

# PASSING THE BATON



My time in leadership at Open House is coming to an end. This will be my last year.

I see that Open House is moving into a new era; very exciting full of opportunities and challenges. I see that a new leader is needed to take Open House into the future for the next 5-10-15 years.

So I have a clear view that for the well-being of Open House it is time for me to hand over the baton and enable someone to succeed me and carry it.

Our Chairman, David Woods and the Board have been kind and allowed me to come to this point.

Open House has been an important part of my (and my family's) life for over 40 years. I have been very thankful for the privilege of leading Open House for the past 15 years – it has been such a gift and a treasure and I have grown so much through the experience.

I have enjoyed fantastic support, David and Pam Woods, George and Muriel Farrington, the Executive

Council, Staff, Volunteers, supporters, participants – just incredible support and all this has enabled and encouraged me in my role. I am so thankful for this support.

As I recently shared with the staff this is not a time of farewells, we have much ahead of us this year and I am looking forward to the 'new things of each morning'.

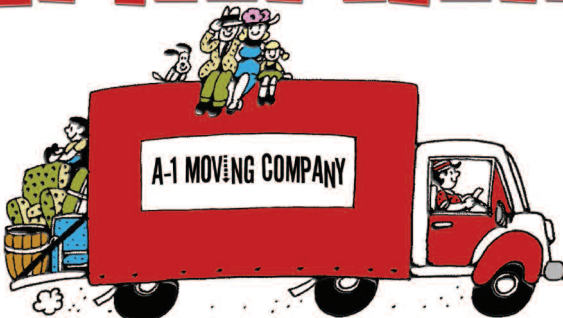
Can I express myself in this way –

- I have been held by God's amazing grace
- Open House has been held by God's amazing grace
- And God's amazing grace will continue to abound because 'great is His faithfulness'.

Thank you for your support.

Ross Oldmeadow  
Director.

**WE HAVE MOVED**



**We have now moved to our new home at  
Macleod**

**OUR NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER  
is 9450 7600**

**Our new postal address is  
P.O. Box 906 Macleod 3085**

**Email: [office@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:office@openhousecic.org.au)**

# 2015 - moving to the 3rd generation of 'friendship' at Open House

In 2015 the Open House Board and staff will seek to ensure that the foundations, on which the work started 43 years ago, are strengthened so that the next person to lead the ministry will continue to show God's love in tangible and relevant ways to those who are in real need.

2015 is the first year of the next 5-10 years of the Christian ministry of friendship to the community.

Ross is the second chief executive of Open House and with his desire to move on at the end of this year, the Board has already begun the work to prepare for this and it seeks your prayer and support as it undertakes the large task of replacing him. Whilst looking to the future it is important that we do not lose sight of the way people have been helped in the past and the basis on which that help was offered. History tells us that many of the works which set out to help the poor and disadvantaged were based on the Christian ethos but no longer retain that ethos.

In the next few months we will have completed the move from Ivanhoe to Macleod and the settlement for Ivanhoe will be completed. The Macleod property offers many opportunities to continue and grow the work of helping people to grow. To take advantages of these facilities we will need to grow our volunteers and supporters. We will need to recruit a replacement for Ross, better equip and resource our committed staff and we will also need to ensure that the Board is strong with a clear vision and the God given wisdom to see it carried out in the lives of people.

We are committed to using the proceeds from the sale of Ivanhoe for the future development of the work – capital for capital as Ross said when announcing the sale last October. It is our view that the money should not be used for day to day operating cost and therein lays a very real challenge. We are finding that some of our traditional sources that have supported the ministry in the past are becoming harder to obtain and so we will need to not only try harder and do better with those sources but also seek out new ones. The vast majority of our operating costs are for staff wages so again I ask for your prayerful support as we try to address this issue in 2015.

On behalf of all at Open House I ask for your continued support this year as we prepare for the major step of transitioning to the 3rd generation. The current generation are committed to doing what it can to ensure that the foundations of this ministry are not only preserved but strengthen so that God's love will continued to be offered to all into the future.

Thank you for your help in the past and I look forward to you continuing to walk with us into the future.

David Woods OAM

Chairman

## **SPECIAL GATHERING**

**SUNDAY – 3rd MAY 2.00 pm**  
KEEP FREE – DETAILS TO FOLLOW

Farewell to our Ivanhoe place, .....

..... Celebrate developments to our Macleod place

# NEW OPPORTUNITIES

## Plans for the next 6 months

### 1. Complete the transition from Ivanhoe

Complete Sale of Ivanhoe Property

### 2. Fit out the old manse with Meeting Spaces and Offices

### 5. Research how we might engage with disconnected youth in relation to needs of employment/skills/social development

– this follows on from last year's Connecting U2 Work scrap metal project.

### 3. Develop a detailed and researched plan for the Garden Patch

- start construction
- undertake Garden Boxes Project (see article)

### 4. Grow our existing programs

- Youth Workshop Mentoring
- Club Work
- Youth activities
- Schools Well-being
- Painting and Art and Craft groups
- Bible Fellowship
- Backyard Sports
- Men's Group
- Community Meal

## JANUARY BUS TRIPS

Chocolates anyone!! The trip to Kinglake Ranges – Healesville and environs was completed by an indulgence of chocolate, ice-cream and chocolate cappuccinos at the Chocolaterie Factory in Yarra Glen.

Ian and a team from Club Work took 2 groups of house-bound adults on exciting adventures. One lady hadn't been on a trip with Open House. At the start of the day some were strangers, forward 8 hours, they are new friends.

New things seen and new friendships developed – what great experiences.

## COMMUNITY GARDEN BOXES PROJECT

We are seeking sponsors for this Project (each garden box costs \$300). Perhaps this may be an opportunity for your business, club etc.

This new initiative makes for some easy connections with the nearby community.



What would you like to grow some herbs, or flowers – then go ahead the space is yours.



The Boxes will be placed near the perimeter of the property and so be accessible for the community to tend their plants.



# Backyard Sports - Medal of Friendship (MoF)

Recently we introduced a new award called the "Medal of Friendship", this award recognises participants that regularly attend



the BYS program; who are conscious in developing positive and lasting friendships; who use encouraging words to build each other up and who participate in team activities and play fairly.

On Thursday 11 December we had our end of year BBQ and games which was a huge success with about 35 youth in attendance.



We had Mo (one of the regular participants, who is studying to be a chef) cook the BBQ and had on offer cold drinks and lollies. The BYS team set up the Knock-Out Game and Slippery Slide which were very popular, and then ran a few other activities which involved water balloons, chocolates and lots of running!



The presentation followed - the MoF Award and the Encouragement Awards. The excitement on everyone's face said it all, as they all sat huddled under the marque, waiting in anticipation to hear who would get the medallions. Abdi, Lachlan and Gabby were the three well deserving participants who received the medallions for displaying great commitment to the program, developing positive friendships and encouraging others to be involved in the activities.

I asked Abdi what it means to him to have won this award. He could hardly talk because of the smile on his face, but eventually he said to me that he has absolutely loved coming to BYS every week and playing in the park with his friends and meeting new people and that he will never forget this experience!



Just through this simple action of recognition and praise we were able to give these participants hope and belief in themselves, and to reinforce the message that someone else cares for them and recognises their amazing achievement. During the teams de-brief, we discussed how we could have bought \$15 worth of chips and the kids would have been satisfied for 10 minutes until they were all gone, but this medallion is kept for years and years to come and will remind Abdi and the other participants of their wonderful achievement of displaying friendship.

**Steve Marks** - Co-ordinator Youth Workshop Mentoring/Backyard/ and Sports Programs

