

Chatters Newsletter

May/June 2010

Clubhouse Blues Breakers



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Editor's Note

This is our largest issue of *Chatters* yet; 20 pages sets a new record. This is, of course, a testament to the number of great articles that have come in from our membership. The initial pages of *Chatters* this month are dedicated to our friend Antonio, who has sadly passed away. The quality of these words is just one indication of how much he is missed. We have a number of great interviews in this issue, including Diana P, our placement student Charles on page 16, and our newest member of staff, Meghan. A huge "Thank you!" to everyone who contributed to this great magazine.

Contributors: Marjory, Gaz, Gerard, Pauline, Midori, Brucel, Paul, J.D., Diana, Tamara, Kerry, Eugene, Stephen, Jade, Patrick, Nadine

At the time of writing this... it's been just days since Clubhouse and Arahura had its audit with the Health and Disability Association of NZ (HDANZ). And yes, this is a big deal because a favourable report goes a long way to ensuring our continued funding from the ADHB. Of course there is no guarantee... but the provisional verbal feedback given at the end of the audit was very positive. The audit team commented on the fact that there was a very welcoming atmosphere in the Clubhouse and that they believed people would want to come here. They also said that it was not clear to them who were members and who were not... great feedback. A full written report will be sent to us in the next two or three weeks.

Clubhouse decided to advertise for a relieving staff person when we weren't able to get Iwa to come in to fill in for staff absent. And we were successful in getting a really terrific person in Meghan, whom many of you have already met (see page 19).

Clubhouse has begun responding to some of members' requests from the planning day in April. Badminton is up and running again and towards the end of the month we have a pool competition and bar-b-que in conjunction with Pro-Active.

We have had some super weekend recreation outings and Employment Dinners also (see articles). I am currently making plans to go to Brisbane, Australia for Clubhouse Training in July and looking for a member also to do this, and accompany me. Applications are now open. Hope you all are keeping healthy and warm now that winter is (almost) officially on us.



Men versus the Birds!
Patrick, Gerard and Kerry protect our
lettuces from our feathered foe.

Patrick

Remembering Antonio

What a privilege to have known Tony. Thinking about who he was makes me smile.

Tony was humble — He never put himself above anyone.

Patient — He always had time for others.

Hardworking — He loved being busy and was willing to give any task a go. I can just hear him saying “What can I do?”, “What’s next?” Among many things, he tended to the Clubhouse garden, helped prepare pizza and several roasts, worked in the Communication Unit typing and doing data entry. I also recall him whizzing around Clubhouse with the vacuum cleaner or cloth and spray and wipe.

Brave — Even though Tony faced his own challenges, he was courageous. One of Tony’s personal goals was to complete the *Round the Bays Fun Run*. Despite suffering a lot of pain from a medical condition and past injury, he completed the event with the Clubhouse team. Chris R and I had the privilege of walking the 8.4kms with him.

Witty — Tony had a smile that lit up his whole face and a twinkle in his eye. When he was relaxed he was really quite funny. I can just hear some of his oneliners, when he, James C and I made our last roast together. We all had a blast!



Antonio, Heather, Merv and Chris celebrate together after completing the *Round the Bays*

A poem for Antonio



Antonio,

You tried to make the most of life
But your sorrows showed
You tried to appreciate life
But it soon overwhelmed you
You was a walker, a runner
As round the bays
We last heard of you
Maybe you was running
In the direction
Of God
Our creator
Who takes back everyone
Of us
Maybe we do not know
Your reason
For living
Only you do
May we do not know
Your reason
For dying
Only you do

Life Couldn't be more cruel
If we do not know
The reason or purpose
For living
I cannot fathom it out
Why nature is so beautiful
Yet you had so much pain
Maybe sorrow
Maybe you were too
Understanding
You ran your last lap
Well
Antonio
You ran to the
Finishing line
(as we all do, through
Pain or sorrow)
We all end up there
At the end

Marjory

Over the last few months the kitchen has had a real boost with new equipment. We have been enjoying the use of the new oven and were recently able to purchase an electric fry pan, mixer and steamer set. All items are well loved and getting plenty of use.

