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FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FLINDERS

SHADOW MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND WATER



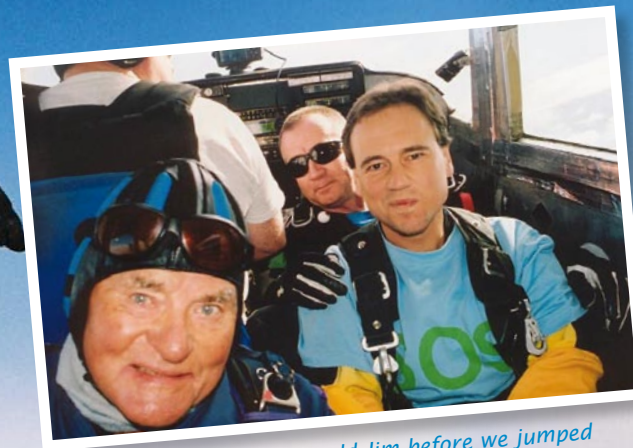
Flinders Community News

Working for
our Community

Spring 2008



► parachuting with
tandem instructor
Dave Boulter at *Tooradin*



▲ with 83-year-old Jim before we jumped

Skydiving for a Solar Future ...and Supporting Active Ageing

In June I accepted an invitation to take part in a skydive with Australia's oldest parachutist, 83-year-old Jim Brierley.

Jim, who lives on **Phillip Island**, invited me to jump with his club, Commando Skydivers, based at **Tooradin** Airport.

I decided to use the jump to draw public attention to two things:

- ✓ the harm being caused to the solar panel industry by the Rudd Government
- ✓ the importance of active ageing

The solar industry was sent into free fall on Budget night when the Rudd Government, without any prior warning, imposed a means test on the popular solar panel rebate scheme.

The parachute jump marked the launch of the Coalition's Save Our Solar campaign which aims to reverse this unfair decision.

Jim went first - stepping elegantly from the plane and executing a graceful free fall and effortless landing.

My tandem instructor Dave Boulter and I followed, somersaulting out of the plane through the clouds for about 20 seconds before activating the parachute.

20 seconds of free fall doesn't sound long but it was absolutely thrilling and felt just a little bit longer!

With the parachute open, it was time to catch my breath and look around at the magnificent **Western Port** and **Bass Coast** scenery.

I have since introduced to Parliament the Save Our Solar private members bill, aimed at getting the means test removed. I will not give up the fight to save the solar panel industry.

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▲ Lallah Ellerton's 100th birthday

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tree planting at
Mt Martha Primary ▲

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Focus On Seniors

Push for a \$30 Boost to the Single Age, Single Service Age and Widow B Pensions

The Coalition recently introduced to the Senate its Urgent Relief for Single Age Pensioners Bill.

This Bill will increase the single age, single service age and Widow B pension by \$30 a week by amending the Social Security Act and Veterans Entitlement Act.

The Coalition believes this relief is urgently needed by single aged pensioners struggling to meet the rising cost of living. To support our campaign please sign our Petition for Pensioners. For details contact my office on 5979 3188.

Greek Community Honoured

I recently had the pleasure of presenting **Flinders Community Awards** to three groups representing the Mornington Peninsula's thriving population of Greek seniors.

Awards were given at the **Dromana Hotel** to:

- the **Rye & Peninsula Greek Seniors' Club**
- the **Rye & Peninsula Greek Women's Group**
- the **Hellenic Association of Mornington Peninsula Aged Citizens' Club**

Flinders Community Awards are given to groups or individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to the community.

The Greek community is a vibrant and energetic group who work exceptionally hard raising money for good causes and looking after those members of the community in need of help.

Perhaps their greatest achievement, however, is in fostering a genuine sense of community and connection among the Peninsula's many elderly Greek residents.



▶
with members
of the Greek
community at the
Dromana Hotel



Positive Ageing: Local Heroes

An invitation to a 100th birthday party recently had me marvelling at the ability of so many senior citizens to grow old positively.

One of the best things about the Flinders electorate is that we have the highest concentration of seniors in Victoria. As a result, we have a community with an abundance of life experience and wisdom to share.

There are so many local seniors who epitomise the spirit of growing old positively, including:

- **Phillip Island** resident **Jim Brierley** who, at age 83, is Australia's oldest parachutist. His determination to make the most of every day and to enjoy life is inspiring.

