

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 87 February 2018

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

Nelson Mandela said *Peace and prosperity, tranquillity and security are only possible if these are enjoyed by all without discrimination.* We agree that our own freedom as individuals is only secure when we care about the safety and security of all other people. This is not a purely selfish ideal. Increasingly there is a need for us as citizens to reaffirm our belief in a decent society where there is an expectation on those of us who have all we need (and often more than we need) to support those who are vulnerable. And increasingly, in a world where there is so much interdependency on multiple levels, and sixty five million people on the move seeking sanctuary, this surely needs to be a global understanding.

President Barack Obama in his final address to the United Nations General Assembly, calling on leaders to work together and criticizing those who seek a “simple rejection of global integration” said

I do not believe progress is possible if our desire to preserve our identities gives way to an impulse to dehumanize or dominate another group. If our religion leads us to persecute those of another faith, if we jail or beat people who are gay, if our traditions lead us to prevent girls from going to school, if we discriminate on the basis of race or tribe or ethnicity, then the fragile bonds of civilization will fray. The world is too small, we are too packed together, for us to be able to resort to those old ways of thinking.

Ideally on a global scale we need to work towards people not being displaced or forced to move to protect themselves. But since we are a long way from this goal, refugees need not only protection from the persecution they have fled but also the opportunity to build a sustainable life in a place where they can be physically safe and enjoy longer term security. That is why almost all refugees move – the search for sustainable protection. Australia at present only grudgingly accepts people seeking refugee status and falls far short of treating refugees without discrimination in our country.

Current policies are punitive and cruel to those who present themselves here seeking asylum. These policies might be achieving their short-term political ends but they are presenting Australia to the world in a very bad light. We are increasingly being seen as a nation which is deeply hypocritical on matters of human rights, a very wealthy and spoilt nation which wants to share in the benefits of global trade but much prefers to push responsibility for humanitarian crises back on its much poorer neighbours. If willing partners can't be found, then our government finds ways of paying others to do its dirty work, starting with the weakest and the poorest.



Donations to the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project are tax deductible

What is the real situation on Manus Island and Nauru?

Very gradually refugees on Manus Island and Nauru are being transferred to US. Twenty two went in mid February—the fourth group to exit the islands, dogged by delays, confusion and travel bans as well as resentment from Donald Trump. More than 1600 have expressed interest in going to the US—it has been reported from the beginning of the deal that there may be 1250 accepted. What will Australia do to/for the remaining people?

It is hard to get numbers of refugees on both of these islands because different numbers are given and for different dates. However there seems to be over 1800 people (742 on Manus, 1048 on Nauru), including 150 children –still languishing in desperate and dangerous conditions on Nauru and Manus, a situation the UNHCR has called a 'humanitarian crisis' of Australia's own making. The movement to the US is very slow and since there is no time table or list of people who will be made an offer there is huge anxiety for all those left. There are another 200 men on Manus (in Hillside Haus) who have been rejected as refugees—and these are in limbo. Many argue they have had an inadequate legal process.

The toll among Burmese, Sudanese, Somali, Lebanese, Pakistani, Iraqi, Afghan, Syrian, Iranian and other refugees is devastating: self-immolation, overdoses, death from septicaemia as a result of medical negligence, sexual abuse and rampant despair. The provisions for health care are totally inadequate for those with complex needs.

As well as this, **families here on the mainland who were brought to Australia for serious medical reasons, are being assessed by the Nauruan government and being given refugee status but they are unsure of what this might mean.** It ensures that they cannot be returned involuntarily to their own country and that they are eligible to be chosen for the US. But in the event of their not being able to go to the US, their options are resettling on Nauru or going to Cambodia. A question in their minds is—do we have to go to Nauru first to go to the US if we are given this option? That would be very frightening because they would fear being left on Nauru. And as one parent said to us “We don’t want another new beginning. We have friends here and we feel part of this community. We hate the thought of upending everything—especially with the kids once again.”