Several weeks back we changed the daily lunch order cutoff, now 10 am. Thanks to those who have been planning ahead and ordering within this new time frame. It helps the kitchen team as we are able to shop earlier and have more time to prepare lunch for 11:45am-12pm. It has been a pleasure to work alongside new staff member Meghan. She has been doing a fantastic job of relieving in the F.S.U.

John M has continued to faithfully produce tasty baking. It has been neat to also see others give baking a whirl! Special thanks to Bobbi, who came in on her birthday and made a magnificent pavlova. Speaking of great food, recently new member Matt acted as guest chef. He did an excellent job of leading the team in making a divine risotto!



An amazing Pavlova, courtesy of Bobbi

This month Kerri Wells from Sport Auckland came to talk to members and staff about how members can gain cheap access to gyms, pools, etc, through the Green Prescription. Some members have expressed an interest in learning more about diabetes. A speaker will visit Clubhouse shortly to inform us about this topic.

We have been able to use a good range of Clubhouse garden herbs and produce over the last few months. We are eagerly awaiting produce from our winter seedlings. They have a much greater chance of surviving the birds now, with the aid of milk bottle shields. Gerard and John M have been taking a well deserved break from watering with all the recent rain.

Several maintenance tasks have been done, are underway or are scheduled for attention with the arrival of new member Scott. A maintenance book has been set to keep track of this progress.

Huge thanks to all members who have helped in the kitchen and garden in the last two months!

Nadine

It's been another gigantic exciting couple of months at the Clubhouse. Those of you who are here regularly have no doubt noticed the increased membership this year. We've had nearly 700



Craig welcomes calls to the Clubhouse

total members attend in April and May, and in the last few weeks of May have been averaging well over 30 members a day. This includes 10 new members in the last month alone. Of course, it's not all about the numbers. The way our membership has embraced and supported new members has been great to see. The positive atmosphere at the Clubhouse makes each day here a pleasure.

The Clubhouse website is still a work in progress, but we have made some headway. Thanks to Eugene we have been able to add both a more user friendly map and weekly planning calendar to the website. This has information about what's coming up at Clubhouse and also has the weekly menu. The next goal is to continue to streamline the information on the website, introduce more photos and eventually start an interactive blog.

In other news, we have decided to designate set times during the week for tours of the Clubhouse. As things get busy we need to be more organized in the way we introduce new people to what we do here. Accordingly, we will now aim to conduct all tours on **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays** between **11am** and **12pm**.

Correspondence with our international brothers and sisters continues to go well. We have recently received a number of great letters from Clubhouses in Japan. These are on display on our *Clubhouses Around the World* map in our dining room.

We hope to catch up with you soon.

Stephen



David wants you to come travel the world with him.

What has been happening in the unit for the past two months?
 Job Club is back up and running. In the past week JD has been a guest speaker sharing his pathway to locating employment opportunities. We have had great numbers of members that have participated in Job Club, covering all sorts of topics such as disclosure of illness, job interviews and working out what type of job members would like to have. Job Club continues every Wednesday from 11.00am – 11.45am... All welcome!

We have started the Transitional Employment process with contact made with Framework Trust, another mental health provider, Whitieria Trust, an educational provider in Queen street, KFC Pt Chevalier, ProActive Trust and initial contact with Subway. The interview with Framework went well, and thank you to Beverley who is the General Manager of Human Resources for taking the time to meet with us. Unfortunately, Whitieria Trust does not have a Human Resources centre in Auckland so we are unable to pursue this avenue any further. We will be setting up more meetings with other possible employers in the future so if you have any suggestions for other possible employment opportunities please feel free to let us know or add this to our Transitional Employment Board in the Employment and Education room.

