

Chatters

A publication of Crossroads Clubhouse

March / April 2015



Editorial

Hello Fellow Chatters Readers!

For this month

Warm sunshine, a blue, blue sky, good company, good food and the chance to relax – all the elements to be had for a great day, a great Crossroads day at Cornwallis.

Some of us relaxed, some braved the elements of a cooling sea for 'a dip' and some took the opportunity to enjoy a friendly game of cricket with unique Crossroads rules. Throughout the day everyone worked together to set the scene and help the day smooth along at a relaxed pace.

It all sounds simple but there is a deeper meaning and purpose to these social recreation trips.

Many people with mental health issues live isolated from their communities. They may gradually lose the capacity to make conversation, to express their thoughts and ideas and for hearing other's. Crossroads Clubhouse provides such people the chance to make friends and develop relationships they might not otherwise have, in a welcoming, safe environment. 'Social rec' days can and do provide this.

Above all, though, they provide the chance to have fun, everyone's right.

Jules

Huge Thanks to our magazine contributors...



Director's Report

The beginning of this year brought with it some significant changes for our Clubhouse. With two long term staff moving on in early January it was inevitable our Clubhouse had a different feeling to it. As in life, change is inevitable and it has been amazing to see the way our Clubhouse has embraced our new staff members and brought new ideas and energy to this community.

Linus and Natalie have really hit their stride and have been working with members on some great new projects. Our TradeMe fundraising sales have begun with a huge effort from Natalie and Sue to organise leftover goods from last year's Garage Sale. Linus has brought with him a great sense of humour and some great ideas from his time working at a Clubhouse in Finland.

Emma and Linus have begun the exciting work of setting up a new transitional employment opportunity. We are hopeful that as this develops two Clubhouse members can gain an introduction to paid employment. These six-month placings are a natural extension of the work we do together at Clubhouse every day and we intend that this year holds the promise of similar.

We've been riding a wave of energy to pursue more fundraising activities this year. Special mention goes to Gavin and Kevin, whose enthusiasm to see Clubhouse improve in a variety of ways has been infectious for everyone.

There's plenty of hard work ahead involving members in this work. Nurturing their talents along the way makes it rewarding and a heap of fun. Glad to be here,

Stephen Hart



Chatters Newsflash!

Skyping: With our laptop, projector and new sound system we are able to video-call other Clubhouses around the world. Our first contact has been with Fresh-start Clubhouse in Michigan. They told us they have about 30 members a day with 5 staff and that they make the 'Wild Dogs Walk' (a mile's walk) each day. With below freezing temperatures most of their unit work is done inside. They call their admin/business/clerical unit (our Heads Up unit) 'The Co-op.' While we only have two Clubhouses in NZ there are 46 in Michigan. Representatives from each conference call meet in person once a month. Fresh-start Clubhouse currently has three transitional employment positions: a pizza place; back-room of a store; and a position in shipping and processing. Fortunately for them they are beside the University of Michigan Football Stadium. To fundraise they open their carpark for stadium-goers at \$US20 a head — and made \$10,000 in a season!!! We continue to keep in contact.



Rachael The DVD Diva!

Rachael has spent weeks cataloguing new DVDs for the clubhouse.

We now have a grand total of 565 DVDS available for members to borrow free of charge. A huge thanks

To those who build this shelves. Thanks to Fatso for the donation Of the DVDS.

Bible Study Group

A group is meeting Tuesdays 3pm.

The program begins with a opening prayer, Singing hymns, bible study, praying, giving thanks Close with prayer.

Plenty of blessings have come from it. As well as Interesting discussions. Altogether the group has a large knowledge of Christian history.



The **'Hands On' unit** has been pumping out projects left, right and centre. Shelves were needed for the 415 d.v.d.s Crossroads Clubhouse owns. Claire built a printer's tray for Nikki in work-exchange for Nikki's mosaic gifted to Crossroads. Kevin, Kerry, Eru and others have spent long hours installing our new audio-visual projector system. We built a workbench so that we no longer drill into the picnic table :) and we hope more projects will stem from having this resource.



