



“Older Men Supporting Older Men”

August 2015

The BOMNET Bulletin

Issue 17

The official Newsletter of the Bundaberg Older Men's Network (BOMNET) Inc.

President's Message

Welcome to the August 2015 issue of the BOMNET Bulletin.

On the 23rd June we paid a visit to the Jabiru Aircraft Factory, and were given a guided tour by owner/designer Rodney Stiff. Rodney did a wonderful job of explaining the aircraft from its inception to today's product. Ben Jansen, BOMNET Treasurer and I called back recently to present Rodney and staff with a Certificate of Appreciation. In Rodney's absence the certificate was presented to Rodney's Personal Assistant, Leigh Cooper by Ben Jansen.



Check out the article titled “Looking Out For A Mate” on Page 3, taken from the current issue of “The Shed Online”, and re-printed here with their kind permission.

We have been invited to the TOMNET Annual Men's Muster being held on **Wednesday 26th August 2015** to be held at **Regents on the Park, 87A Perth Street Toowoomba**. Any of our BOMNET members wishing to attend should RSVP by **Friday 13th August 2015**.

We had the pleasure of the company of Leanne Donaldson, the State Member for Bundaberg, on Tuesday 21st July. We discussed important things to us, including handicapped parking, drop off zones at the Bundaberg Base Hospital among other important issues that affect the elderly. We had a good attendance for Leanne's visit, that is until I produced the camera, then half the group remembered they had important appointments to keep and dashed off. What is it about blokes and cameras?

Check out member Bob Stephensen's bio on Page 4.

Also check out new member Peter Pickering's introduction on Page 6. Peter's life sure has been an interesting one.

Cheers,

John Balding - BOMNET President.



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"BOMNET Drop In Centre"

When: Every Tuesday .

Time: Between 9.00 am and 12.00 pm.

Where: Stadium Kitchen YMCA.

Address: 7 Quinn Street, Kepnock.

Join us for a cuppa and a chat. in a quiet , private, safe environment. If you're feeling lonely, isolated, depressed, or just seeking friendship, pop in and say 'g'day.

Phone John Balding on 41542452 for more details, or email johnbalding@bigpond.com

Meet Our Sponsors

Sponsorship by way of this newsletter is of paramount importance to the growth of the Bundaberg Older Men's Network (BOMNET) Inc., for without the generosity of sponsors we would have little in the way of funds to offset the costs of running our programs.

To date the following businesses have taken out ads in our newsletter, made donations, offered their support by way of a venue for our meetings, or offered reciprocal ads in their own newsletters, and in doing so have become sponsors, and or supporters.

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If any of our growing list of friends and supporters would like to become sponsors, or donate prizes that can be raffled, please contact John Balding by phoning 41542452, or by emailing johnbalding@bigpond.com

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Do You Suffer With Chronic Persistent Pain?

The Bundaberg Pain Support Group meet between 10.00 am and 12 noon on the second Saturday of each month at Room 3, St Mary's Catholic Community Centre in Boston Street, Bundaberg..

The next meeting will be held on Saturday 13th June 2015.

For more information phone Shelley or Sammy on 0456 159 583.

"Pain Free Raffle"

Tickets are now available in the Bundaberg Pain Support Group's "Pain Free Raffle". Why not grab a few tickets and support a worthwhile groupphone 41542452



A BIG "Get Well Soon" to Trevor Colley who is presently recuperating in the Friendlies Private Hospital after a fall.

Our best wishes go out to any other members who aren't feeling the best at the moment.

Looking Out For A Mate

There are times when you come across someone who you are concerned about. You might notice changes in a person's mood, behaviour, energy, habits or personality and wonder what is going on. They might seem sad, anxious, depressed or perhaps their behaviour is erratic.

It can sometimes be hard to know what to do in these situations, what to say or how to help. Here are a few ideas that can help you to look out for a mate.

Show your care and interest

Begin a conversation that is respectful and offers them an opportunity to talk about their situation. Listen carefully as they explain what is happening.

Choose a time and place to talk that is private and where you will both feel comfortable to talk. If they are reluctant to talk, encourage them to seek the support of someone they trust; family members, friends or their GP.

Talk honestly and openly about your concerns

Describe your concerns using 'I' statements such as 'I have noticed... and feel concerned' rather than 'you' statements, and let them know you are concerned about them and want to help.

Ask a few questions about how they are feeling

You might ask a little about how the person is feeling and how long they have felt this way, or if they feel this way all of the time. You could also consider asking if they have had times like this before; this might help them to reflect on what worked for them previously.

