

## ***STRENGTH AND KINDNESS***

### ***Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP)***



54 Beaconsfield Pde, Albert Park 3206  
Ph: 96962107; barthur@basp.org.au  
Website: www.BASP.org.au

*I was a stranger and you made  
me welcome ...*

***Newsletter 81 October 2016***

The Project aims to:

- \* provide hospitality and practical support for people seeking asylum
- \* actively network with like-minded individuals and groups who are working for justice for asylum seekers
- \* promote advocacy for the rights of asylum seekers
- \* raise awareness of asylum seeker issues and concerns through a range of activities

### **Equality of opportunity for individuals, regardless of their race, religion or ethnic background. .. or mode of arrival in Australia**

We are somewhat overwhelmed by the increasing number of people (families and individuals) who are at an advanced stage of feeling hopeless, boxed in, mentally trapped by the whole process of trying to get some resolution of their situation in Australia. Most are suffering significant mental and psychological strain because they have been just waiting for something to happen for such a long time – and then they can only hope for a temporary visa and if successful another temporary visa. If there are no legal changes we will have a permanent group of second class citizens. In many other countries this is taken as a given but in Australia we have prided ourselves on a spirit of egalitarianism that embraces mutual respect, tolerance, fair play and compassion for those in need and pursuit of the public good. Indeed our government's statement of values claims this. We may never have achieved this ideal but at least we believed this was what we prized.

We are not lawyers here at BASP. However, we are often seeing people about legal issues and we have two wonderful Migration Agents who work to help those people for whom it is difficult to find assistance. Much of the work of advocacy involves a consideration of the legal rights of people to make applications for protection. The gradual erosion of the rights of those seeking protection in Australia is distressing. Indeed, we are alarmed by the failure of our legal system to protect fundamental rights; by the failure of our courts and Parliament to protect the rights and freedoms that have evolved over millennia. **The 1951 Refugee Convention explicitly states that those fleeing persecution should not be penalised because they arrived in an undocumented way, that is without a valid visa.** In Australia such people have been increasingly stripped of many of their basic human rights.



Along with many others in the community we believe that Australia needs a Bill of Rights or a Human Rights Act that would enable the courts to constrain the excesses of indefinite and cruel treatment.

Sometimes at BASP we feel very sad that we can't say to refugees and all people seeking protection: *You are welcome. We welcome you. Our Government and our community will give you a fair go. We need you and you need us so together we will be fine!*

***Donations to the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project are tax deductible***

## When bad news is too hard to bear

A few weeks ago we had an email from one of our young Hazara asylum seeker men: *I lost all my childhood friends last Saturday in Kabul. Sad life. I wish I was never born in this life.*

Reza

This referred to the attack in July where at least 80 people were killed and 231 others injured in twin suicide bombings at a demonstration in Kabul. Officials say it was the deadliest attack in Afghanistan since 2001.

Graphic television footage from the site of the blasts showed many dead bodies lying on the bloodied road, close to where thousands of Hazara had been demonstrating over the route of a planned multi-million-dollar power line. Pictured here is the burial of many of the victims.



## Should we be fearful of Muslims? And should Muslims fear us?

It is unfortunate to say the least that many Australians fear Muslims to the extent that some quite prominent public figures have called on a ban of all Muslim immigration. Accompanying this sad situation is an equally disturbing one that many Muslims, particularly women, are frightened of community angst. A wonderful family were attacked at a bus stop recently because the mother was wearing a hijab and the father/husband was powerless to respond because his immigration status is so tenuous that any complaint against him would have prevented the family from any chance of attaining a Protection Visa. His small son said to him afterwards, “Why didn't you hit him for treating us like that?”

Muslims coming to Australia is not new. In fact we are told that contact between Muslim fishermen from Indonesia and our indigenous population was happening before the First Fleet in 1788. Certainly we had Afghan cameleers in the early years of European settlement—people who understood the terrain here better than the British!