CVs and CV updates are still being completed, along with members making applications to possible employment opportunities. So, thumbs up to those who have been working hard on these. If anyone else is interested in completing or updating a CV, let us know and we can book a time that suits you to complete it. If



Kerry, J.D. (our guest speaker) and Jade after a great Job Club

you are interested in getting some experience in job interviews and more information around getting a job — the right job for you and not just something you get paid to do — then come in and have a talk to us. We are willing to help you locate the information or set you up on the computer to try the new interactive tool on the Career Services website that can assist in looking at the wider picture of your skills and interests that you have.

Finally a BIG, HUGE Thank You to all the members who have participated, supported the Employment & Education Unit, and made every day in the unit a worthwhile event.

Jade

Badminton: Hot Shots

Badminton has become a regular part of the Clubhouse exercise regime and is part of our effort to attain a Heartbeat Challenge Award. Every Wednesday afternoon at 1.30pm we head off to the Auckland Badminton Courts in Gillies Avenue, Newmarket. If you're interested in playing a game of badminton, book in as early as possible. You can do this by calling the Clubhouse on 09 376-4267, then coming along on a Wednesday afternoon to play. All are welcomed to attend and participate.



Reducing Stress with ProActive Trust



A huge thanks to Jim, Lois, Laura and everyone at Pro-Active Trust for hosting the inaugural Pool Tournament with Crossroads Clubhouse. It was a great event: great food, great atmosphere and great people. We look forward to the next challenge next month.



What instruments do you play?

I play the keyboard and guitar. The keyboard is my main instrument. I play the guitar if I am required.

What type of music do you play?

I play gospel, rock, songs from the 60s. Like they play on Coast radio.

Who do you play music with?

I play with the Church worship team.

How often do you play?

I go to music practice once a week and play at church a few times a month, or when needed. Recently I played twice for church in the one week.

Where does your musical interest come from?

I come from a musical family. I was taught the piano and guitar at the age of nine years.

Have you performed at any occasions like weddings, etc?

Yes, I have worked as a musician. I played piano at a Rest Home for 2 & 1/2yrs. I really enjoyed this. Unfortunately, the job ended because the Rest Home closed down. I also played piano for a keep fit (aerobics) class.

Is there anything else you would like to say about music?

I like to have music around me. I like playing the Juice music channel on T.V. I also enjoy keeping up with the latest modern music like Justin Bieber.

A True Story from Diana Paul

I was travelling between Panmure and Mt Wellington one night when a siren started going behind me and I realized it was the police. I stopped my car and a policeman came to my window.

"Are you Diana Paul?" he asked.
"Yes," I said. "Do you live at 296 Panmure Road?" "Yes," I said, really shaking. "Oh good!" he said. "Can you give this typewriter to my sister please?!!!"



(Just happens my flatmate's brother was a police officer!)

Some perspectives on Muriwai

On Saturday the 24th April quite a few of us Clubhouse members went with Jade to Muriwai. A van and three cars full of members went up. I think that more members went on this Social Recreation than on any other. On the way up it was raining which put a damper on us all. But once there, it was fine. Some people, namely James, Ngaiwi, JD and Mark W, were brave enough to go for a swim. We all went for a walk up the hill to watch the gannets. Unfortunately, there were just a couple there as most have left Muriwai in March for their long journey overseas. We had filled rolls, apples and muesli bars for lunch. We then walked along the beach. We all had a good time. We left Muriwai by about 12.30.



Paul G

Unfortunately the Gannets were in short supply



And here's another perspective from an anonymous author:

Just after nine we left Clubhouse and headed for Muriwai to visit the Gannet colony. There were, however, only 5 or 6 birds as it was past their migrating time. The weather was overcast and it looked like rain. It started to rain as we got close to where we were going. I was in the van, with Jade & John driving, also Julie was there as well as Ngaiwi. Four vehicles went in all, with 16 members. I walked to the rocks, but they were slippery so I didn't go out any further. What I really enjoyed was having a trip out and being around others. Some members went for a swim, and Julie went for an unscheduled swim. When she was walking in the water she fell into a dip and so was forced to swim.