There is a lot of unrest in both Manus Island and Nauru. We believe that Australia has put both these places in an invidious position. **Australia acts towards both countries as a colonial power—no matter what language is used to cloak this reality.** Both PNG (and therefore Manus) and Nauru have effectively been Australian colonies for part of their history. Both are indeed 'client states' and both rely on Australian money. The money paid to the governments of both places is considerable. And this money is used for jobs for an under-employed workforce and capital works that cannot be afforded by either of these countries. It costs Australia \$1b a year to keep these centres open. Neither country has consulted with their people to determine if they want to be part of the 'warehousing' of refugees who are the responsibility of Australia. In both states, a large proportion of the population do not agree with having the refugees detained or living in their country.

Meanwhile, the continued insistence from both major parties that no-one on Manus or Nauru will ever be settled in Australia has become hysteria. Indeed, both parties have dug a hole for themselves that they can't get out of. In the meantime there are people feeling totally hopeless.

The image opposite is courtesy of Mums 4 Refugees and was published in the New Matilda. It depicts children on Nauru using the now familiar arms crossed above the head that the men on Manus have been using as a symbol of passive resistance. Maybe we can use the same symbol in solidarity with all refugees on Manus and Nauru (and indeed with the local communities there).



Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project

Discussion Night 1 2018

Thursday, March 8th, 2018

Current policies and practices that govern the fate of those seeking asylum in Australia: and what we can do to change them

Linda Cusworth

Combined Refugee Action Group (Geelong)

We will have a couple of speakers from BASP to outline the effects of policies on them.

And we will have an update on the activities of BASP.

Time: 7.30 – 9.30 p.m

Venue:

St Joseph's Hall

(beside the bluestone church)

274 Rouse St ,

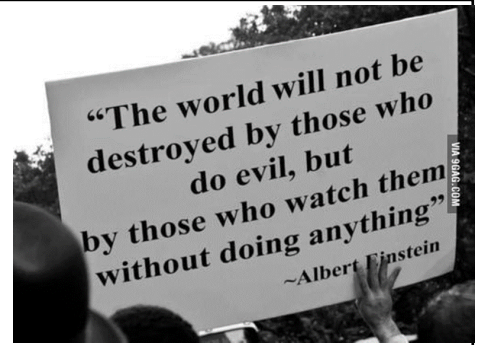
Port Melbourne



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

What do we need to do before the next federal election?

Sometimes in the past, those of us associated with BASP have thought that we should just work for change quietly hoping both major parties might wind back the policies that hurt those seeking refuge and enter a bipartisan decent agreement. Inevitably each federal election brings refugees into the debate as each party appears to try to outdo the other in both vehemence and harshness.



The changes we espouse are:

- Eliminate temporary visas—you are either a recognised refugee or not, so temporary visas are a contradiction in terms and very cruel because everyone deserves a chance to ‘settle’ somewhere. The Labor party has promised to do away with temporary visas—we need to ensure they guarantee to do this if they are elected .
- That the political parties stop lying—boats are still coming—they are being turned back by a huge naval deployment to Indonesia or sent back to Sri Lanka and Australia doesn’t follow up what happens to the people on them.
- Provide government income support to all these seeking asylum until they have other means of financial support. We boast about our strong growth in the economy – yet we have people in the community relying totally on charity.
- Give work rights to all those seeking asylum and access to agencies that get jobs for people.
- Have timeframes that are compulsory for all parts of the applications for refugee status. People can now wait for years with nothing happening to their application and sometimes they are even in detention for all of this time.
- Totally disband off-shore processing of asylum seekers’ claims. In fact our obligations are currently outsourced to other countries and firms. Manus Island and Nauru, and any other places that are hypothetically places for sending people arriving in Australia seeking refuge, should be closed with no holding them for any future use.



Mohamad Didashi, is one of the men supported by BASP. He recently walked to Canberra as part of a protest about the abuse of human rights in Iran. He walked 620 Km to the Iranian Embassy in Canberra. Mohamad was interviewed by the Yass Tribune. He said he was very glad to be able to protest in a safe and peaceful way. He said “Kindness, goodness, universal basic human rights are my religion”.

He pitched a tent on the driveway of a property on Yass Valley Way and thanked the residents for their support. “Thank you for the generosity in allowing me to camp here – they’ve been very kind to me,” he said. Mr Dadashai said he would continue to “fight for freedom”. “If you can, please pray for my people and keep the discussion going. It’s a really hard fight, but not if all of the world stands up to support my people.”

Asked about his reception along the way Mohamad said the people had been very welcoming, allowing him to pitch his tent and stay close to habitation.

