both old and young. Szareena's family was always community minded and she is so pleased to give back any expertise to help people.

2013 saw a dramatic increase in the popularity of the Kingsbury Drive Community Market (once the Greensborough Community Market). Thousands of people attend each week; there were ninety permanent stallholders and fifty casual stallholders, as well as four stalls free of charge for local community groups. Buskers were present and welcomed to provide a regular source of entertainment. Colin Davis and his team were heartily thanked for their great effort since the market began.⁹¹



Following the success of the Community Market, the Diamond Valley Community Support decided to embark on a brand new idea to help future community developments. The new venture was to become the Opportunity Shop (OP Shop).

⁹¹ Annual Report 2013.

When Colin Macklin first raised the possibility of introducing a new way of funding, at the C o M meeting in 2011 (opened in 2013) he got the absolute attention from all present.

However, when Colin said that the idea was running an OP Shop, there was a hesitation in proceedings. The discussion began

Should we? Shouldn't we? Do we? Don't we? How and where? Where?

Some members of the meeting were sceptical, others were hopeful. Colin was positive.

Discussion took place for some time. It was then decided to create a Business Plan, which would identify the reasons for getting into such a venture. The big questions were 'will it be viable' and 'where will it be located'?

In May 2012, The C o M approved to undertake setting up an OP Shop in the surrounding area.⁹²

Before even finding a shop, a holding storage space for donations had to be found. Nillumbik Council was soundly thanked for providing a short term lease storage facility in a former Community Centre Civic Drive (which had not been used for some time). A working bee to clean the holding space had to be quickly arranged, and those taking part in this can vividly remember the refuse that had to be shovelled from some of the rooms. Over the next few months, donations came in thick and fast. Two volunteers were rostered for two mornings a week to accept and sort the donations. It was not long before the storage facility was full and it became necessary to find a suitable location to open the OP Shop.

Guest speakers at the Annual General Meeting September 19, 2012 were Marilyn Steele (Business Operations Manager Doncare) and Maria Brady (Coordinator for OP Shops, Doncare). Both ladies were very informative, and spoke about the highs and lows of operating OP Shops. They told of their beginning with one shop and they now have seven shops, all successfully running. There was time for questions, and both ladies answered, speaking with humour and general practicality.⁹³

Eventually, and after a lot of investigation into a suitable location for the OP Shop, premises were found at 44 Aberdeen Road Macleod. The shop was previously leased by a husband and wife, who sold fine china in the front of the shop, and tools at the back. The shop was in an excellent location, near the train station, school and kindergarten, and opposite the Macleod Park. The outlook was just right for volunteers to enjoy their voluntary work.

⁹² Committee of Management meeting may 2012.

⁹³ Annual General meeting 2013.

When the lease was signed for 44 Aberdeen Road Macleod in October 2013, it was soon found that there was a lot of organising to be done by opening day, December 1, 2013. Special thanks went to Paul Barnes and Gordon Reinecker for constructing change rooms and a front window bulkhead. Also to local painter, Vince Marino, who secured a sponsorship through Dulux to supply paint and materials. A team of dedicated volunteers painted the shop out in white and a counter and some fittings were obtained from EBay, clothing racks were donated by Savers. There was still more to do, but the OP Shop was ready to open its doors on December 1.⁹⁴

The launching of the shop in December 2013 by Councillor Tom Melican (Ibbot Ward, Banyule Council) was a huge success. Councillor Melican wished the volunteers and the shop every success when he cut the ribbon. Special thanks to David Ling and Andrew Minahan from Greensborough Rotary Club, who added flavour to the occasion by barbequing sausages (bought from the butcher next door.)



Colin Macklin, Councillor Tom Melican and Sonia Gilderdale at the launch December 1, 2013.

⁹⁴ Annual Report 2014.



Greensborough Rotary Club members service the people a B B Q. December 1, 2013.

All thanks should go to the OP Shop foundation committee consisting of D V C S Co-ordinator Colin Macklin, President Angela Snow, John Blackman, Cheryl Bahen (Roster Secretary), Phillip Middleton, Jill Keyte, Andrea Brazis, Joanne Adcock and Ratilal Pranjivan who were responsible for the initial forward planning.