Be careful not to ask too many questions; you don't want it to feel like an interrogation. Simply ask questions that help you understand the situation and encourage the person to talk more about what is going on.

Talk to them about some of the benefits of getting support

Remind them that there is help available and that they do not have to face tough times alone.

There are services and people who can help them when they're having trouble with their mental health – just like they can when they have a physical health problem.

Ask the person if they think they need help to work out what is going on and to manage their concerns.

Find information together about mental health and what support they could access

If they are interested in seeking help, consider exploring support options together on the internet, over the phone or by visiting the local community health centre or medical clinic.

Reviewing information on reputable websites like www.beyondblue.org.au can also be helpful. Alternatively, the trained mental health professionals at the *beyondblue* Support Service, 1300 22 4636, can help people work out what options are available as next steps.

Ensure they have a plan on who they can talk to before you walk away

Before you leave them, ensure they have some kind of plan to get support, or make a time to talk with you again, so that they feel supported and not alone.

What if the person doesn't want help?

There may be a range of reasons why the person may not want to seek help; previous experience, fear of stigma, not knowing what to do, or perhaps simply a lack of hope for the future.

Do your best to address their reasons for not seeking help; you might be able to help them overcome their worry or concern by providing more information or reassurance. If they still choose not to seek help, encourage them to think about it; they might change their mind eventually. Or check in with them again soon to see if you can offer any additional support.

Continued on Page 5.

In the spotlight with BOMNET Member Bob Stephensen

I was born in Gayndah in 1939 and as my father was a painter for the public works we travelled to and attended many schools and then finished my education at the Bundaberg High to Junior standard. I then returned to Gayndah to begin an apprenticeship as an electrician which I worked at for three years and then quit because I felt it was not what I wanted to do. I really wanted to work on car bodies so I came down to Bundaberg to take on an apprenticeship as a panel beater. This was hard going because I was on first year wages but I stayed at it until I became a tradesman.

Throughout my years in Bundaberg I married and had three children. Unfortunately my wife died at the age of forty eight of a massive heart attack. As well as being self employed with a panel beating business I found time to race motorcycles, speedway saloon cars and building and flying model airplanes. It was at the end of this pursuit that I met and married my present wife Bev.

This started another life style as we both love Rock and Roll and went to many concerts here and in Brisbane. One of the highlights of this was a Rock and Roll cruise out of Sydney aboard the Rhapsody Of The Sea for four nights. This was nonstop entertainment. After 20 years of marriage I have now retired because of health reasons and we lead a more sedate lifestyle living in a nice two bedroom unit and let the Body Corp take care of the maintenance To satisfy our love of music we regularly attend evenings at Across The Waves Sports Club.

Because we live in the village where the President of BOMNET resides, I heard about the group from the neighbours and it sounded just what I needed to give me some male company without having to be making things or working and as I am involved In Saint Vincent De Paul it gives me a place to relax and talk to other like minded men.



Bob Stephensen




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Looking Out For A Mate Continued from Page 3

What if you are concerned the person is suicidal?

Any discussion about suicide should be taken seriously and talked about. Talking openly about suicide can save a life. Often people do not actually want to die, instead they can see no alternative to what is going on for them and feel unable to live with the intense emotions they are experiencing.

Helping someone who is suicidal begins with an open and honest conversation about what they are thinking, and if they are suicidal, it is important not to leave them alone. Help them to contact a mental health professional via phone (see numbers below), the local hospital emergency department or their local GP. These first few steps can help someone to get the support they need to stay safe. If however it is an emergency, call Triple Zero (000).

24 hour phone services

LifeLine – 13 11 14

www.lifeline.org.au

Confidential telephone crisis support service available 24/7 from a landline, payphone or mobile.

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 468

www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

The Suicide Call Back Service provides free nationwide professional telephone and online counselling for anyone affected by suicide. Supporting someone you are concerned about means talking to them about your concerns and helping them to find support. This simple interaction can be the difference between the person seeking help or not; so don't be afraid to start a conversation. And if you don't know how to help, that is ok too. Show them that you care, encourage them to see their GP for follow up and if you see them again – check how they are going.

There have been many programs written that provide guidance on how to support someone you are concerned about. One such program is called [Mental Health First Aid](#). This is an Australian program that is based on the best evidence available in the mental health field.

Related pages

- [Having the conversation – older men](#)
- [How to have a conversation about how you're feeling](#)
- [How to start a conversation about depression and anxiety Q&A](#)
- [Have the conversation with a health professional](#)
- [Need help talking to your teen about how they feel?](#)

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The blokes from BOMNET welcome our latest member Peter Pickering, who joined us during July. Here are a "few" words from Peter.