Poverty becomes destitution for many. Can you help?

For those asylum seekers who arrived in Australia by boat after August 13, 2012, they were initially not allowed to work; the government provided welfare payments valued at \$288 per adult per week or 89% of the lowest weekly Newstart allowance payment rate – well below the nationally accepted poverty line of \$344 per week (as of December 2014). This amount is now called Status Resolution Support Services Payment (SRSS). The payments were expected to cover rent and utilities, food, and public transport costs. So for all these people this means living in poverty.

However things are getting worse and many asylum seekers now are destitute. Many people do not get SRSS payments:

- Those who have appealed a negative verdict to their application for protection or have lost that appeal
- Those who are at the end of the road in terms of getting a protection visa eg. those who appeal directly to the Minister on compassionate grounds
- People who were released from community detention last September with work rights but no income support
- Family members who come as part of family reunion do not get any income for two years
- People on temporary visas undertaking courses which take more than 12 months to complete will not be able to receive income support during this time. This means young people who want to undertake a university degree course get no money.

Some people lose their SRSS payments if their bank statements show money coming in or going out. Some examples of this are

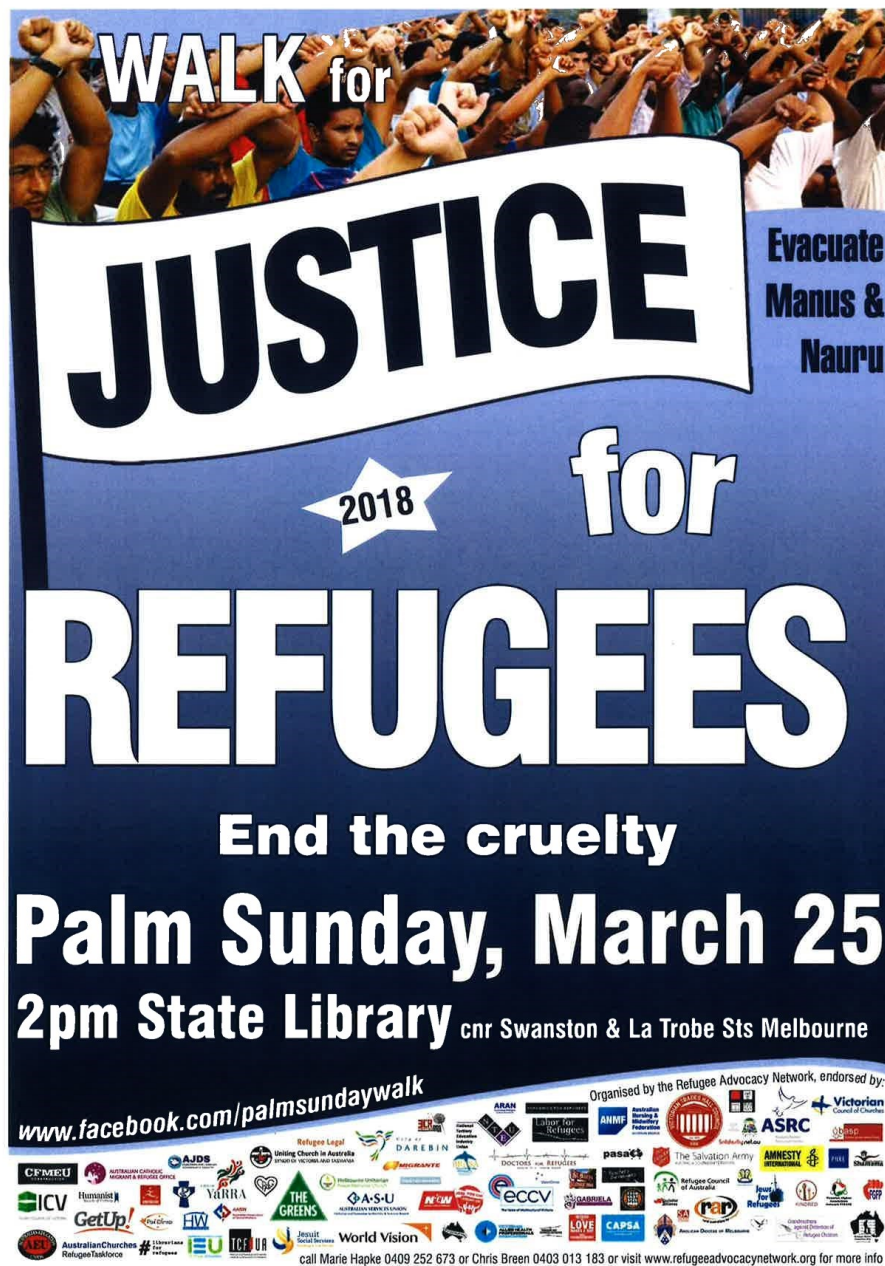
- Bank statements from countries where a person has lived are needed before any application for income support is processed. Some countries do not have bank statements or will not release them. In other cases, it is dangerous for relatives or friends to request them.
- A woman with two children, has a partner who ended up in the US when the family were seeking protection and he paid \$1000 into her account at Christmas time for a TV for their sons lost her payments.
- A woman who, while she was working, sent money to her three children in Nigeria then became pregnant and had to stop working. Her Centrlink payments were cut off because she had previously sent some money she had earned to her children. Now she has no income support, and has a baby as well, to support here.
- A woman with four children, whose mother sent money through her account back to family in Jordan, and the mother has had all payments cut off.