Volunteer rosters of half a day, 3.5 hours, were organised each week day and Saturday mornings to sort donations and to serve the public. A Supervisor for each half day roster was trained for being in charge of the roster (looking after the security of the shop and being responsible for the banking etc). Each of the committee members took on the duties of being responsible for the various sections of the shop. For example, books, clothing, toys, home wares and other parts of the shop. The two front windows were changed often, not only to make them interesting, but, to work in with the seasons of the year (Easter, football, Mothers Day and Christmas. This seemed to add to the interest of the newly opened OP Shop.



OP Shop Window. Dressed for cooking for winter. December 2013



It was soon found that some of the local residents just came in to the shop to browse or just to chat.

Pictured left is Volunteer Diane Lonsdale chatting to a regular customer Keith (Ginger) Weedon.



OP Shop Volunteer Supervisor Joanne Adcock serving a customer.2013.



Volunteers helping at the OP Shop Andrea Brazis and Sonia Gilderdale 2013.

It was felt by the volunteers' of the Op Shop that, because the local Macleod shoppers were so supportive it would be nice to 'give something back to them'. The Committee of Management approved the buying of a defibrillator for the local shopping centre in case any health crisis should arise. The OP Shop supervisors have been trained how to use this equipment in an emergency.



Article from the Heidelberg Leader News paper, May 2014.

The OP Shop Committee have a meeting every two months. Any problems that may have arisen are discussed and ironed out. A news letter is printed to keep everyone up to date with its proceedings.

Other positives of the operation of the OP Shop.

- ❖ Valuable items are sold through eBay or auction.
- ❖ Some undergarments are donated to Samoa and Tonga.
- ❖ Spectacles are given to The Prevention of Blindness in Vanuatu via Living Faith Church, Greensborough.
- ❖ Blankets go to the Cat Protection Society.
- ❖ Goods not suitable for sale are donated to the Diabetes Foundation.
- ❖ Emergency relief is provided to clients referred by Diamond Valley Community Support. (Over 300 new ER clients had been helped in the first year of trading).
- ❖ Magazines are distributed to the local Nursing Homes.

President of the C o M, Angela Snow in her Annual Report 2012-2013, reported that with the financial success of the OP Shop provides extra funds. These included increasing the Back to School allocation per child, helping the Emergency Funds and allowing the Bureau to extend and operate new programs.⁹⁵

Centrelink approached the Executive Officer Colin Macklin to enquire if it was possible to place people on the Work for the Dole program and other Centrelink requirements at the Op Shop, as volunteers. It was explained to the Centrelink Management that, volunteers would be welcome if they followed the rules which the other volunteers agreed to. Example---That appropriate police checks and probationary period be adhered to. Any cost should be covered by Centrelink and the volunteer should keep all relevant paper work.⁹⁶

On July 31, 2015, the OP Shop was visited by a group from Kinglake Neighbourhood House to observe the workings of an ordinary day at an OP Shop. Supervisor for the day, Joanne Adcock and her fellow volunteers were very pleased to show the ladies around and have a cuppa with them afterwards.

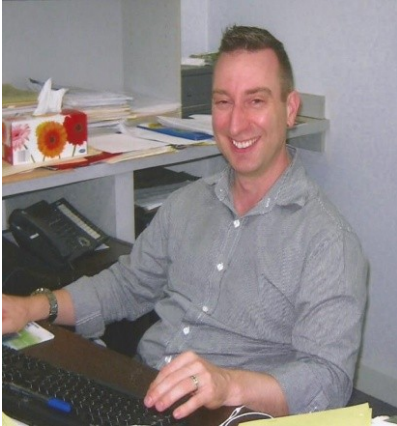
Volunteer Supervisor Joanne Adcock and Volunteer Dianne Lonsdale with the Kinglake Neighbourhood House group. July 31, 2015. (Pictured below).



⁹⁵ Annual Report 2013-2014

⁹⁶ Draft Amendment/addition to volunteer policy 23/4/2015.