Try this at home: Using clear Duraseal (what you use to cover schoolbooks), cut out your design, peel off the backing and stick well to material. Using a Spray'n'-Wipe bottle filled with bleach, spray the design from about 50cm away (don't over-spray). Pat the design with hand towels to absorb excess bleach. Let dry. **WASH BEFORE WEARING.** We plan to make t-shirts & banners for Crossroads events such as the garage sale.

Clanging in the Kitchen!

The kitchen has been super busy lately. Rebecca made tomato chutney and chili sauce, Daphne stewed fruit. Kevin made his unique (and tasty) 'peanut plum chili sauce'. Cooking classes have got off to a great start on Thursdays afternoons.





Is there gold in them thar hills?

Patrick Harris (former director) interviewed by Claire H.
What do you find interesting about searching for gold?

I love the color of gold. I love the adventure. It's really special being in the back and beyond beside a stream. You find beautiful rocks too.

When did you start searching for gold?

About a year ago. Recently I went to the South Island. We started in Franz Josef, then went up the coast to Ross and Greymouth. I'm not going to tell you where exactly because then I'd have to kill you 😊. It's become a bit of a hobby. You

need to research, find out where the rivers are, and carry the gear.

Do you use a metal detector?

No, we use gold pans about thirty centimeters wide. You scoop up a bit of silt from the river bed and slosh it around. The gold, being heavy, sinks to the bottom of the pan.

Have you found any?

We found a bit of dust and flake but nothing of any value. We need to perfect our technique, be persistent and try different places. Anyone can go fossicking on Crown-owned land without permission, as long as you are only using hand tools and not machinery.

Anyone can go fossicking for gold on crown-owned land without permission, as long as you are using only hand tools.



ONE EVENING AN OLD CHEROKEE TOLD HIS GRANDSON ABOUT A BATTLE
 THAT GOES ON INSIDE PEOPLE.

HE SAID: "MY SON, THE BATTLE IS BETWEEN
 TWO 'WOLVES' INSIDE US ALL.

ONE IS EVIL. IT IS ANGER, ENVY, JEALOUSY, SORROW, REGRET, GREED, AR-
 ROGANCE, SELF- PITY, GUILT, RESENTMENT, INFERIORITY, LIES, FALSE PRIDE,
 SUPERIORITY AND EGO.



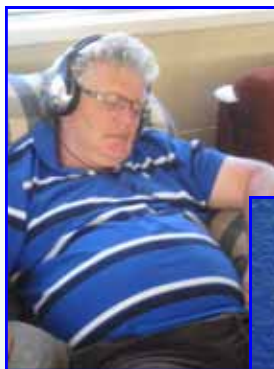
THE OTHER IS GOOD. IT IS JOY, PEACE, LOVE, HOPE, SERENITY, HUMILITY, K INDNESS,
 BENEVOLENCE, EMPATHY, GENEROSITY, TRUTH, COMPASSION,
 AND FAITH."



THE GRANDSON THOUGHT ABOUT IT FOR A MINUTE AND THEN
 ASKED HIS GRANDFATHER: "WHICH WOLF WINS?"
 THE WISE OLD CHEROKEE SIMPLY REPLIED; "THE ONE YOU FEED".

Hi, my name is Robert and I have lost 12 kilos in one year. I had to do this as I have type two diabetes, which is a degenerative disease. The condition can be treated with medication, but in my case it isn't working well. If I am unlucky I will have to inject within five years according to my g.p. So that's the lowdown that I have to deal with.

You can see the difference in these photos! I have more energy and don't get so tired. I walk two hours a day three times a week. The hardest part for me was giving up ice cream, chocolate, biscuits, cakes, sweets, quite a bit of fruit, coke and all the sugary foods. It wasn't the fact that I wasn't watching my diet, it was that things weren't taken in moderation. Also the fact that the illness runs in my family.



