

Chatters

A publication of Crossroads Clubhouse

November/ December 2013



An Exciting New Season

Congratulations to Stephen who has assumed Clubhouse directorship! We thank Patrick for his contribution to Crossroads and wish him well. Coinciding with this leadership change we are running the annual Clubhouse Membership Survey, asking all members to share their ideas, concerns and opinions about the future direction of Clubhouse.

Arahura Charitable Trust's AGM was held on the 31st October. The afternoon was well attended with David Breen giving a particularly moving speech about the purpose of Crossroads...

"Crossroads is not a destination but a vehicle. The Crossroads vehicle provides a safe social wellbeing setting and the tools to up-skill in different directions. While there are boundaries and guidelines for the Crossroads vehicle it is up to the individual and group as to where it is steered. Crossroads provides a semi-structured sanctuary at a time which can—and has been—very confusing

for people. A place where people can regain confidence in themselves and others. Crossroads depends on mutual acceptance, good will, and trust. This culture can be fragile and it's maintenance is the major work in this model of recovery. Crossroad's success is not measured in numbers or dollars but in the value people find in it."

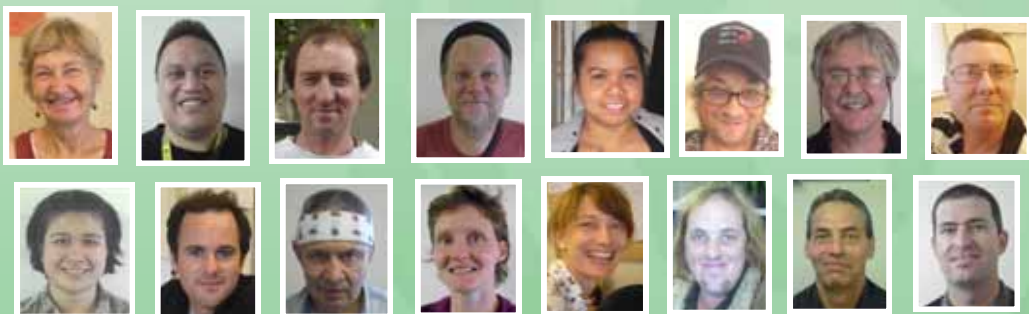
Our dining room has been renovated by staff and members, Bunnings kindly donated the paint. It has been inspiring to see the dedicated work going on and the vast skill set Crossroads has access to via it's members.

Spring has brought a surge in activity – including Molly (the informal Clubhouse mascot) bringing six new puppies into the world. Our tadpoles are growing very well, we wait impatiently for legs to grow and tails to shrink.

We wish you all safe and happy holidays and a joyous Christmas.

Emma

The contributors to this issue of *Chatters* are:



The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those
of Arahura Trust or Crossroads Clubhouse

A Chat with the new Chief

- Emma Nelson interviews Stephen Hart

A clinician recently used this definition of recovery; “When a patient has a social life indistinguishable from their neighbor.” What issues do you see with this concept as an approach to recovery?

Sufferers of mental distress are often given the message that they should strive to be ‘normal’. This leads to the belief that ‘if only my life were more normal I would be ok.’ This can stop us recognizing our uniqueness and strengths. Interwoven with our times of mental distress are the strengths and gifts we have as people.

The Clubhouse approach is to let people lead their own recovery. For some of us becoming empowered to direct our own lives is a new experience. What are some of the ways Clubhouse builds gently on our sense of empowerment?

That Clubhouse is voluntary is extremely important.. Clubhouse encourages people to be involved but balances this in acknowledging that it is the person’s own responsibility to choose when they are ready.

During a recovery period we draw from our personal resources, social resources and community resources. In your opinion, which of these resource areas is least developed?

*Clubhouse is brilliant at providing that really informal peer support. Often this occurs best in the simple things; a phone call, birthday card, home visit. The Clubhouse vehicle gives people the opportunity to give back when we are in a good space—keeping us all well. I think we have only begun to leverage what we can do in terms of community resources. In some ways we **are** a community resource. I’ve heard people describe Clubhouse as they*

would a library – there should be one in every suburb. In some cases it is difficult to make links from Clubhouse to the wider community; I would like to see this is a high agenda item for 2014.