It is true that in different parts of the world, particularly the Middle East, some Muslim groups are targeting other Muslim groups and the violence is horrific. Many seeking protection in Australia are the victims of this violence. As most people point out that while extremist attacks may be carried out in the name their religion does not equate to that religion being the cause of the attacks. In 1994, an hysterical and terrible genocide in Rwanda happened in a country that was 90% Christian. Indeed churches became the physical sites of thousands of people being killed. There are complex reasons why this happened but, as in the case of Muslim peoples killing each other, we can argue that it is not in the spirit of either the Christian or Muslim religion that these atrocities happen.

People seeking protection from countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Syria are commonly fleeing religious or politico-religious based violence. Religious minorities such as Christians, Yazidis or Mandeans in Iraq are especially at risk from these extremists and war criminals. They are all fleeing hatred driven by irrational fear and prejudice.

In Australia, asylum seekers now face a new fear and prejudice, from those who do not understand why the refugees are coming. Political groups such as One Nation promote fear and prejudice. Luckily in Australia there is no real risk of being killed in bomb attacks, but we hear reports of abuse and discrimination because of religion. ' Indeed, what is One Nation afraid of? Their fear is “the other”, and rather than meet people and learn about their country or culture, they promote irrational fear. We would argue that the small Muslim community here has much more to fear from us than we do from them.

## Visiting Christmas Island August 2016

Pamela Curr and Brigid Arthur

'I am so tired'. A sentiment that was both vocalised and observed. A young man sits with quivering hands and instinctively one wants to comfort him. But he doesn't know us and we need more time to establish a relationship.

The visitors are two advocates from Melbourne and the men being visited are being detained in the Immigration Detention Centre on Christmas Island. The place is a discordant mass of grey uninviting and harsh concrete and wire mesh. The actual room we are meeting in is drab, devoid of any softness or colour. Even the uniform of the Serco Officers is grey – it is almost as though any sign of colour would be an admission that some humanity had found a chink of opportunity.

To hope we need to be able to see a horizon, to picture something to work towards, to strive for, to dream about. Here there is no horizon, in fact or in metaphor. Here we see about thirty men who are in varying stages of applying



Christmas Island

for protection but there is a sense of hopelessness that overrides the particularities of their cases. So even though each one is particular, the sum of it all is summed up in the often repeated 'Just get me out of here'. One begins to wonder how long the human spirit can survive with no freedom. 'We have to ask for a cup of tea or coffee. We have to say please each time'. We look into listless eyes and wary faces and ask ourselves 'Who dreamed this up?' and more importantly 'Who can dream up and execute an alternative?'

Almost ironically, the Centre is in a clearing, an area set in lush, green jungle. There are beautiful large butterflies, many birds and occasional red crabs (for which the island is famous). The island itself is small and remote – a tiny rock in the Indian Ocean far closer to Jakarta than any Australian city, and the detention centre is on the opposite side of the island to the settlement so it has an even more remote feeling. 'I was born a refugee'. A young twenty three year old who has been in detention, including Christmas Island, for over three years. A young faili Kurd who has spent all his life as an alien, belonging nowhere, being accepted by no one.

'The only way to stay safe is to stay in your room'. 'I am way too tired here'. This from a man who escaped from the Iranian secret police (basij) and the special revolutionary army group (Sepah). A man whose whole life appears to have been scripted with incidents of intimidation and years of violence and fear.

Relationships have been almost impossible to maintain at this distance. One said, 'My wife thinks I must have been in some trouble to have been moved to Christmas Island' and another, 'I have a girlfriend in Melbourne but it is impossible for her to see me. She has her own life now'.

What emerges as we talk to people is that here are men who believe they are treated as commodities and who, by and large, are reacting in a semi automaton way. 'I asked what was happening to my case' and they said 'We are having a big meeting about you – but no one told me what happened'.

The Centre could be called a place of endless waiting. Men are told 'The Minister has lifted the bar – a technical way of saying 'Your case can now be assessed' but in fact it often seems to mean nothing. Indeed it can be followed by the advice 'You don't need a lawyer'.



Cage for 1 hour fresh air from cell in the isolation unit.