Annissa has spent the last eight months working on a piece of art. She has been attending Toi Ora's mosaic class for about three years. "It's good to have something to work on; it's quite a relaxing activity and there's nice people in the group." Any idea what your next project will be Annissa? "No idea, I won't think about it until next term!"



Toi Ora is a unique shared creative space for people in support of their mental health and wellbeing. You need to enrol at the beginning of a term and classes include mosaics, painting, photography, poetry, acting, flax weaving, music, printmaking. **It rocks!!!**



Boxfit classes are held every Wednesday from 1.00 to 2.00pm at the Shane Cameron Boxing and Fitness Centre in Birkenhead, North Shore. A van, capacity ten people, leaves Crossroads at 12.30pm.

Boxfit!!!

If you want to get leaner, stronger, fitter, go faster and further than before then this is for you. Classes are mixed with a good representation of women.



New Staff Member: Linus

Why did you choose to come to N.Z.?

I dreamt of great scenery. It is so exciting to travel so far. I was an exchange student in Canada and met a Kiwi person. We became good friends and promised to visit each other.

What is your education?

I studied for my Bachelor of Sports in Helsinki. I have worked in secondary schools for three years. I was a personal assistant and a teacher in gymnastics.

What is your Clubhouse experience?

I worked at Clubhouse Pelaren in the Aland Islands for four months. The Clubhouse there has 84 members (ten to 15 members every day) and four staff members. I have noticed that the Clubhouse organisation gives people great support. It is like a second family for many people.

What are you passionate about?

I like being in the outdoors, especially here in New Zealand. I like doing different kinds of sports. I like listening to music when I am out and about. Two things I am passionate about are sustainability and ecotourism.



Natalie's Lunchroom Interview

Claire ~ Why are you interested in working at Clubhouse, a mental health organization?

Natalie ~ "I heard really great reviews and wanted to be part of a cool, happy environment. I looked after my mother when I was aged 16-23. She was severely depressed and I became her caregiver."

Claire ~ "How long will you work at Clubhouse?"

Natalie ~ "How long is a piece of string! As long as you'll have me. It's my career path. I'm still studying for my Bachelor's in Social Work."

Claire ~ "What are your plans for the future?"

Natalie ~ "My short term goal is to finish my studies."

Claire ~ "What's a funny moment in your life?"

Natalie ~ "I have a fear of rats and mice. I was once driving along the Coromandel Peninsula at 100kph. I saw a small mouse on the road. Naturally I closed my eyes and lifted up my feet—the car ended up in a ditch!"



My Trip To The Monastery - Paul G.

On Monday, 23rd February I and two friends drove to the Southern Star Abbey at Kopua. It's about two hours drive south of Napier. The trip there takes seven to eight hours.

The abbey is situated in a rural environment, on a farm with bushlands nearby. People go to there to seek God's presence or just to relax. The week I was there, there was a man from Germany, one from Australia, a woman from Mexico and another from Christchurch.

You can go to church services including mass, meditate, do spiritual reading, go for walks in the beautiful countryside or go to the nearby towns for visits. The meals are tasty and healthy. You can eat as much as you like. The kitchen is open all

hours for coffees, teas, biscuits and fruits. The monks do not charge for this. Payment is by donation only and you give only as much as you can afford. The accommodation is wonderful (a brand new guest house). It's well worth a break from the rat race. I will be back there in the future.



I was asleep and dreaming when a voice
spoke to me in my dream;
reciting to me this poem. I woke up and
wrote it down on a piece of paper.
Is it my poem or the work of some
kind of mouthy dream poet?

Calm

The Calm before the Storm
Nudges me awake.
Lazy eyes peer about
Still, no storm.
They doze off again.
- Julian Pilbrow

Founders Day at Long Bay.

Some members from the Crossroads clubhouse went to Long Bay for part of the day. The weather turned out to be amazing as it was quite hot but there was provision for shelter under the wooden pergola. There was a cool breeze blowing and the sea was very inviting. Quite a few people went in for a dip!