As well there are ways that people become destitute because of harsh regulations and practices.

A man was re-detained because he did not have a Bridging Visa (the Department often refuses to renew these) and he was randomly stopped by police. Ten months later he was released from detention (for seemingly no reason) on a Friday evening at 5.30pm. He was given no money and told he would get his work rights back in 10 days. He has asked unsuccessfully for SRSS payments. Luckily he has found a job and is currently living in a garage where he works during the day.

Many people cannot survive without assistance because they have very expensive medication (usually for mental health issues) and paying for them means no money for living.

BASP is currently giving emergency relief money (usually \$100 a week for each individual) amounting to \$2500 a week as well as paying a lot of money for accommodation. We are grateful for any help because there are dire consequences for many people if we can't continue.



We urge everyone to come to this walk. The event is designed to accommodate all. There will be short talks by

- faith leaders,
- refugees (including a phone connection to a refugee on Manus Island),
- Tim Costello, a prominent leader who has recently spent time on Manus Island.

and music both before and during the walk. One of the singers will be Mulu who is currently being supported by BASP.

Those who feel they cannot walk can just stay in front of the library and the walk route will take those walking back to the library.

We ask as many groups as possible who have banners to carry those and display them in the crowd.

This is an opportunity to show the community and the government that the well-being of refugees and the welcome extended to them crosses all ages, religions, races and community groups.

Please spread the word and invite everyone to participate.

The vagaries of the detention centres (even from a visitor's point of view)

On the website of the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration Department has got lost), is the following information:

The Department of Home Affairs welcomes visitors into its immigration detention facilities and recognises that visits to detainees are important to their health and well-being.

Visits give detainees access to their family and friends as well as legal, migration and community representatives.

The Department also welcomes a large number of organisations such as the Red Cross, the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Our skilled and professional staff are committed to providing every visitor with a safe environment in which to visit detainees, and to make the process simple, efficient and stress-free.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The prison system allows visitors to make a booking over the phone but to visit those detained in immigration detention (detained for administrative reasons by law) getting a time to see people has become a nightmare. The rules change very frequently and each new rule makes the situation harder. Visitors see themselves as providing friendship and emotional support to people who are detained, advocating on their behalf and filling in the gaps that exist in the provision of services and information in immigration detention facilities. But, more and more, helping out in these ways is becoming impossible.

Firstly, a visitor needs 100 points to visit. For example, 70 points for a Birth Certificate; or Citizenship Certificate; or passport and 35 points for other documentation etc. People just released from detention have great difficulty getting the 100 points as they try to go and see friends still detained. Visitors have to give five days notice in their application and the online form to do this is almost always impossible to fill in.

Complaints about this issue (and any other problems) have to be sent through Global Feedback. All such complaints since 2016 have received the same six paragraphs in response—whether the complaint is about the food—or health matters or visiting.

Even lawyers are finding it extremely difficult to make appointments to see their clients.

One example showing the importance of visitors

Recently two pregnant women were transferred to the Brisbane Immigration Transit Accommodation and the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation respectively for medical care from Nauru. Both women were visited in the detention centres by local community groups and made friends. They asked to stay in their respective cities because of the support and friendship of these visitors.