I once wrote “It is ironically my difficult, horrendous, scary, painful and shameful experiences that give me my sense of self and influence how I interact with the world.” Movies like Lord of the Rings

(where characters tackle obstacles, experience personal growth and are tested beyond their limits) are loved worldwide; why do you think the sharing of our own stories of struggle and overcoming is not encouraged by society?

Lack of understanding and experience. There is still a lot of stigma around mental distress. I’m convinced this doesn’t come from a bad place – it’s just lack of knowledge, which is often exacerbated by the media. It’s up to us to

be having these conversations and to encourage people we know to tell these stories. One of the problems is that we only ever hear about people at their worst – and often out of context.

In continuing to offer a place of belonging and to grow in vitality, resilience and a sense of direction, what do you ask of Clubhouse staff and members?

I ask everyone at Clubhouse to be thinking about opportunities for growth and support that continue to promote and nurture a community in which people can feel they’re contributing to their own well-being as well as the well-being of others. As humans our well-being comes within the context of all the other people we are connected with. It never comes in isolation. The more we can support each other in opportunity, the better we all will be.



Newsflash



In October we celebrated Patrick's time at Clubhouse, with a farewell afternoon tea. There was a large attendance at this special occasion. See p 10- 11 for Paul G's tribute and Patrick's note.

With Stephen moving into the Director role a **Facilitator vacancy** has opened up. There has been strong internal interest. A panel of members and staff are about to interview applicants as this magazine goes to print. We look forward to having the successful applicant on board shortly.

Our **Christmas Lunch** will be held on the 19th December at the Pt. Chev RSA. We expect some interesting performances and jovial conversation.

We began our **Feet-beat walking challenge** on the 9th September and recorded our individual walking hours until 3rd November. Team 'Urban Hikers' won having walked a total of 25,332 minutes. Congratulations to the other teams taking part; 'Feet Freaks', 'Land Striders', 'Smooth Striders', and 'Kilometre Killers.' The winning team received grocery hampers. Tony C walked most minutes, accumulating a staggering 10790 followed closely by Raymond achieving an impressive 10340 minutes. Rachael was awarded 'most improved walker. Rachael and Tony C are pictured showing off their certificates and prizes.



Molly is the unofficial Clubhouse mascot. She is a two year old rescue dog of unknown

breed (suspected terrier cross.) She originates from Kaitaia but does much travelling (she has half a suitcase for a bed in the back of the car.) Good-tempered and low-maintenance many people enjoy her company. Molly has just given birth to six cute puppies, they already have homes to go too.

Newsflash

We have been lucky enough over the last few months to be visited by some local V.I.P.s. **Councillors Cathy Casey and Pippa Coom** have both joined us for lunch. It was great showing them what we do, and getting some clarity about how the "SuperCity" deals with the community and NGO sector. We received some great advice about fundraising and look forward to catching up with these lovely folk in the near future.

As the weather warms up our minds are shifting into summer mode and we're looking forward to the third annual **Clubhouse Camp**. This year we'll be heading back to Mangawhai Heads. This great trip away has had a funding boost thanks to our super successful Mental Health Awareness Week raffle. Congratulations to Nikki the lucky winner pictured with friend, collecting her prize from Purewa.



Bunnings donated the paint and members and staff have completed the work of sanding, filling-holes, preparing and painting the dining room walls. It has been inspiring to see the dedicated work going on and the vast skill set Crossroads has access to via its members. We are all glad to be able to use the **dining room space** again as things were rather cramped while work went on, (p 7).



Community of Refuge Trust (C.O.R.T) and Clubhouse have been busily working together on a very exciting project called **C & C Lawns**. This initiative will provide paid work for several members to maintain C.O.R.T rental properties.

Fiesta in the Park

In October we celebrated mental health awareness week by taking part in a creative arts festival promoting mental health. What a lot of fun we had! Here's Rachael's story...

There were lots of different stalls at Fiesta in the Park. People were dancing to the music. The main stage was good – it had a large screen with art from Toi Ora, projected onto it. The acoustic stage was close to our stall. I liked Emma



Paki's singing and listening to the people who performed poetry (The Literati.)