The Flinders Positive Ageing Forum

On International Day of the Older Persons earlier this month, I called for nominations to honour those seniors who make a contribution to our community.

Successful nominees will be announced at the **Flinders Positive Ageing Forum** to be held next year.

Where: **Rosebud RSL, Eastbourne Road**

When: **9am-12pm, March 27, 2009**

More details will follow in my next newsletter. Those wishing to make a nomination should contact my office.



▲ congratulating Lallah Ellerton on her 100th birthday

- **Margaret Harris**, doyenne of the **Sorrento Portsea Senior Citizens' Club**, whose warmth and zest for life infuse the club with a lively, uplifting spirit.
- The much-loved **Lallah Ellerton**, whose 100th birthday party I attended earlier this year at the Southern Peninsula Community Care in **Rosebud**.

In her earlier years, Lallah was a trailblazing career woman, one of the first women to successfully combine a career in business with having a family.

Although she has long since retired, she continues to take a keen interest in current affairs and politics and has an enormous amount of good advice and wisdom to pass on.



▲ discussing plans for a the new outdoor area at the Southern Peninsula Veterans' Centre **Rosebud**

Southern Peninsula Veterans' Centre Rosebud

I am pleased to announce that the Southern Peninsula Veterans' Centre at **Rosebud** has been granted more than \$16,000 in Federal funding to buy new computer and office equipment.

I visited the centre recently and was impressed by the warm, friendly and relaxed atmosphere at the office.

Staff at the centre help local veterans and war widows with pensions, disability claims and other welfare-related issues and work closely with groups such as Legacy and Carry On.

While at the centre, Pensions Officer Peter Burnett told me about his plan to create a quiet, outdoor courtyard as a place for clients to take time out during visits.

For further information please contact the centre on 5986 3087.

Phillip Island Pensions Welfare Centre Cowes

Phillip Island residents have a new Pensions Welfare Centre located at the RSL Club at **Cowes**.

Thanks to the hard work of staff and club members, the new centre opened on July 1 to provide much-needed support and advice for local veterans and their families.

The Australian Government has provided a grant of \$8746 under the *Building Excellence in Support and Training* (BEST) program to buy computer and other equipment for the new centre.

The club has also been successful in obtaining additional Australian Government funding of \$4000 for the creation of a memorial garden.

The garden will be dedicated to all **Phillip Island** residents who have served Australia in times of war or conflict.

Beyond Disability

Beyond Disability Inc assists house-bound physically-disabled children and adults in gaining access to the internet.

Using the support of local volunteers, recycled computers and low-cost internet, the organisation has so far helped 300 local residents become connected to the internet.

Those interested in finding out more about the services provided by **Beyond Disability** should call 5977 6547 or visit www.bdi.org.au

Focus on the Local Environment

National Tree Day

It was fantastic to see so many local residents turning out to support National Tree Day – Australia's biggest community tree-planting event.

This year's National Tree Day took place on Sunday, July 27, with National Schools Tree Day on July 25.

Since its inception in 1996, more than 1.8 million volunteers have planted nearly 12 million native trees at over 20,000 locations Australia-wide.

Local projects included:

- ✓ Mt Martha Primary School
- ✓ Sunshine Reserve, Mt Martha
- ✓ Friends of Chinaman's Creek, Rosebud West
- ✓ Dromana Foreshore Committee of Management
- ✓ Dromana Primary School
- ✓ Sorrento Pre-School
- ✓ Sorrento Primary School
- ✓ Lions Club of Mt Martha



▲ planting saplings with students from Mt Martha Primary School on National Schools Tree Day

Save Money and Reduce Emissions with Fuel-Efficient Driving – Rosebud Couple Lead the World

I am pleased to support a new fuel-efficiency campaign by Rosebud couple John and Helen Taylor.

John and Helen hold a number of world fuel-efficiency records and I recently invited them to Canberra to spread their fuel-efficiency message and stage an 'MPs versus Media Fuel Efficiency Challenge'.

▼ waving the flag at the start of John and Helen Taylor's fuel-efficiency drive to Canberra



With fuel prices continuing to skyrocket, the event demonstrated how drivers can cut their fuel usage and emissions by up to 30 per cent by using a few simple driving techniques and basic vehicle maintenance.