I was born in Melbourne in 1940. Probably as good a place as any at the time considering what was going on in Europe and shortly thereafter to the north of Oz.

My Dad was a Pom who escaped from a small mining village and came to Victoria. He wasn't "going down bloody pit" and his only alternatives were emigration or starvation.

My mother's family were Irish who settled in the Toowoomba area before Toowoomba actually existed. Great, great Grandad Jimmy Green was a bullock driver who did the run from the Darling Downs to Ipswich.

The land of Oz was a bloody good place to grow up in in the 50s & 60s. All you had to do was get off your backside and you could achieve anything, so I decided to have a go and see what I could achieve.

I had an interest in animals and decided that being a Vet could be interesting. Problem. No Vet School in Melbourne, so you had to go to Sydney for 5 years. No chance of that, no money.

What about medicine? Righto let's give that a whirl. But this was the time before group medical practices and when doctors made house calls and were on call 24/7 Running a decent sized farm would be nice but no \$\$\$s for that either.

That filled in the next 5 years and after getting married and spending 2 years in England I came home and set up shop in Dandenong, an outer Melbourne suburb.

However I soon found that general dentistry is rather boring, (there's a pun there somewhere) and I became interested in oral and facial surgery.

So back to Uni for another 3 years. Still had to work though and somehow managed to sire 3 sons in those same 3 years. I Don't think I slept much.

By my late 40s I'd had enough of wisdom teeth and the like and, as I'd acquired a reasonable sized farm that was making good money I decided to give away the fang farrier business altogether.

But no one had told me that Primary Production was like gambling. Your opponents are God and Governments. God sent a drought and two very nasty bushfires and the Governments changed a number of rules regarding international trade. So financially I went from being quite comfortable to having the backside out of my jeans.

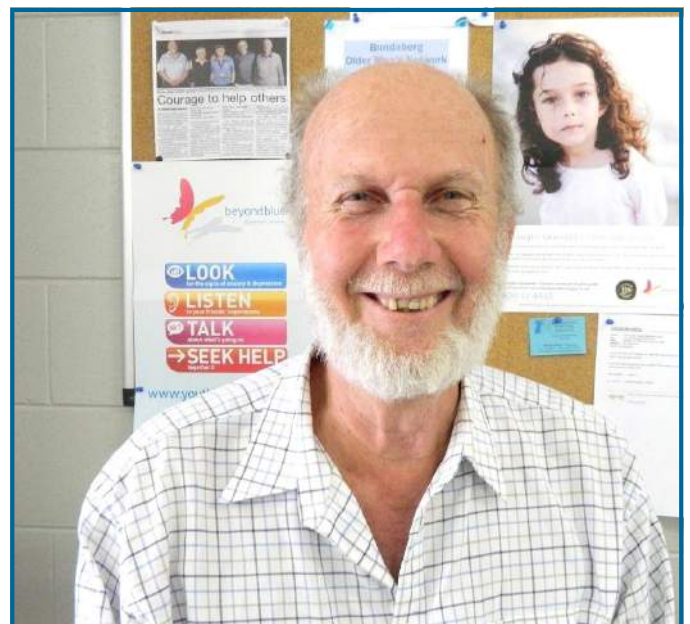
So back to the old trade and I did stints with the Vic Aboriginal Health Service and the Vic Health Department finally ending up as a lecturer at Melb Uni. I really enjoyed teaching but had to give it away when my eyes started to pack it in a bit over 10 years ago.

My wife and I decided to go our separate ways and after we sold up I headed north to Qld.

I've travelled a fair bit, seen most of Australia, spent a summer in Antarctica and been to Africa, PNG and Bougainville.

If Jo puts up with me until Melbourne Cup Day this year we will have been together 10 years.

Cheers, Peter P.



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Our thanks go out to 4BU and Billy Healy for his ongoing support and regular "On Air" chats.

Many thanks to Phill Sellwood and staff for their support, and for helping us out with use of the Stadium Kitchen for our Drop In Centre and monthly meetings.



WE are most grateful to the Bundaberg Regional Council for the approval of our grant application, thus enabling us to purchase the most essential capital equipment items to produce this newsletter, among other things.

This newsletter was printed by BCAS (Bundaberg Community Admin Support)

A work for the Dole Activity funded by the Australian Government.

A BIG thanks to Tabettha and the Team

Please support those who support us.

Bundaberg Older Men's Network (BOMNET) Inc.

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