However Canberra transferred them to community detention in new cities where they knew no one. Both were transferred away from the hospital ante natal care which they were receiving leading up to the births of their babies. Both are separated by government policy from their husbands. When they arrive at the airport they are met by an agency person who takes them to their house and gives them money for food. If it is a Friday as it was for one woman, they are then alone for the weekend in an unknown country.

Through the visitor networks we were able to contact people who visited and offered support that night. These young women have lived in detention centres for years. Suddenly they are placed alone in houses in unknown cities in Australia. They need friends and this is but one example of how important detention visitors are to providing

Hard to get in, hard to get out

Ali (not his real name) came to Australia by boat from Indonesia in late 2010 as an unaccompanied minor (UAM) aged seventeen. He was born in Kuwait but his family went to live in Iran when he was a baby. The family have Iranian citizenship. They had moved to Indonesia in 2008 because of problems in Iran.

After arriving at Christmas Island, Ali was sent to mainland detention and he was in about seven detention centres over a period of four years and three months, some several times. Eventually he was released into the community early in 2015. In many ways he is a troubled young man but he has extraordinary resilience and insight granted his life to date. He says 50% of his life in Australia has been good and 50% hell. The good includes the opportunities to learn (he has never had any formal education), the friends he has had, the support he has received from many people, and the hell has been being in detention, sometimes getting in with friends who have led him down destructive paths and not being able to get any resolution to his claim for protection.

Since September of last year Ali has been homeless. That has not been because it was impossible to get accommodation for him but because he cannot live with other people on account of his mental state. He can't work for many of the same reasons. He gets no money from the government because of his visa status. Some months ago, Ali made a decision to go back to Iran if his mother and young sister could also go back from Indonesia. BASP has been able to help with this. He would prefer to take this risk than continue his 'life' in Australia!.

However another hurdle for Ali now is that between the Iranian Embassy and the immigration authorities in Australia there seems to be a lack of preparedness to give him the documents he needs to re-enter Iran. Immigration here says he has to go back into detention to allow them to process the documentation to allow him to leave (understandably he is very wary of this) and the Iranian authorities say they need Immigration to provide documents to them to proceed to give him a visa.

It was impossible for Ali to get protection here in Australia. It seems extremely difficult to get out of Australia now that he's given up seeking protection.

Visiting family when it is possible to get travel documents

When those applying for protection eventually get a (temporary) visa they can get travel documents to visit their family if the family is in a country other than the one they sought asylum from.

These times are bitter sweet. Seeing a wife and children for a short time after years and then leaving them again—for an indefinite time again—is really hard. It can feel very frightening because without Australian citizenship, there are no guarantees of any support if things go wrong. Men visiting Pakistan to see families who have relocated from Afghanistan face threats from the same group who threatened them in Afghanistan. Sometimes they feel really guilty blaming themselves for the problems that have happened to the family. There is often enough of a belief among family members that the one in Australia has been living an affluent and safe life leaving the rest of the family (usually extended family) to suffer.

So a common scenario is: The opportunity to see family again means finding the fare, managing to get time from a job that does not have holidays or leave provisions, and having presents to give to those still stuck in misery and fear.

Accommodation continues to be the greatest need

Accommodation needs continue as Centrelink is being stripped from some people and private rentals are increasing to a point that they are out of reach for many asylum seekers on 89% Newstart. However, we continue to be heartened by the goodwill in the community.

In late November an Indian couple and their son were referred to us in urgent need of housing. Liz, a woman in Moe offered a unit she owned and has assisted them in becoming part of the local community.

This is part of her early report:

"There was a good smell of Indian cooking on Monday. They have Library membership and have begun an English course on computers.

The son has chosen a bike at the Morwell Recycling Depot and Tony, a friend is repairing it for him.

Another friend has talked with the parents and found out that they want to garden, so I am taking some gear and getting a load of loam and mushroom soil. We shall go to a Gardening Club talk tomorrow.

We have an appointment with the Primary School where the key contact has worked before with asylum seekers, and has a super attitude about the family's needs.

After that I will go with the wife to the Women's Multicultural Friendship Group which meets every Friday."

The job now is to help them get work.