Many of those detained are there because their visas have been cancelled because of the strict new character tests introduced 2014. 'I was picked up for drink driving. I didn't care. My sister had just been killed in a road accident'. A criminal offence or any breaking a rule that an asylum seeker commits while on a Bridging Visa may mean being put back into detention and may disqualify the person from refugee status. All misdemeanours, however small and whenever it occurs, can be used to deny a visa application. This is a world where even breaking a TV is a crime punishable with isolation and deprivation of ordinary human interactions. Listening to these men talking makes us reflect that a good percentage of the Australian population at large would doubtless fail the character test.

The men are not anti-authority and they try to be fair in their assessments of those in charge. 'Not all officers are bad – it is like 5 fingers (holding up a hand) see all different'.

Most conversations involve a reference to 'Before and after the riots ... and the death of Fazel'. This is referring to November 2015 when an Iranian Kurdish man, Fazel Chegeni committed suicide. He seems to have been a victim of many of the things the men talk about: a conviction over a minor incident—(a fight in a canteen that lasted less than a minute). Such is the unpredictable and unforgiving nature of the law as it applies to refugees that pleading guilty meant loss on character ground and therefore virtually no hope of being allowed to stay in Australia. Then a hopeless situation follows – long term and indefinite detention. There seems little real evidence of what happened after Fazel's death, but fires were lit and there was a lockdown in the Centre. Subsequently, 'it is all much tougher now'.

We leave with a feeling almost of being new accomplices in a horrendous misappropriation of justice – we also are deserting these men. Maybe recording something of their existence is a small step towards ensuring they are not forgotten.

### **Signing: signal for hope or despair?**

One of the things that gets communicated around a detention centre like wildfire is any news or rumours that a person or people are going to be released into the community. There is genuine joy for those getting good news and, at the same time, anguish that it is still not 'me'. For people looking for even a skerrick of hope there is the inevitable calculations about who arrived in Australia first, who has had a application in longest and so on.

The signal that one is to be released is normally that the person is asked to sign a code of behaviour agreement. It is necessary to sign this agreement before a Bridging Visa is granted. The code says that the asylum seeker must not bully, spread rumours, spit or swear in public, or persistently "irritate" anyone. It also states that the person must not make sexual contact without consent, must never make sexual contact with someone under the age of consent, or engage in criminal behaviour.

If the Department of Immigration and Border Protection finds that an asylum seeker has breached the code, their income support may be reduced or stopped, an existing bridging visa may be cancelled, or the asylum seeker may be detained or even transferred to an offshore detention centre.

Usually signing the code, means a release in a week or two but sometimes a person signs and then is left in detention, it seems indefinitely, even after signing. So 'Ali' keeps saying, with increasing despair, 'They are just playing with my life. I signed five months ago and they will not let me out'. Neither 'Ali', nor anyone else he asks can tell him why this is. It is the Minister's decision is all he can glean. He has a wife and two children in the community. He used to be allowed to go with Serco officers to see them once a fortnight but for many months now this has not been allowed. The joy of the news he shared on signing months ago has changed to a black anguish of disbelief.



## **Volunteers and supporters embracing individuals and families.**

As well as the Support of Families Through the teaching of English, we have other volunteers who visit and assist people seeking asylum in a number of ways. These connections are significant and make such a difference. One family is a mother with 4 children, the oldest being of kindergarten age. Despite best intentions, it has been difficult to harness all 4 children to get the oldest to kinder on a regular basis. We now have a couple who visit once a week and either take her to kinder or mind the others while Mum does. On 2 other days a week, another volunteer does the run to and from kinder. This has transformed the youngster from being reluctant about kinder to being enthusiastic, forming friendships and being much more 'school ready' than she would have otherwise been. At the same time, the couple and another volunteer have arranged for the 3 yo to have one day paid child care a week, giving him the opportunity for stimulation and play with others. What a great benefit these initiatives will have in the immediate as well as the longer term.