The Taylors have established a Fuel Academy to take this message directly to the public and have drawn up a list of top tips to improve fuel efficiency. Tips include:

- ✓ drive smoothly – avoid hard acceleration and observe the traffic ahead to reduce braking
- ✓ minimise the use of air conditioning – use the fan unless it is extremely hot
- ✓ keep windows shut and remove roof racks not in use to improve aerodynamic efficiency
- ✓ use higher gears in manual vehicles – change to higher gears sooner than later
- ✓ plan your trips with traffic and stoppages in mind – avoid peak hour traffic
- ✓ ensure the vehicle is well tuned and that tyres are pumped up properly

For a full list of tips and more information, you can visit www.fuelacademy.com

Protection for the Hooded Plover at Gunnamatta Beach

Efforts to preserve the threatened Hooded Plover have been boosted by the installation of new information signs at **Gunnamatta Beach**.

The signs, paid for by the former Coalition Government under its Envirofund program, provide information on how to avoid damaging or destroying the fragile nests of the marine bird species.

The area of coastline between **Cape Schanck** and London Bridge at **Portsea** is home to one of the most important breeding populations of Hooded Plovers in Victoria.

Sadly, the number of Hooded Plovers in Victoria has shrunk dramatically over the past decade.

The Hooded Plover builds its nest on the sand between the high water mark and the dunes. Unfortunately, this makes it easy for beach users to inadvertently stand on a nest and destroy the eggs.

The new information signs advise beach users on how they can avoid destroying nests and disturbing the birds while they are nesting.

Congratulations and thanks go to Malcolm Brown and all members of the Friends of the Hooded Plover.



▲ with Malcolm Brown of the Friends of the Hooded Plover at Gunnamatta Beach
(Hooded Plover image © Tony Wilson 2007)



▲ addressing climate change policy with students at Rosebud's Chisholm TAFE

School Visits

As Shadow Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water I recently wrote to all schools in my electorate offering to set aside time to speak with students about water, the environment and climate change and answer any questions they may have.

More than 20 schools have taken up the offer. Those schools that I have either recently visited or am due to visit include:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ✓ Baxter Primary School | ✓ Flinders Christian College, Tyabb | ✓ Rosebud Secondary College |
| ✓ Bayles Primary School | ✓ Lang Lang Primary School | ✓ San Remo Primary School |
| ✓ Bayside Christian College, Baxter | ✓ Our Lady of Fatima Primary School, Rosebud | ✓ Somerville Rise Primary School |
| ✓ Boneo Primary School | ✓ Padua College, Rosebud | ✓ St Brendan's Primary School, Somerville |
| ✓ Cranbourne South Primary School | ✓ Pearcedale Primary School | ✓ St Joseph's Primary School, Crib Point |
| ✓ Crib Point Primary School | ✓ Penbank School, Moorooduc | ✓ St Mary's Primary School, Hastings |
| ✓ Devon Meadows Primary School | ✓ Rosebud Primary School | ✓ Tootgarook Primary School |
| ✓ Dromana Secondary College | | ✓ Woodleigh School, Baxter |

Mornington Peninsula

▼ at the opening of **Dromana Primary School's** new building



New Classrooms for Dromana Primary School

In July I was delighted to take part in the opening of a new \$1.4 million addition to **Dromana Primary School**.

The construction of new classrooms and an early learning centre was a substantial undertaking and represents years of hard work on the part of Principal Ray Robertson, teachers, students and parents.

I have closely followed this project from the beginning, when we secured \$1.2 million under the Coalition Government's Capital Grants for Schools Programme in September 2006.

In February 2007 I was delighted to announce a further \$200,000 for the school's redevelopment works.

with Frank South near **Sorrento Pier**



On The Trail of Sorrento Portsea Artists

In August I met with Nepean Arts Group member Frank South to discuss the addition of three new interpretive signs along the Sorrento Portsea Artists' Trail.

The trail, which takes visitors from **Sorrento Pier** through to **Portsea** and back, reproduces the works of several renowned Australian painters who have drawn inspiration from the southern Peninsula's spectacular coastal scenery.

This wonderful project is a great addition to the area's many tourist attractions and I urge those who have not yet visited it to do so. It is one of the southern Peninsula's hidden gems.