Another family - Tamils from Malaysia were facing homelessness when Bill and Deb in Castlemaine offered a unit for the mother and her 2 teenage children. The hosts have assisted with linking them to health and school supports.

A single woman from Ethiopia has been here since September 2017 and is still not receiving any income support. Her English is progressing well through morning classes at ASRC. She has been living with 2 other women seeking asylum and has benefited greatly from the use of a unit in Glen Iris made available by Cabrini for 6 months This period is nearly up and the young woman asked to live with an English speaker so she would have to speak and hear English more often- not falling into the trap of speaking Oromo, when she is with other Ethiopians. This has been arranged through the good will of a woman who has made a spare room in her home available.

The Comedy Night, held at the end of 2017, not only entertained everyone who attended but also introduced some to the work BASP does. One couple contacted us afterwards to offer a self contained unit at the rear of their home to someone seeking asylum. A young woman from Tibet has met the couple and all have agreed to embark on this over coming weeks.

A young couple offered a room in their flat for 6 weeks to a young Ukrainian man while he sourced some housing himself. This too has gone well and enabled him to save the bond and first month's rent for his own place.

Brigidine College in Indooroopilly, Brisbane, has given us the use of a house for three women seeking asylum. These were released in September from community detention with no income and they have spent quite some time on Nauru. The house has been named Brigid's house and the women cooked a cake and a meal to welcome all guests when the house was recently blessed.



Of course, the existing houses continue to support others who approach BASP for help. Whenever it is possible, people move on when they have sufficient income to do so, leaving those with no income to have shelter.

BASP continues to provide weekly cash for food and basic needs to the people in this housing.

Phil Steele, who co-ordinates the Friendship Through English Program, sent through this message and photo about a pre Christmas Party.



I thought you would enjoy these photos of this family in our program. The husband is not in the photo but he is now getting some work as a painter, so things are looking up for the family.

They have been supported very well by the wonderful group of volunteer teachers at Clifton Hill Parish since April 2017. They do an absolutely fantastic job. I attended a pre- Christmas party kindly hosted by Rosalba, one of the teachers and met the family and the other volunteer teachers.

This is a real success story that shows how our program is able to transform the lives of people.

Tenacity ...and a lot of help from new friends ... and now Mohammad is working in his profession and loving it!

When Mohammad, a qualified engineer arrived in Australia two years ago seeking protection, he had \$400 in his pocket and he knew no one. Through the refugee network he found the ASRC and BASP who've provided ongoing job seeking and accommodation assistance.

Within 3 weeks of arriving he got his first job cleaning a commercial kitchen. After completing white card and forklift license training he then found a job working in an abattoir. Tough but consistent work.

After a year at the abattoir he secured his first job associated with his profession ...working with a concreting firm. Mohammad thought he was on his way ... it was good experience and working six days a week. There was only one problem - the firm decided not to pay him for his three months' work and they did that to other employees too!! Thank goodness his new friends could help out financially.

With this experience however, he was able to secure a job with a major physical services company... not only was the pay good, the colleagues good to work with, this was the first time he received sick and leave pay! The best thing is that the firm recognised his engineering skills and Mohammad has been promoted to work in the Engineering office.

There are many, many more stories of asylum seekers successfully finding their way. The common denominator is getting employment.

Let us know if you have any jobs available and we'll find willing, suitable candidates.

St Finbar's East Brighton approached BASP again this year to offer hampers, created by parishioners for people seeking asylum. The



following note of thanks was sent to the priest, Phil McInerney, following the delivery of about 80 hampers!

"We wanted to let you and your parishioners know how much their hampers have been welcomed and appreciated. They were such generous hampers and we have had volunteers delivering them to over 70 families.

I wish I could capture the excitement in the voices of those who rang to say how thrilled they were to receive them. One mum with 2 small children was overjoyed. One man in a household with 2 others called, so excited. I don't think he has ever received an unexpected gift of anything, let alone such treats.

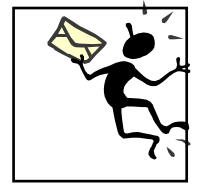
We have added a few of the texts received which reflect the joy of so many.

"Thank you so much Angel Lady, the Christmas hampers are lovely. My son love it and so do I. The groceries for sure yummy too."