**John** who does the collection and delivery of household items has had a long tradition of including an asylum seeker to come on the run, if they are interested and have no work/work rights. Through this, one young Somali man secured some casual work with a removalist and this in turn helped him get a full time job in a factory. Recently, another young man from Sri Lanka has been helping - not only getting hints on good removalist techniques but some general advice about likes, customs and expectations in Australia.

**Kerry**, another long time supporter of BASP has recently assisted a young man from Ethiopia prepare for the White Card exam, which is the OHS certificate to work in the construction business. Kerry has helped others with driving practice for their licence.

Two other volunteers set up a roster to visit a young man who had a fall and needed to rest for 3 months. He was unable to get out and about and the days were very long without this companionship being provided.

Using contacts is another way of giving people an opportunity. A young Somali woman doing her Diploma of Childcare could not secure a 200 hour placement in any child care centre she approached. One word to volunteer Mary and she was connected to a centre willing to give her the break she needed.

### **The Support of families through the teaching of English program**

A note and some photos from Cath, Nay and Steph, volunteers who visit a family with the English Program.

“This family often feed us, we don't get a choice! So we've come to an arrangement where we share the cooking now. Hence one of the photos is from the night that we had “Aussie Pie” night, we made homemade pies. Lots of fun and Rezwan is quite handy with the pie decorating. We're usually there for 2 – 3 hours and even then it's tough getting out of there. We all enjoy spending time with Touba and her family immensely, thanks for the opportunity to lend a hand.”



We would love to hear from anyone interested in assisting in this way. Most of the families waiting are in the northern or western suburbs and the visits are usually 1-1.5 hours, unless it evolves as in the example above. If you are interested, please email one of the 2 volunteer co-ordinators of the program- Sue Wood - wood572@hotmail.com; or Phillip Steele - phillip.steele1@gmail.com

## Accommodation

Following the success of the recent fundraiser for Crisis Accommodation, this funding continues to support a number of people in a variety of ways.



- It supplements the rent of a young Somali mother with 2 children who could not afford to pay for private rental on the Centrelink she receives. This is in Lalor.
- It pays for rent and utilities of a family of 4 which has been waiting for over a year for a response from Immigration re their visa application. Father/husband can do some menial work which just covers their living costs.
- It pays for one house in Lalor where two men are housed. One has been released from detention after 4 years and is still adjusting to living in the community. The other is appealing his visa rejections and he has had his right to work and to income support revoked - leaving him with no money and no option to work.
- One of the attendees at the fund raiser generously made a unit in Hawthorn available for twelve months at a very low rent (\$50 pw). BASP furnished it and a couple moved in early August with their first child due within two weeks of the move. Prior to this they were in a short term emergency house after living in a car. They are Tamils from Malaysia.
- A large house in Glen Iris - to be demolished in 6-12 months - has also been made available by one of the attendees at a significantly reduced rent. This will house four single men and has been furnished by donations from community members.

As well as enabling BASP to rent properties, the funds also allow us to help with short term emergencies such as a young Tamil man, without funds or work rights who had been sleeping at the station for some time. We tided him over at a motel for 5 nights while another agency was able to make further arrangements.

A family assisted through the initial Crisis Accommodation funding called recently, to say they would never forget the help they received when they so needed it. Their visa and income support was uncertain and as such they were unable to secure any rental themselves. BASP took out a lease and topped up the rent until these matters were more settled. Eventually, their income support became more stable and they were able to take over the full rental. At the end of the lease, it was transferred into their name. This means so much to be functioning independently again. However, it was wonderful that BASP had the means to help when it was needed.

### General Housing Program

The availability of the housing through the Crisis Accommodation initiative and through other individuals and groups has enabled us to assist an increasing number of people being desperate for low cost or no cost accommodation, depending on their circumstances.

An Ethiopian couple are being housed while waiting for their visa application to be processed. Another man, also awaiting some assistance was able to be housed in one of our shared houses. After arranging this, we heard the following message from his case worker - *Just writing to say thank you so much for finding Mr X a place to stay for a while. When I spoke to him on Friday his voice had lifted and you could just hear how relieved he was to have a place to stay. It was a nice piece of news to end the week on. So thank you very much..*

Some months ago, a couple with a new baby took up the offer of accommodation, made by a family with a bungalow in the Wonthaggi area. The couple have been embraced by the community including Rural Australians for Refugees. The husband has full time work, the wife is running cooking classes and selling candles. They have moved from the bungalow to a rented home in the area, having made many connections in this community.