Why Waiuku?

Wet weather was predicted, but at the start of the journey the sun was out, so off we went. Members helped to get the Picnic things together and we set off in two vehicles. On the way to Waiuku, and not too far off the Southern motorway, we stopped to have a look around the grounds of the old Kingseat Hospital. People were living in some of the buildings there. One large building had been turned into a "House of Spooks" entertainment place.



When we got to Waiuku some of us went for a mo-sey around the town. Patrick asked one of the locals for the best place to have a barbeque and he directed us to a place on the banks of a river. It was a very large gazebo which was by a museum. The

highlight of the trip for me was the yummy sausages and onions.

The weather had been getting steadily worse, though it was dry under the gazebo. Because of the really heavy rain we decided not to look at the beach nor the view of the steel mill.

On the way back we went past a major traffic accident involving 6 cars, it must have just happened because we were not held up much.

By the time we got back to town the skies had cleared and it was fine again just like when we set off.

I enjoyed the trip and doing things with other members, having companions.



Kerry, Jason, Kenny and Ngaiwi cook up a storm, despite the storm

Kerry

My Fish

My fish are becoming expensive, I brought four new Kissing Gouramis. But they are killing the cat fish, 10 of them. I've none left, but the Gouramis are very territorial and bite with their strong rugged mouths. They even kiss each other but this is not mating, only aggression. They are totally white except for black eyes and they swim around fast and take flake food from the surface. My catfish used to eat food off the bottom so they are different to watch. These Gouramis eat more often and they need to be fed four times a day and this makes them fun to watch. I only hope they will honor me and start to breed.



Kissing Gouramis are often seen kissing. This is an act to maintain their territory.

Bruce

A note from Midori



Thank you very much for having me at clubhouse during my placement period. I would like to thank all the staff and members for your support, inclusiveness and lovely smiles. I thought it would take me a long time to complete my 30 hours of training, but my last day came so fast, because I enjoyed my time here. Although I did not have much time to do practical work or activities with you, I have learnt many things. Thank you so very much to those who have shared their personal stories with me. Your reality has touched my heart and made me think a lot. I will miss you all. Good-bye and hopefully I will see you all around. J Love Midori Oguchi from AUT.

This poem came to be last Tuesday, after "Paint the Sky" art class at Toi-Ora. I was waiting after class and everyone else had left. We were using the parking spaces and lines as catwalks modelling our Adidas and All-blacks jackets and Olympics beams. We were quite inspired and excited, having fun that day. Then the nurse Niall came to pick us up. I sat in the back. I talked to Niall about his drop-offs and pick-ups. He said he had missed out dropping Jason back at the Mason. The sun was shining but the weather was crispy clear Autumn. We read our silly poem reluctantly to him hoping he would not ridicule it. Then he said he liked the rhyming couplets. Later, I wrote this final relevant bit of the poem without Jan-Marie's participation. Finally we got back to the Mason late with a micro-waved hot quiche for lunch.

My bum is getting numb

I know it , I should've been a poet

I should've started earlier when I was girlier

That would've been my fate with all my mates

And possibly I could've had a date

I should've dropped Jason and his care-giver back at the Mason

Now the sun is out the poem is done and I've had lots of fun

Two word rhymes are hardly Shakespeare but they make it clear

Sonnets, iambic pentameter for one kilometre

Back to the Mason a poem to ponder upon for now.

Jan-Marie and Tamara

A chat with Charles

On the 29 April 2010 I interviewed a pleasant young man Charles, from Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. His real name is Chalchessa Worku but goes by the name of Charles. Charles was 10 years old when his father,



as well as two older sisters and two brothers came to New Zealand. His family initially settled in Wellington, where he enrolled at Naenae College. Charles says this was his favourite school. His family lived in the Lower Hutt region where Charles excelled in Basketball and Soccer. Later on, Charles and 1 bro and 1 sis moved to Auckland where

Charles finished off his schooling at Mt Albert Grammar: his father still works in Wellington as a Taxi driver. His mother passed away when he was young.