When we got there after a relatively short trip in two vans and a couple of cars there was enough food to feed an army, plenty of biscuits, chips and dip, chocolate chip muffins and apricot muffins. After that lunch was served about 2pm We had hamburgers sausages and salad and if anyone wanted seconds there was heaps to spare.

After lunch there was some sporting activities. Cricket was the order of the day, with star performances by Ngaiwi, Barbara and Stephen to name but a few.

Our two new staff members Linus and Natalie came along to their first social rec at clubhouse....we trust that you had a great time guys.



Social Recreation Day at Emma's





After a relaxing drive looking at farmland scenery we arrived at the house in Onewhero. Ngaiwi couldn't wait and was in the swimming pool five minutes after we touched down. Some stayed at the house and others of us went into the bush to prepare the stone hut and lunch area. We gathered, chopped and stored wood. Kevin had obviously used a log splitter before.

Ngaiwi and John worked with Emma's dad Aidan, building foundations for a new cabin. Ngaiwi suggested, "You need a football team to do it! "

Everyone came together for outdoor-oven pizzas. We toasted marshmallows on the fire. I refrained from branding anyone with the red hot sticks. Still swimming, Ngaiwi was asked not to "bomb" due to water shortage - Once the pool is empty that's it! We enjoyed a mellow afternoon lounging on the deck consuming watermelons. Many suggestions were made about having a camp here. After a stop at the Tuakau shops on the way home we arrived back at Clubhouse to unwind and tidy up. - James

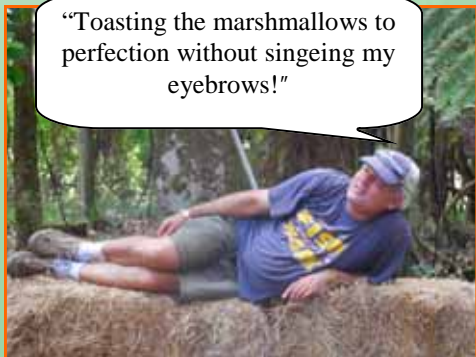
Highlights:

"Sitting around the fire."
(Paul and Raymond.)

- "Making the pizza's (Claire)

- "Swimming in the pool—I didn't want to get out!" (Linda)

"Toasting the marshmallows to perfection without singeing my eyebrows!"



PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

Is a recurring trauma that can affect anyone and is caused by....

Usually a life event which the brain cannot process. You become stuck in that time – for me, it's been 20 years – nothing new can enter in. It's physical and mental; you **CAN'T** file it away and get on with your life.

For me it began in 1994 with a near-death experience. I was on a mountain bike and was hit by a car. Going through the window, I punctured my lungs, broke ribs and several other bones. A year and a half ago I couldn't have even talked to you about it.

I remember being on the operating table. They were unable to give me anaesthetic because of my head and lung injuries. I could feel the tubes being pushed through my side which had been cut open to drain fluid from my lungs. My brain was looking for ways out and reasons why this had happened to me.

I had had all these plans; had just started a new job...but now, there I was fighting for my life. I relived this for 20 years.

With no warning I'd have seizure- like convulsions several times a day. It would take several days for the anxiety to recede and then, bam! Out of nowhere spasms, tears, depression. With this happening so often I just wanted to give up trying anything.

I believed I was weak and unable to get on with life. I began self-medicating with alcohol and cannabis. Cannabis stopped the nightmares and helped me sleep to some extent but it just put things on hold. The alcohol knocked me out but would also bring on more attacks. Why couldn't I overcome this thing?



POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

- Recurring intrusive recollection of the traumatic event
- Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma or numbing of general responsiveness
- Persistent symptoms of increased arousal -- physiological hyper-reactivity

I was embarrassed by the spasms – I had no idea I was suffering from something called PTSD.