This has enabled another young woman with a 2 year old to take up the housing in the bungalow, after moving through a number of short stay places over the past year.

Those who take up the options of regional living seem to enjoy it greatly, but many are reluctant to leave the few people and locations they know in the city. We have received a couple of generous offers for country housing in recent times and are hoping to find matches for these in the near future.

## Employment

Marian Steele, the BASP volunteer who helps those asylum seekers in the community with work rights to try to access jobs is developing many contacts and giving hope to quite a number of job seekers. Marian makes sure all have a resume to give to prospective employers and she has a lot of helpful advice to guide those who are in a difficult position in the job market.

Adar, an IT professional, has been studying assiduously for the past 15 months since arriving in Australia last year, fleeing persecution. Last week he successfully completed a complex CISCO accreditation – achieving a very high score. This means he is now a qualified network engineer who can plan, implement, and troubleshoot local and wide-area enterprise networks. So anyone who needs a CISCO qualified network engineer ..... – contact us. Having only been released from detention recently and received working rights, Gehdi could not wait to get his resume done and apply for jobs. He tried various sales jobs online but to no avail. Then he decided he would canvass all the shops in the local shopping centre. After an exhausting (and cold) time of approaching more than 30 shops he struck gold. One retailer required a sales assistant part time to start immediately and he was given the opportunity.

**If you have ANY work opportunities – no matter how small - talk to us and we will find a willing and enthusiastic worker.**

### How you can help with Jobs

The response to an article in the parish newsletters regarding work opportunities was very positive and from this a number of people found employment.

It is always pleasing to see individuals making a go of it in establishing businesses. Hamid who has been known to BASP for a number of years has begun his own tiling business with a colleague- – The Ghan Tiling Group- and they now have experience on larger jobs eg Aged Care facility, a gym, apartments. **Phone Number for Hamid 0452488544**

Two others have established cleaning businesses and we already have had referrals for these services from members of the community.

### Tickets to work!

Completing vocational training can be a real help when seeking work.

Fortunately our relationship with MultiSkills Training, a registered training organisation, has provided access, at a discounted rate, for asylum seekers to undertake courses including White card and fork lift driver's training.

MultiSkills Training is a family owned business, providing a range of training programs for the construction industry.

*'The forklift driver's course gave me new skills and confidence and helped me get a job.'* Mohammad

Thanks MultiSkills Training for providing this assistance to our Program.

## Some things don't change!

From The Argus 1937 (courtesy Pat Agostino and John Addie)

Sir, With 10 years' experience of fruit growing districts in Victoria and New South Wales, I suggest that the champions of Italians could profitably pay a visit to numerous areas in both States. The conditions under which these men and their families live are, in the great majority of cases, on a level lower than exists at our own "Dudley Flats." The average aboriginal camp along the northern rivers is superior in every detail to the average Italian camp.

I have yet to see any church in these localities overcrowded with "religious Italians." Invariably the whole family, down to the smallest toddlers, are in the paddocks from daylight to dark. In practically the whole of these districts it has been found necessary to increase police protection.

If we must have migrants and cannot get English stock, let us try for Northern Europeans, who invariably make their country of adoption their home, live up to local standards, and take an interest in the welfare of the community in general. **AN AUSTRALIAN**

Yours etc.

Albert Park



Celebrating Gul's first success with his many friends.

## Migration Assistance - 2 joyful outcomes in an often bleak space

A celebration at last! The man on Brigid's left in the photo has had many rejections in his visa process and he now has received the recognition that the process had not been followed and he could reapply. This was thanks to the extraordinarily hard and diligent work of Judy Dixon, a BASP pro-bono migration agent and Julian Gormly, a lawyer in Sydney.