The children looked like they were having fun playing our

games. We had a skill tester game, a knock-them-all-down game, and a Go fish game. The clowns had a go at the games too. We offered free raffle tickets, jelly beans and worry nuts for prizes. We sold raffle tickets for \$2 each - the winner was drawn on October 31st. Congrats to

Nikki, (pictured in the newsflash on p.5). We also had a competition to guess how many jelly beans were in the jar.

Maricor took lots of photos. Molly the dog enjoyed racing around chasing the tennis ball – I saw her jump quite high. We made stress balls –a spotty palm-sized ball which you can squish and squidge. I recognized Ainslie from Changing Minds wearing a green wig. There was a coffee stand – I bought a Moccachino for \$4.50.



How to make a stress ball:

Blow a balloon up and then let it deflate (this stretches the balloon). Put rice or flour through a funnel into a balloon. (it takes some pushing) Then tie the balloon and put another balloon over it which has one or several small holes cut in it. You can also decorate your stress ball with hair and a face. It was a great day.

Rachael H

Moving on Up!



Clubhouse dining room has undergone a transformative freshen-up. Members and staff organised and carried out our own renovation with paint donated by Bunnings, Mt Roskill.

"From the start we knew progress would be slow, but we knew we were in it for the long haul." - Gavin.

"It was a fair result for painters who aren't *really* painters." - Ian.



Special thanks to Ngaiwi, Stephen, Gavin, Ian, and Wayne!



The new look is crisp, clean and lighter than the previous institutional green.



Data Entry on Trial Here

Since my last job seeking update I completed two months temporary work as a receptionist for the Salvation Army office in Royal Oak. This work came to an end as they were looking for someone permanently with more desktop publishing experience.

Through some chance women's networking, a friend managed to refer my C.V to another friend in a transport company near the airport. The manager liked my C.V and rang me the next day. I began a data entry position the following week.

I completed two months trial in this role. I found the work complex and difficult to apply. However I was able to gain new knowledge about ship containers and the trucking industry. The workload

was strenuous and hours very long. I decided not to continue with this job.

I was doing a job seeking course at the Chamber of Commerce at the time. They kept regular contact with me about the data entry job. I had a lot of support from different people including Cross-roads Clubhouse.



I enjoy administrative work because I like to see things completed properly. I have found volunteer work administrative work with different community agencies enjoyable. I like the methodical nature of the work. It was satisfying and calming.

I believe there is a job out there for me, with more suitable working conditions, where I can utilise, and further develop my skills. This might mean also looking at part-time work opportunities. I am persistent in job seeking and expect a good result!

Pauline T

visiting BIG Melbourne

Geoff fills us in on his travels across the ditch...

In November I went for a holiday to Melbourne, State of Victoria, Australia. I had thought about going to Melbourne for a while, partly because my daughter lives there and I had not been there before. People said it was a great place to visit. I asked my daughter if it was a good idea and she said yes.

To prepare for the trip I renewed my passport and saved money for airfares and spending money.

Highlights of the trip were going up the tallest building in Melbourne, called Eureka, (Skydeck, 88 stories high), going on a boat cruise down the Yarra River, riding on the trams around Melbourne and walking around the CBD.



There are 4 million people in Melbourne. Melbourne has an excellent public transport system. The bus around the city is good. The visitor shuttle is \$5.00. It leaves from outside the art gallery. You can change money before you go at the flight centre in the airport.

I didn't think I could handle the trip because of my health. I did manage, although at times it wasn't easy. One of the challenges was all the people and finding my way around the CBD. It took thirty to forty minutes to travel into the CBD plus a ten minute walk. The airport

wasn't easy, waiting for the bags. I had to be patient with myself and also push myself quite a bit.

My advice to others planning a holiday is get information by talking to people who have been to the place you want to visit. Also look up details on the internet. It's important to make sure you have enough money for the trip. It helps to know someone who lives where you're going or travel with someone else.

Geoff

Farewell Patrick Harris

On Thursday the 17th of October we had a farewell party for Patrick Harris, the Clubhouse Director. Many Clubhouse members were there to farewell him. They all said many good things about him, and all true.