Maps of the trail are available from local businesses or can be picked up from my office.

OUT AND ABOUT

- ✓ met with winemaker George Mihaly to discuss plans to create an environmentally-sustainable vineyard at Paradigm Hill, **Merricks**
- ✓ presented a flag to residents of Village Life retirement village at **Safety Beach**
- ✓ launched a revegetation program "The Skink Link" at Drum Drum Alloc Creek, **Rosebud**
- ✓ attended the unveiling of the Rotary Centenary Clock at **Rye**
- ✓ spoke at a public meeting about protecting the village character of **Red Hill**
- ✓ addressed students about **Pt Nepean** at Toorak College
- ✓ attended a fundraising luncheon for the Southern Peninsula Community Care at **Dromana**
- ✓ helped with the Lions Club sausage sizzle at **Mt Martha**
- ✓ spoke at the AGM of the Mornington Peninsula Beachside Tourism Association at **Rosebud**
- ✓ attended a fundraising luncheon for the Frankston Peninsula Carers' Inc at **Cape Schanck**
- ✓ spoke at a Year 11 careers day at The Peninsula School, **Mt Eliza**
- ✓ launched a book celebrating 20 years of the U3A on the southern Peninsula at **Dromana**
- ✓ addressed the opening of the refurbished **Sorrento Portsea Senior Citizens' Club**
- ✓ presented trophies at the **Dromana Football Club** awards night at **Rosebud**
- ✓ spoke to students at **Tootgarook Primary School** about the environment



▲ helping daughter Poppy lay a wreath at **Rosebud's** Anzac Day ceremony

Western Port



▲ *lending a hand at Hastings Westpark Primary School's Breakfast Club*

Hastings Westpark Breakfast Club

Operating since 1989, the **Hastings** Westpark Breakfast Club provides breakfast four mornings a week for any of the school's 172-strong student population who wants it.

This terrific program provides local youngsters with the necessary energy to fully participate in all that school has to offer.

I was delighted to recently join the mums who volunteer to run this great program.

Somerville Safety House Scheme

I recently attended **Somerville** Safety House Committee's annual morning tea.

While I was there I spoke with three local principals: Andrew Felsinger of Somerville Rise Primary School, Corrie Hearn of St Brendan's Primary School and Sue Goodall of Somerville Primary School.

I urge all residents to consider becoming volunteers for the Safety House program, which provides a network of safe houses that children and seniors can go to if they feel unsafe or need help.

Visit www.safetyhousevic.org.au for more details.

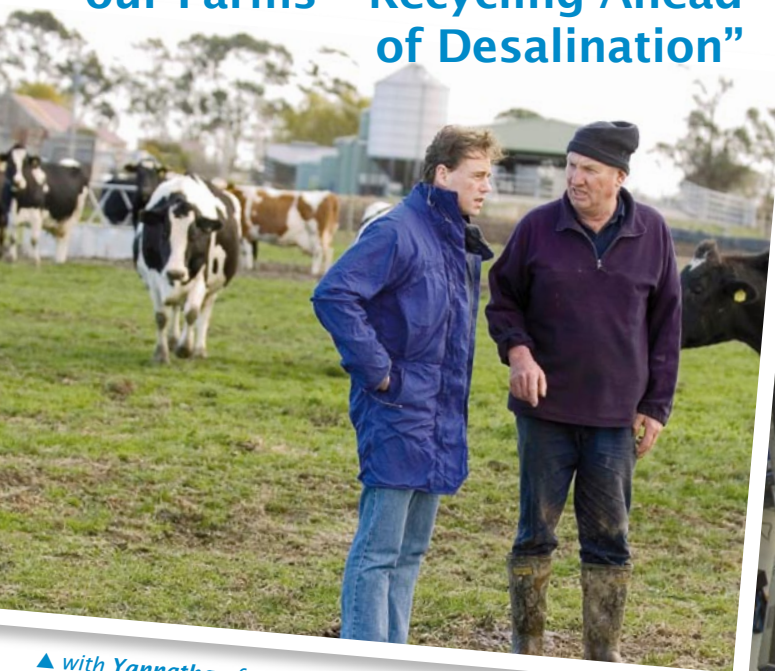


▲ *presenting an Australian flag to scholarship recipient Ruby Stewart at Flinders Christian Community College at Tyabb*