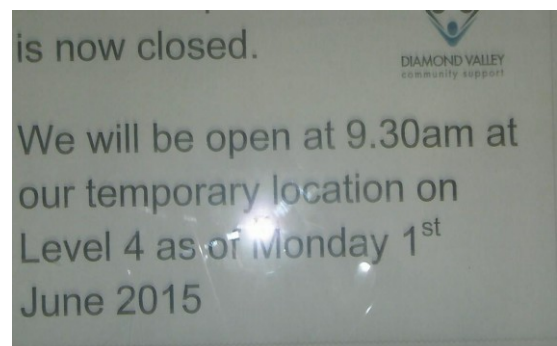
It was with deep regret, that Executive Officer Colin Macklin gave formal notice of resignation after five and a half years. Colin decided it was time for him and his family to move up north. All were sorry to see him go on July 31, 2014. Everyone wished him well and thanked him for all the great effort that he had put into the Bureau.



In September 2014, Sean Coleman (pictured left) was welcomed as the new Executive Officer. Sean had a background in working with the Children’s Hospital and the Melbourne Zoo. He came to the Bureau at a time of tumultuous insecurity when the Banyule Council in its wisdom decided that there should be a merger of three agencies. Sean tendered his resignation with regret from the Bureau after only 12 months He moved on to be the CEO of the Blue Ribbon Police Foundation. He was wished well at his farewell on September 18, 2015.

In early 2015, Greensborough Plaza Management approached the Bureau about a possible move to another location within the Greensborough Plaza. The management planned to repurpose Shop 201 as part of a family-friendly play area. As the Bureau had been located in their present area since 1996 and it was such a good position for community access, this came as a shock to the staff and volunteers. Greensborough Plaza offered two possible locations, which they were willing to pay and outfit for our community work. Neither locations were as convenient to the community or volunteers as Shop 201. Of course, nothing is ever as simple as it is promised, as the move went through two possible locations, multiple plans, several budgets and three weeks in a temporary location in the office area of level four. Finally the new premises on level three, was nearly complete, and it was all shoulders to the wheel for the big move to the present location in Shop 378a, level 3. All agreed that the new premises were hard to find but they were also grateful for funding the fit-out and providing the space.⁹⁷

Office Doors shut for the last time on Shop 201 May 29, 2015.



⁹⁷ Excutives Officers Report 2015.

The membership was saddened to hear of the death of long time volunteer John Hawkins in June 2015. John's wife Fay is carrying on the tradition volunteering at the OP Shop.

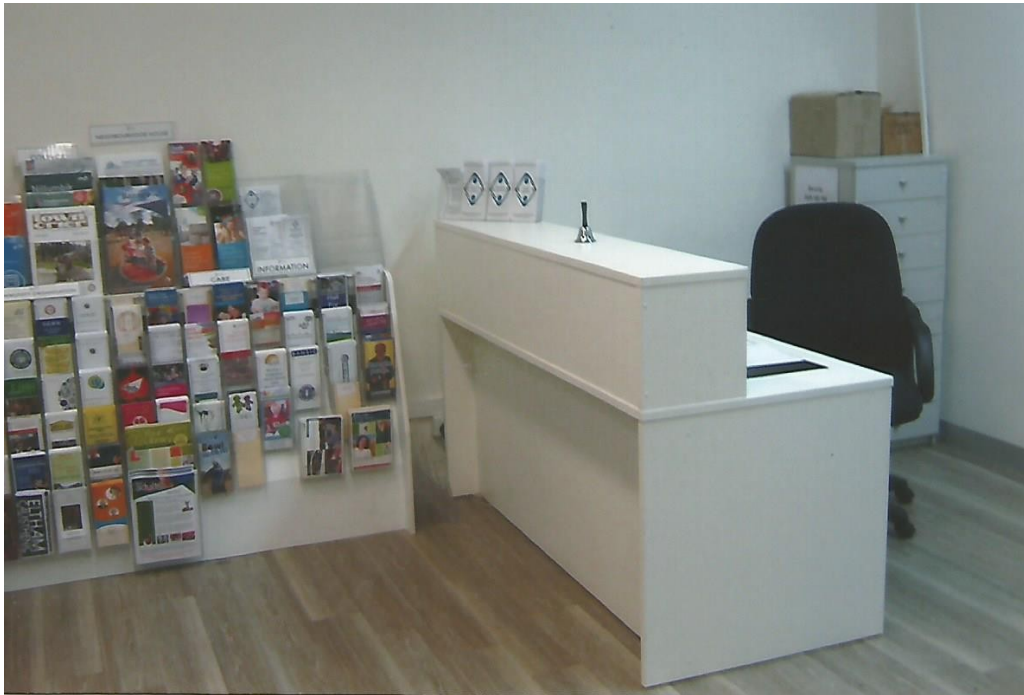


Rita and Paul Barnes with Kellie Preston “roughing” it at the temporary location, level 4. June 2015.