Patrick did wonders for the Clubhouse. Under his directorship the membership flourished.

Patrick is intelligent, warm hearted, easy going, and has a good sense of humour. Patrick is also quite spiritual, having some Buddhist beliefs. Patrick is a vegetarian. The sandwiches he had for lunch, full of salad fillings were wonderful.

It was a pleasure to know Patrick. I enjoyed the conversations I had with him, especially at the Urban Jungle Café on Friday afternoons. I wish Patrick all the best for his future.

Patrick came to the Clubhouse in early 2009. Over the next four and a half years he introduced new practices to the Clubhouse. Examples of these were the free coffee and tea for morning and afternoon tea, and the lucky dip job bucket at 11am. He also introduced Summer Camps for members, which are very popular.

Paul G



PATRICKS RESIGNATION NOTE



It was with a heavy heart that I tended my resignation as director of Crossroads Clubhouse after struggling over quite a long period with some on-going health issues and needing to have some protracted time off to deal with them.

I believe the Clubhouse to be the provider of more than just a very special service, it is more a community, providing very real support and hope for people, one of the members once described it as a 'sanctuary' for them. It was great for me to have been a part of that 'community' for over four and a half years.

I would like to acknowledge the challenging and demanding work done by the very dedicated and skilled staff team both past and present and it's been a privilege to have met some terrific people in the members of Clubhouse and being able to work alongside them.

Thanks and my farewell to all those in the community who supported me and support Clubhouse in many different ways (you know who you are).

My only immediate plans at this point is simply to get in a good period of rest and exercise and then decide where to from there... life is full of opportunities isn't it...

Thanks to you all, my life is richer for the experience of 'Clubhouse' and without doubt I will retain an interest in 'the goings on' of it, and of Arahura Trust.

Patrick Harris

Clubhouse Adventures

Six pictures equals
six thousand words...



October:

We went to Wenderholm. It was perfect weather for it. We took two vans. Gavin drove the Crossroad's van. Ngaiwi and Tony went for a swim. The barbeque was great. I took a few pictures. Stephen cooked the sausages and I helped. After lunch we threw frizz bees around for a little bit. The kai was great. A good time was had by all. We got back to Auckland around 3 o'clock.

Glenn P



November:

Emma's family farm is an hour south of Auckland in Onewhero. We left at 9:30am and returned at 6pm to Clubhouse.



Molly jumped in the pond after the Frisbee and scared the tadpoles away. Leica is a Burmese cat who loved all the visitors and was sitting in the wheelbarrow. Molly was running around like usual and trying to get into the bushes. There was lots of chickens and one baby chick.

We collected some eggs. We fed the chooks scraps from Cross-roads Clubhouse and we fed the doves. We went swimming, played volleyball.

Emma let Tony C watch TV. There is a piano at the house but unfortunately we didn't have Eugene with us.

We went for a walk over the farm; one group practiced their survival skills and took a little detour. Gavin was unimpressed at what a 'short walk' meant.

Tony C enjoyed the day and wanted to stay on till Sunday. He managed to light the old barbeque and cooked some great sausages.

Several members said they would be keen to come again and do a bit of work around the place. The attic of the house has a good view down to the Waikato River but is much too hot to stay in for long.

Emma moved to the farm when she was eight years old and we had a good laugh at the photo on the wall. Emma admitted she still enjoys re-arranging the playhouse interior/redecorating.

Rachael



These thoughts were inspired by a TV Doco on Stephen Fry, the English comedian and know-it-all quizmaster...

As host, he told of his Bipolar Disorder since high school days. It wasn't diagnosed then – He was just thought to be a gifted but eccentric public schoolboy, as they are, discovering his gaiety and suffering too many character-building thrashings from prefects. He was diagnosed at 37 on his first visit to a psychiatrist, following the incident when he was reported as “disappearing” to Belgium, actually taking refuge at his sister's place. Poor reviews for his early performances had sent him spiraling into deep depression and suicidal “ideation”.