"I received a Christmas gift thank you so much to didn't forget us."

"Thanks a lot for our Christmas package. One day we came home and found a big bucket full of good things at our door. We love you"





Hands of friendship

On December 10, a group from Woodend arranged a picnic for a number of individuals and families BASP works with. The group caught the train (see photo) and were met at the other end by members of the local



Such abundance



On the way

community- initiated by the Macedon Ranges Rural Australians for Refugees. It was a wonderful day, enjoyed by all.

The feedback from those attending was so positive and appreciative of the efforts of

the hosts. However, the benefit did not stop there. One family has returned to spend time with one of the community families. Another made a contact which led to employment for her mother in a restaurant. Other contacts are also being followed up.

A group of German and Danish women who are living in Melbourne while their partners are working here for various companies have again supported BASP through their artistic efforts. Each year they hold a German market, based on the beautiful Christmas markets in Germany, and sell the wares they have created over the year. These are high quality and unique items- wonderful for Christmas gifts with a difference! They came to present BASP with a cheque for \$3555 which was half their proceeds, the other half donated to another charity.



Ask a busy person..... You would think housing 2 men from Ethiopia would be enough to keep one busy. However, when BASP rang the hosts of these men to see if they could get some money to a woman living nearby, they went immediately and sent this message: "We have given her the funds. She is a beautiful soul. We spent an hour with her and will take her to church with us tomorrow. We are happy to be the contact person for her and mentor as she gets organised. Consider her officially part of the family!" The transformation of this woman, having secure housing nearby and such friendship has been amazing.

Well matched volunteering is proving a win win for people seeking asylum and organisations needing volunteers.

A great example of this is our relationship with the Colostomy Association of Victoria. This organisation relies solely on volunteers for its distribution of supplies. BASP has assisted in the past and the co-ordinator at CAV has again approached us for 2 more, given the success to date.

He writes "Mei and Jack are going great guns! They are so good that we are continually depending upon them more and more, and they always meet and exceed our expectations.

Yeshi is with us one day per week and is a really valued member of our team." These positions are perfect to assist people who don't have work rights but want to be useful as well as for those needing a gradual introduction to work in Australia.

We would be pleased to hear about any other volunteer options



John a volunteer, his wife and Libby were privileged to attend an Ethiopian Christmas celebration with several Ethiopian people known to BASP. This was

January 7 and what a feast and festive occasion it was, despite the hosts having so little here and missing family in Ethiopia so sorely.



The traditional meat and salad dishes were of course accompanied by injera, their very distinctive bread. The women and children were dressed in white with red trim and there was dancing to Ethiopian music. A very special afternoon.

We had a lot of food at Christmas time but it was distributed very quickly in the New Year. We are very short at present. The things people need are



Sugar , flour , cooking oil

Cans of tomatoes, fruit, tuna (large and small), red kidney beans, corn, peas

Long life milk, tea and coffee, cheese, biscuits, honey, noodles, dates

Gladwrap, tinfoil, pegs for hanging out washing,

Sweet and Savoury Biscuits, Snacks for school lunches, Salt and pepper, Spices: coriander, cinnamon, ginger, Shampoo and Conditioner, Shaving Cream and shavers, Toothpaste.

We seemingly never have enough washing powder, dish washing detergents and household cleaning products. A very generous person is keeping us supplied with toilet paper.



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

Vouchers are really appreciated eg. for Coles, Big W, Kmart or similar stores; this allows individuals and families the independence to buy something they really want and need.

Many people bring in some of these items—and we sometimes don't see you to say thanks. Be assured we are very grateful for the food and the time and energy you expend getting it to us. Thanks aslo to those volunteers who continue to take food out to those who need it and above all thanks to Noelle and Gwen who manage the pantry and donated items.

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.

Again thank you for your support, in whatever way you have been giving it to us. It would be easy to feel overwhelmed at present and we can continue only with the moral and practical support that you give us.



Our focus is always two-fold: trying to change the way Australia is acting towards the forced movement of people and giving as much practical assistance as we can to those applying for protection here in this country and in great need.

We acknowledge how blessed we are to live in a peaceful country as we work towards a more just and equitable world. See those of you who live in Melbourne at the Palm Sunday walk!

Brigid Arthur

Libby Saunders

(BASP Coordinators)