Rosie, Kellie, Gemma, Julie and Sean. Workers having a break in between moving office equipment June 2015.

Moved in at last.



Reception area of shop 378a level 3 June 2015.



Raimonne, Angela and Rosemary at the launch of new office shop 378a level 3.

July 9, 2015

Just to back track to 2013 (result 2015). During 2013, Banyule Council conducted a review (Janine Haddow Review) of the Banyule Support and Information Centre (BANSIC), North East Region Volunteer Service (NERVIC) trading as Volunteers of Banyule (VOB) and the Diamond Valley Community Support (DVCS), as is the current strategy for Councils, to conduct periodic reviews of agencies that they provide funding to. As independent associations, each agency participated in the review voluntary with good will.⁹⁸

Banyule City Council sought change in a number of ways: first is the need to provide a community information and support service at a proposed community hub in Heidelberg West as part of a plan to develop the community to become more self-sufficient and resilient: the second is the need to find different premises for BANSIC as it may no longer lease its current premises ; and the third is to consider ways of creating a more efficient and effective community information and support services system, including volunteer services within existing resources.⁹⁹

On May 19, 2014, two Banyule Council Officers (Giovanna Failla and Frances Gianotti) addressed a Committee of Management after their monthly meeting at 3pm. The two Banyule Council Officers spoke to the meeting about volunteering and how it had changed in recent years. They went on to say that for 'best practice' for the community, a merger for the three agencies would be for the advantage for all. It was explained to them by the Diamond Valley Community Support Inc CEO Colin Macklin that:

- ❖ Council still did not appear to have understanding of what D V C S actually did in particular it refers to information services and volunteer management, ignoring the major component of emergency relief.
- ❖ The quality, content and legality of the review document were vigorously criticised.
- ❖ There appeared to be no advantage for D V C S to go into a merger with the other two organisations, nor is it evident that any rigorous cost/benefit analysis had been done.
- ❖ D V C S was not in a position to enter any merger without seeking approval from its members.

In response, the Council Officers indicated that while they could not force D V C S into a merger, if it was refused the Council may consider removing funding and/or premises.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Community Information and Support Services Review for Banyule City Council and Nillumbik Shire Council.(November 2013).

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ DVCS Letter dated May 19, 2014.

To deliver the Banyule Council resolution recommended from the Review, three concurrent and significant projects were undertaken over the subsequent months.

1. The establishment of a Community Services Hub at shop 48 The Mall West Heidelberg (\$4000.000 Capital Works budget allocated in 2014-15).
2. The termination of the current lease by Council and occupied by BANSIC at 101 Burgundy Street Heidelberg from October 31, 2014.
3. The merger of the three agencies VOB, BANSIC and D V C S.

The rationale for determining West Heidelberg was The Mall specifically as the best location for an information services hub was in response to a number of drivers. In 2009 the Bell Street Design Framework (UDF) and Master Plan was adopted by Banyule Council (Resolution FPOC 23/11/2009) as the culmination of a comprehensive community consultation exercise. The Master Plan includes a proposed community hub, with the following principle guiding its development "The whole community will feel welcome and safe in a place that has been designed to enrich the community".¹⁰¹

This left the Committee of Management with a real dilemma of what would be best for the D V C S, which had been serving the Diamond Valley and Eltham area since 1972.

Banyule Council continued with their plan to take a lease and outfit Shop 48 (previously leased by Gilmore Shoes) The Mall West Heidelberg to house the three agencies and also a possibility of other volunteer or welfare organisations. It was anticipated at being completed by October 2015.



On February 2, 2015, Banyule Council held an Open Night, inviting the public, organisations and group to view the plans arranged to accommodate the Volunteer Organizations at shop 48 The Mall West Heidelberg.

Picture left shows interested public viewing plans. (2/2/2015).