Judy Dixon who has worked with BASP for many years giving assistance as a Migration Agent, has provided the photo and good news story of Benjamin Niaznak.

Many years ago his father Mahmoud Niaznak was in Maribyrnong Immigration Detention Centre (MIDC), Judy helped him get his protection visa. He was very young and eventually he got a permanent visa and citizenship. He did an apprenticeship and became a plumber.

Then last year Mahmoud went back to Iran and married his childhood sweetheart, Sarah. Judy assisted with a Spouse Visa application and then Sarah became pregnant. She was not permitted to travel from Iran after she was 6 months pregnant and until baby was 3 months old. So, when Benjamin was born in Iran Judy applied immediately for his Australian citizenship, on grounds that his father was Australian. We got it immediately - within 3 or 4 days.



Benjamin

Then she applied for an Australian passport for him. He was 2 months old. He got the passport immediately.

When Sarah's visa was finalised they came here, Sarah on a Spouse Visa and Benjamin as an Australian- no visa required. A rare set of circumstances and a great outcome.

**Well done Judy!**



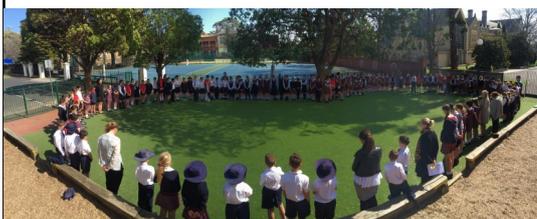
## Circles of Silence

To advocate for people on Manus and Nauru to be brought to Australia, Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum (CAPSA) organised a series of school events called Circles of Silence. Schools invited special guests to share experiences, thoughts and prayers about the current policy towards refugees in Australia.

The Circles of Silence movement originated in Toulouse, France in 2007 among Franciscan groups in an effort to express solidarity with asylum seekers and immigrants experiencing injustice. However, similar non-violent and peaceful forms of protest have been used by a multitude of social justice movements around the world in the pursuit of change, including Mahatma Gandhi's protests against British colonialism and the American Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Since 2007, the movement has spread and



Students from many schools gathered at Birrarung Marr and here are listening to Brigid from BASP.



Students at St James in Brighton forming their circle of silence—with Brigid from BASP

there have been Circles of Silence events across Europe in Spain, Britain, and Malta. All are unique to the experience of immigrants in that particular society, but united in the purpose of standing in solidarity with all people, regardless of where they have come from and their life experiences.

A talented woman, Mojkan, made several art pieces while in detention. She actually made a couple of very stylish bags from an old pair of jeans—with no pattern! And crocheted doilies like this one.



BASP worked with the VCAL students at Star of the Sea College to set up a small business which has a website and will sell items of jewellery and items such as Mojkan's craft. More details will be available before the end of the year.



John and Pat have been involved with BASP for a number of years. They have 2 creative neighbours who held a fundraising exhibition for BASP displaying and selling beautiful ceramic and wool crafted items. A most enjoyable Sunday afternoon was had by all who attended and \$1700 was raised for BASP.

Monica Dullard and other well-known comedians held a Comedy Benefit Night for Asylum Seekers at the St Kilda Town Hall in August. Over 450 attended and it was a great night, raising awareness of issues affecting people seeking protection in Australia. Many comedians gave of their time and artistic skills to make the night such a success. Many gave such enthusiastic feedback to BASP. *We have never had such a funny night!*



The proceeds from the night were given to BASP and to Refugee Legal.

We are again delighted to have the support from the Sisters of Little Company of Mary who sponsor a refugee each year with their tertiary studies. BASP put forward a young man from Chad who is undertaking a nursing course at TAFE. He has already commenced, taking out a loan, working part-time as well as helping his mother and 6 siblings when he can. BASP is delighted he was successful in getting this assistance.



John is bus driver and general support on so many BASP activities.



### The Social Justice group of the St Louis de Montford parish again hosted a barbeque for people seeking asylum.

This was the 3<sup>rd</sup> year they have done this and again about 35 people joined with parish members to have a most enjoyable day. John Meyer, one of the Social Justice group and an important member of BASP, again borrowed the bus from Simmons College and collected families from Epping, Glenroy and Broadmeadows to take them to the school at Aspendale. The school was a perfect location, with an extensive vegie garden, birds and animals as well as play equipment and grounds. The very strong winds on the day did not mar the day.