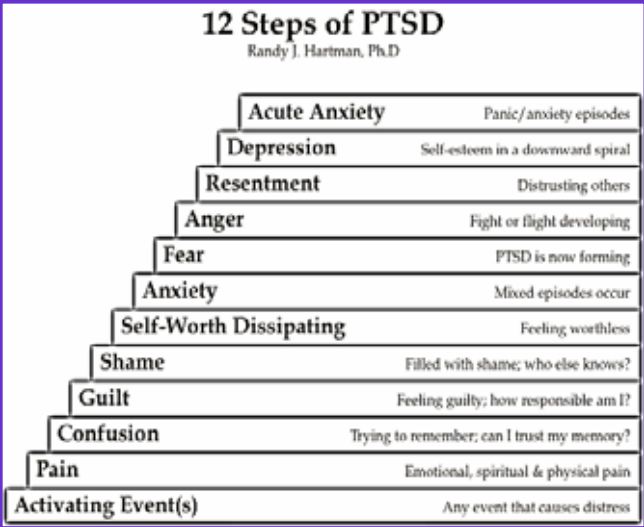
I threw myself into my job as a dispatch clerk and mediator in a factory. I thought that if I got in and helped others I'd be able to forget about my problems. But that didn't happen.

I would counsel people to be more functional in their jobs and lives – I took too much on and burnt-out working 12-16 hour days seven days a week. This went on for five years during the 25 years I held this job. Then one day the company folded and I was made redundant.

To make my life even more miserable, I fell over while walking and got an infection which spread to my spine and nervous system. I spent 8 months in hospital/recovery – the worst thing I've ever been through. At the same time my girlfriend died from a brain haemorrhage. That knocked the shit out of me and I just wanted to die. I was in a basement lying on a mattress on the floor. I lost a huge amount of weight until at a very low point I only weighed 35 kilos (yes, 35 kilos!)

During hospitalization I went through some harrowing experiences and had no support. I started to understand that I had an illness and began to get help. I gave up alcohol but was stuck with a cannabis addiction. I spent some time living on the Coromandel trying to live a healthy way of life but depression continued to plague me at times resulting in several suicide attempts.

I finally flipped out and was taken to the Connolly unit with depression, anxiety and PTSD. The Taylor Centre offers a PTSD treatment called EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and deprocessing), of which I had four to five sessions. Since this time I have had neither PTSD symptoms nor depressive periods. I had been stuck in a bottleneck in my life for years – now I am **FREE!** - good aye! - Kevin Hall.



Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

By Portia Nelson and submitted by Kevin Hall

Chapter one

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the side walk.
I fall in.
I am lost.....I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.



Chapter two

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in this same place.
But, it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.



Chapter three

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in.....it's a habit...but my eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is *my* fault.
I get out immediately.

Chapter four

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the side walk.
I walk around it.

Chapter five

I WALK DOWN ANOTHER STREET.



Life in hospital...

Can be cold, you never know what you are going to get (Forest Gump).

At least you get a lot of attention.

The only way they get medication into you without consent is through an injection.

You might get two big fellas on either arm trying to hold you down.

Many doctors have only an outsiders perspective of mental health.

I can see how every last admission can be a burden, don't expect sympathy from every one.

Rehab sucks.

I have met people who have been in there for five years, including myself.

Stay in for as short a time as you can.

Get on the right medication.

My creative side kept me up late into the night .

which probably wasn't the best.

When you are wired it's a hard time.

You become unsettled and maybe a little bit restless.

It's hard to know what comes next.

How to arrange your thoughts.

Reading can become flippant - hard to take seriously.

Wired in rehab isn't nice.

I wonder what is my purpose.

Staff tell me I'll get by because of my personality.

You feel like you might be drifting...

- Reed

A Unique Approach

Like all our work, this was produced in-house 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.



Crossroads
CLUBHOUSE

Belonging
Purpose
Hope



393 Great North Road
Grey Lynn
Ph: 09 376 4267
admin@crossroadsclubhouse.org.nz

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.