This was a time of uncertainty for all three organisations. There were so many meetings held to try for an outcome that would best suit all and also a resolution of the merger. President Angela Snow, Treasurer John Gluyas (Executive) with wise words from the Legal section of D V S C John de Koning were the main attendees at these meeting. They managed to allow D V C S to keep its presence at the Greensborough Shopping Centre, but that the main office would be at The Mall West Heidelberg. No one in the three organisations was happy with the outcome and each meeting was less successful

¹⁰¹ Banyule Council Agenda September 7, 2015. Item 52.

than the last. It was a stressful time for all. After months and months of trying to negotiate the merger situation it became obvious that the merger was 'no longer viable or possible and not in the future interests of D V C S '.

Banyule Council decided to put the merger to the Tender process.¹⁰²

Banyule Council resolutions at Council meetings September 14, 2015 (deferred) and the September 21, 2015 Council meeting recommended that:-

**Recommendation 4. Confirm continuation of community information and support service delivery from the existing Greensborough location by the existing service provider Diamond Valley Community Support (D V C S).
Carried unanimously.**

It was recommended and encouraged by Banyule Council that D V C S could enter into the Tender process. This was firmly declined at the following C o M meeting.

BANSIC and VOB had no other choice but to enter into tender process to continue their services.

Tributes must be paid to the hard working C o M Executive Angela Snow, John Gluyas, Sonia Gilderdale, Peter Kahane, and John de Koning, Committee members John Blackman, Gemma Sprague, Ratilal Pranjivan and Rosie Bray at this time for a good outcome.

The Banyule Council will ask for another review in three years time (2018).

Programs and events at the D V C S formally the C A B did not 'just happen'. They were organised and planned by a dedicated staffing team composed of paid staff, volunteers and C o M members.

A tribute must be made to those past and present. Thank you all so much.



(Pictured left) Members of the 2015-2016 C o M Back- Rosie Bray, John de Koning. Front- John Gluyas (Treasurer), Sonia Gilderdale (Vice President), Gemma Sprague (Secretary) Absent- Angela Snow (President) Ratilal Pranjivan, Peter Kahane.

December 2015.

¹⁰² Banyule Council Agenda 14 and 21 September 2015 Items 5.2 and 5.3.

Friendships

Since 1971, volunteers of each gender and from all walks of life joined the Diamond Valley/Eltham Citizens Advice Bureau now called Diamond Valley Community Support for different reason. Some had just retired; others were looking to pass on their professional skills, whilst a few were just plain inquisitive. However when interviewed most people said that the friendship made and the camaraderie between the volunteers made the highs and lows the focal point of their rosters.





Epilogue

“From little things big things grow” wrote song writer Paul Kelly and this was the case with the Citizens Advice Bureau from the first meeting on April 16, 1971. There was an offering taken at this meeting which resulted in \$4.42. The 50 plus people could see that there was need for an organisation to help people who, were either too proud to ask for help or, had ‘fallen through the cracks’. That need is still alive and well in the Diamond Valley districts and the Greensborough D V C S continues to operate to try to alleviate any poverty or distress in the area.

I became involved with the Bureau in 2000, when Marian Weaving asked me to be volunteer publicity officer. This was probably because I had just retired from 12 years with the Diamond Valley Leader writing the local news. I soon discovered that the Bureau publicity was well covered and I said so. Marian replied “Well, stick around and become a net work volunteer” (what ever that is,) and so I did. I became a member, and I was elected to the C o M (2009) and I have enjoyed all involvement with the D V C S.

I have written this book in decades, researched and footnoted the files faithfully so that this document gives a truthful history of the C A B. I would like to thank those people who encouraged me to write this history and those who I have badgered for information and photos (you know who I mean). If there is anyone that I ‘left out’ please forgive me, because I know that there were many more volunteers that made the Bureau what it is today.

When I began to collect the information for The History of Diamond Valley/Eltham Citizens Advice Bureau INC I found the going ‘hard’ to say the least, but as I began to interview the volunteers it all became clear. Why? Well, each volunteer without exception have given their time to help the community and not for themselves. And I am so proud of them all.

Many thanks to Val and Murray Newman, Sonia Gilderdale and Anne Tattersall for their wonderful job of proof reading and advice.

And to Joanne Adcock’s daughter Meagan Beck for Editing. I can’t thank you enough.

May the D V C S continue its valued work in the Greensborough area and go on from strength to strength.

Rosie Bray

December 2015.