Fatima, Leila and families

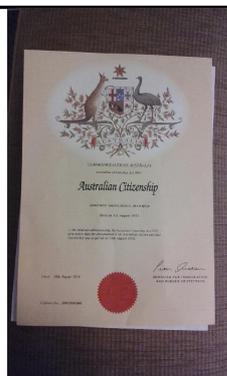
Many thanks to the parish, the school, Simmons College for the donation of bus and fuel and to John for getting people there and back.

One of the people who teaches English is going away on a holiday. Her daughter who is a young lawyer has a job to do while her mother is away. It is to take the dog out to see the family because the children have formed an absolute attachment to the dog and it is helping the whole family's recovery from the traumas of their recent past.

The Mariana Community hosted another weekend recently at their community house in Millgrove. Three families took up this generous offer and enjoyed all it had to offer. All 3 families have been detained on Nauru for 2 years, then at the Broadmeadows Detention centre and more recently in Community Detention. Their freedom of movement is limited but after much paperwork, the Department approved their 2 nights' trip to Millgrove. Many thanks to the community and its members who shared the weekend with these people.

Jasmine Pilbrow is a young student who disrupted the departure of a Qantas flight because there was a Tamil asylum seeker on board who was being deported. Jasmine is a member of Love Makes a Way. She stood in the plane and explained that her action was a protest about the deportation. She was found guilty of interfering with a crew member and asked her to voluntarily pay Qantas \$3429, which the airline argues it lost because of the incident. Jasmine's friends did some crowd funding to pay for the fine and costs. This effort paid for the fine and the money left over was distributed between BASP and another group. We thank Jasmine and her supporters for the donation of \$3847.92. More importantly we recognise the courage of a twenty two year old who made an important point about transporting people back to danger. The Tamil man in question is before the court in Sri Lanka.

Some of our BASP supporters will remember Abrehet who lived in the house in Beaconsfield Pde, Albert Park and then in the Coburg Murray Rd house. Abrehet came from Ethiopia and she is a singer of repute. Recently she got her citizenship. We were very excited for her. Abrehet's dream is to establish a restaurant so we may hear more !





**We have been very short of food and household goods. Some things are much more in demand than others**

**Staples are:** Sugar, flour, tinned tomatoes, tins of fruit, Tuna (plain), Long life milk, tea and coffee, cheese, biscuits, honey, noodles.

**Basmati rice** as well as **dried lentils, burghal and chick peas** (in preference to those in tins) are especially welcome.

**We seemingly never have enough washing powder, cleaning products and toilet paper.**

**Cooking oil is always welcome.**

Quite a number of families have small children, so **disposable nappies and wipes** are an ongoing need.

### **Something Special**

A **voucher for Coles, Big W, Kmart or similar stores** allows individuals and families the independence to buy something they really want and need.

**We have an ample supply of tinned soup and beetroot so no more needed at this point.**

For anyone wishing to make a donation, the Project Bank details are: Brigidine Asylum Seekers Trust Account: bsb: 083-004; a/c: 56-924-6603; NAB.

Please put your name on the entry and if possible send us a message so that we can send you a receipt. This could be a text message on 0438 001 515 or an email to [jcaldwell@basp.org.au](mailto:jcaldwell@basp.org.au).

We want to thank the many who assist us in making a real difference in the lives of many people seeking protection.



Many are part of BASP through the support of families through the teaching of English Program and we are immensely grateful to Sue and Phil for their continuing wonderful work in organising and maintaining this program. About 160 volunteers give their time to this program and often these volunteers become staunch advocates and supports for their families.

Thanks for all the money contributions. They enable us to pay for many supports for families and individuals. All the money received (except for fairly minimal administration costs) goes to asylum seekers.

Brigid Arthur

Libby Saunders

(BASP Coordinators)