Interviewing bipolar persons, one was former movie star Richard Dreyfuss. Whatever happened to him in the late 1970s after *Jaws*? — Answer: 20 years in the wilderness away from showbiz fighting his severe mood swings. A clinician put overall recovery figures at: 20% who post-breakdown remain excluded from life's main race, in a world of their own; 40% partially functioning but unable to concentrate and reliant on parents or friends for the rest of their lives; 20% who can work at a routine level; and 20% who might well excel themselves late in life. Fry put himself in this last category and decided to stay medication-free. Among these high achievers, a common theme is that bipolar individuals actually cherish their “specialness” and prefer to experience their ups and downs rather than live a flatter emotional life, especially those in the artistic or creative world who find extreme emotional states more productive in the end.

An apposite quote for those on my low level of depression/anxiety came from President FDR addressing a USA facing The Great Depression: “We have nothing to fear but fear itself.” Since escaping Anxiety Disorder, a question I periodically ask myself is: “What's the worst thing that can happen to me?” if I go this way or that. We might build it up in our minds but almost always the answer is not much. We are all individual “cases”, but I am convinced that, as long as we follow the prescription of the right practitioner we can look forward to our allotted span of years, barring unforeseen accidents and genetically predisposed illnesses—that are useless to worry about until the time comes anyway. And it might not. In my case of pure luck, following a random five-minute chat with a G.P. in the waiting room of a hospital, I popped my first quarter-capsule of Prozac and started feeling better the first day. Whatever time we have we should make the most of it.—G. A. D.



Labour Weekend Voyage

At Labour Weekend I went to see the tall sailing ships at Queens Wharf on Saturday and Sunday. On Sunday I went with Ian from Clubhouse. He picked me up from out side Count-down at 9.30am

Afterwards we went back to my place for coffee and to listen to some sounds on my stereo.

A great weekend.

Glenn P

A fruitful Choice

Hi, my name is Preston, a year ago I decided to give up smoking because it was too expensive.

I had \$60 in my hand, I stopped and thought about it, most of that money was going on smokes. I had one more smoke left and I said to myself "that's it, this is the last smoke I'm going to have in my life time." I have not smoked for a year now and I've saved \$2000. I am feeling a lot more healthy, I notice I can breathe a lot easier.

Since I have become smoke free I

have had extra money to spend on nice things for myself. I have bought a guitar (\$400), a Playstation 3 (\$600), and some Dr. Dre Beats Studio head phones (\$400), I've also kept \$600 in savings.

I think it's a good idea to stop smoking. My tip to others is to use the lozenges, they really worked for me.

Kia Ora Whanau

Preston



Making the Most of Educational Opportunities

Our resident guru on study options, updates us on his latest course and educational background.

This year I have been studying Horticulture for free from the Open Polytechnic. The first two units have focused on soil. I had to send three soil samples down to Lower Hutt and answer a booklet of questions. Also, most weeks I attend Kelmarna Gardens, a work skills program run by Framework Trust where I can learn practical gardening skills. Next year I will enrol in Plant Structures. These courses are level three and straight forward. They allow up to 32 weeks for each enrolment so you only have to study 6 or 7 hours a week.

Other studies I have done over the years include an Adult Education paper, 'How to Create a Positive Learning Environment' also at the Open Polytechnic. I was working for Framework, teaching budgeting

and time management skills at the time. It was very relevant to the work I was doing.

Ten years ago I did tutor training with the Home Tutor Society, teaching English as a second language. It is now known as English Language Partners. I thoroughly enjoy voluntary teaching. In 2001 I completed my Bachelor of Business after studying a Cooperative Education paper at Auckland University of Technology (A.U.T). I did a student placement for this course at Clubhouse.

Most people can succeed at studies especially if they complete the study skills paper available from The Open Polytechnic.

If you would like to discuss study options or gain support in or applying to study please approach myself or the Clubhouse staff.

Chris R



"Hoofbeats & Springs"

Tony C put his predictions to paper for the sporting fans amongst us, see how they lined up...



Sports and Thoroughbred and Harness Racing.

All Blacks tour of Northern Hemisphere... So far nothing really that surprises... for the mighty men in black its business as usual ensuring they secure victory in each contest... France are history and so are England... I don't expect Ireland to upset the All Blacks perfect record thus far ...and neither should you! While the Northern Hemisphere teams tend to slow the All Black style down for 60 or 70 minutes inevitably the All Blacks break through defense structures of other teams and when you play the Men in Black you know the last ten minutes can be the most punishing. This is where their fitness, tenacity, ruthlessness and will to win usually take over...