- ✓ attended AGM of the **French Island** Community Association
- ✓ spoke to students at **Baxter** Primary School about the environment
- ✓ attended the **Flinders** Singers charity concert at **Somers**
- ✓ spoke at the Live and Learn Expo at **Somerville** Community House
- ✓ spoke at the 'Sign Up to be an Organ Donor' day at **Hastings**
- ✓ attended the planting of a memorial garden in memory of Kay Stanley at **Tyabb** Pre-School
- ✓ visited the mobile Life Education Learning Centre at St Brendan's Primary School, **Somerville**
- ✓ spoke at the opening of the new Bendigo Bank branch at **Balnarring**
- ✓ attended the Rotary Club of Hastings' annual dinner at **Balnarring**
- ✓ met to discuss latest research with the Dolphin Research Institute at **Hastings**
- ✓ met with the new principal of Mt Erin Secondary College's **Somerville** campus
- ✓ visited small business Freshfield Alpacas at **Somerville**
- ✓ bowled the first bowl of the season at **Hastings** Bowling Club
- ✓ unveiled a new water tank system funded by the Coalition Government at **Balnarring** Bowls and Social Club
- ✓ met with Cecilia Witton to discuss the **Mornington Peninsula** and **Western Port** Biosphere Reserve and opposition to the **Crib Point** bitumen plant
- ✓ met with the director of the Thin Green Line Foundation Sean Willmore at **Balnarring**
- ✓ attended a rally calling for boom gates on the Frankston-Stony Point rail line at Bungower Rd, **Somerville**
- ✓ launched a water recycling project funded by the Coalition Government at The Bays Aged Care Facility, **Hastings**

Casey, Cardinia & Bass Coast

“No to Power Lines Through our Farms – Recycling Ahead of Desalination”



▲ with **Yannathan** farmer **Les Hornby** whose property will be cut in half by the power lines for the desalination plant

Opening of new fire station at Kernot

I was delighted to be invited to speak at the opening of the new fire station at **Kernot** recently.

This project is a wonderful example of the hard work, community spirit and admirable culture of self-sufficiency that thrives throughout the **Bass Coast** and **Phillip Island**.

Members of the **Kernot-Grantville** CFA and local volunteers planned, funded and built this new fire station by working together towards the common goal of protecting their own community.

The local fire brigade has been a vital part of the social fabric of **Kernot** and **Grantville** since the 1940s and it is great to see that this community spirit is as strong as ever.

▼ with **Captain Pat Russell** and **Member for Bass Ken Smith**



New Computer Lab for Koo Wee Rup Primary School

I recently had the pleasure of opening a new computer room at **Koo Wee Rup** Primary School paid for by a \$147,372 grant from the former Coalition Government.

The funding, under the Investing In Our Schools program, enabled the school to buy 28 computers plus interactive whiteboards, furniture, a printer and scanners.



The grant also enabled the school to install air-conditioning and heating in every classroom.

◀ enhancing computer skills at **Koo Wee Rup** Primary School

- ✓ launched a new school bus funded by the Coalition Government at **Koo Wee Rup** Secondary College
- ✓ attended a public meeting to oppose the desalination plant and overhead power lines at **Lang Lang**
- ✓ launched a Green Corps revegetation project at Phillip Island Koala Conservation Centre, **Cowes**
- ✓ visited small business the Koala Park Resort at **Phillip Island**
- ✓ met with **Phillip Island** RSL to discuss new Pensions Welfare Centre
- ✓ met with farmers at **Lang Lang** opposed to overhead power lines to supply the desalination plant
- ✓ took part in the 80th birthday celebrations at **Bayles** Regional Primary School
- ✓ visited small business Kaleebra Greyhounds at **Pearcedale**
- ✓ addressed the 80th birthday celebrations of the **Cranbourne** CWA
- ✓ visited small business La Fontaine Estate winery at **Clyde**
- ✓ attended the launch of the Coastal Communities Coming Together initiative at **Pearcedale**
- ✓ jumped from a plane with the Commando Skydivers at **Tooradin**
- ✓ spoke with students at **San Remo** Primary School about the environment
- ✓ met with the **Cowes** Bulk Billing Surgery team to discuss support for the new medical centre

OUT AND ABOUT