With ***League*** we're doing ok at the ***World Cup***. I like everybody

else thoroughly expect it to be a Aussie/Kiwi Final. I also expect Australia to be out to exact revenge on the Kiwi's by playing a fast swift passing game and isolating any tired players on defense and a skillful kicking game that will constantly have the kiwis busy trying to secure high balls in the 22 area and chip kicks into the try zone area that will be difficult to gather with the fast and usually very reliable Aussie attack hunting for the touchdown.

Harness Racing... Terror to Love simply too good in the ***New Zealand Cup...*** ***Thoroughbred Racing...*** Spring Cheer far too good in the ***Gallop Cup...***...don't write off Coup Align sprint failures at cup meeting....the track was not the rock hard track that he requires and he is a little older now requiring a little more racing to prep him...but he'll bounce back quickly as only top horses can do.

Tony C.

The Great Pretender

I'm always telling myself that I have special powers
I'm convinced that my condition with time is essential
And yet I tell myself that my behavior is really quite correct
If I did have special powers I would have to consider magical properties
Biologically our education and existence seems to be modeled around this notion
If we could actually become a place and time with god how could this theory work
Chemically we have our own beliefs and times for communicating with our peers
How does this notion relate to our time and beliefs about God and space sea and society
If I could actually set this kind of example what would I have to do
And if we all agreed that it was necessary how would it relate to modern science and medicine
I believe that we all actually share the same dreams and aspirations with time
Perhaps what is happening does hold some sort of godly grace and honesty
The force the power the magic the fantasy the might etc.. etc..
If there is a god how does god too bind to the laws of man and woman child
And does god really understand our existence and time
By using our strengths and weaknesses our happiness and favour seems settled
And I believe that we all have our morality and ethical powers with peace and good things
So in all honesty there really should be a connective concept for love with our existence
And I believe that this seems logical practical and legally justified
By living and setting an example our dreams do in all honesty make sense
So really we all should appreciate and realise our time and responsibilities with god
Peace is a wonderful key for love and happiness and can really shape our chemistry
Chemically biologically and physically we all can appreciate gods grace and love
Perhaps there really is life beyond our solar system and one day something might happen
If this is our cause how does our property relate to our field and work experience
And what should we all do to understand gods existence with god.....is there life out there. **Gabriel**

PICK OF THE FLICKS

This picture was a main feature during the school holidays and it was number two at the box office. It was similar to *Clash of the Titans*. I'm sure it had some of the characters as *Clash*.

I enjoyed the story, having been brought up on Greek mythology. It had a theme of evil versus good, of course the good win, but not without their battles.



There were many characters who were also in the Narnia films. Percy is the son of Poseidon (the Sea God), he discovers he has a half brother (a Cyclops). The two join together with young people (Percy's friends from a camp). They had their rivals, especially Luke, who was Hermes son. They meet Hermes as well. One sea monster was a seahorse who took them for a ride to a boat where one of Percy's kidnapped friends was held. With magical devices they free Percy's friend. Because they had been captured themselves they had all the tools to set him free.

Their objective was to go to an island to get the golden fleece. They needed the fleece to heal a magical tree which was dying back at the camp. Before they got the fleece they had to battle an enormous monster, which their enemy Luke had worshipped. Once the monster was destroyed Luke was thrown into a Cyclops lair who ate humans. That's the last we see of him. The fleece is then taken and put on the dying tree. The tree breathes life again and a body that the tree grew on was revived. It became a young girl called Tahlia who had died years ago. All she said was "I had a funny dream I was dying". That part of the story I knew all the time would happen. At this point the movie ends.

Diana P

A Unique Approach

Like all our work, this was produced inhouse by members and staff – our approach to recovery: working side by side at Crossroads.

We'd love to show you our Clubhouse.
Please call anytime to arrange a tour time.



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For more about our Clubhouse visit:
www.crossroadsclubhouse.org.nz
For more info on the Clubhouse model
visit: www.iccd.org

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those
of Arahura Trust or Crossroads Clubhouse.