Charles is a placement student from A.U.T. He is here at Clubhouse on placement while he is studying a certificate in Mental Health. He travels to the north shore campus most days. He explains that the Ethiopian community treat people with mental illness with some discrimination. As such, this has inspired him, as well as having friends as consumers. He wants to help them recover and re-integrate back into society. He very much enjoys helping people. He says that the Ethiopians are very proud of their history and independence. Many countries tried to claim them but failed. This is a good testament to the strength and independence of the Ethiopian people. The country is mostly split between Muslims and Christians.

Charles and I have a few things in common: a love of soccer, helping others, love of big cities (Auckland not Wellington!), movies and both live in the same street!

John (J.D.) Henry

We recently interviewed Gerard about his time at Clubhouse and his plans for the future:

What are some of the recent Crossroad Clubhouse activities you've attended?

I enjoyed the talk by the Peer-support workers from Mind & Body on Thursday night, at the Employment dinner. I particularly liked the way they spoke about walking alongside people. It reminded me of a saying I once heard. "Don't walk in front of me, don't walk behind me, walk beside me and be my friend". I would like to hit them up for a coffee sometime to talk about the peer-support field and what it's like to work in it.

What would be your biggest challenge working in peer support?

Learning how to get to know the different moods of people. And of course, finding ways of turning negatives into positives.

What do you like about Crossroads Clubhouse?

It is helping me to integrate into the community. Things I do at Clubhouse include: gardening, cleaning, keeping the place neat and tidy. I'm also looking for a partner. I like to joke around with people-staff included. This is a way back into the community. The Clubhouse tends to be more relaxed than the Mason Clinic.

What really attracted you about Peer Support Work?

The staff at Clubhouse have been role models working with people, it has made me think about how I could do this for a job. I love to communicate.

What sort of jobs did you do in the past?

I have done a lot of Forestry work including: cross-cutting, bulldozer work, pushing tracks – it is quite dangerous and challenging work. I have also milked cows, I enjoyed getting up at 3.30 am.

What about other goals for the future?

I'd like to have a better understanding about my mental illness, breaking it down to pieces, starting to put my life together. I'd like to get back into motors/ motor-bikes and cars. I'd like also to learn to swim so I can be more confident in small boats. I used to have boats and I'd like to own one again. Fishing is also a passion.



**Ngaiwi, Stephen and Gerard:
The Crossroads bike gang**

Any last words?

Have a great day everyone!

Some thoughts on Mother's Day

I use to love Mothers Day when we were kids. My two sisters and I loved to make a fuss of mum by making breakfast in bed for her, giving her a gift, and spoiling her rotten for the day, by doing housework and cooking a special dinner. It was fun and a real joy. Unfortunately with mum living so far away now and my sisters living incredibly busy lives, we sometimes don't even make it to see her on Mothers day. She doesn't mind, she is very understanding and she is happy with just a phone call or a card and always tells us "don't buy any presents". I didn't manage to get to mums for mother's day this year, but her birthday comes shortly after and I went and stayed with her overnight for that and we rolled mothers day and the birthday into one and had a great time together.

Mothers Day has been tainted by commercialism and it had become a bit meaningless to me, so I thought about what I could do to make it mean something to me again. First of all, I started reading a bit of history about how Mothers Day got started. It originated with the church as a celebration of Mother Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Over time the church began to honour all Mothers on Mothers Day.

A few years ago I decided to honour the 'Mother Spirit' of two friends of mine who both happen to be childless. The reason I acknowledge them on Mothers Day is they are both women with big hearts who are committed to helping people less fortunate than themselves. One is a Probation Officer and the other is a Health Promoter. They both give unstintingly of their time and expertise not only in



their paid work but in other unpaid capacities. I sent cards to each of them saying I wished them A HAPPY MOTHERS DAY to acknowledge their contribution to a better world. They were both thrilled with the unexpectedness of it and now I acknowledge them in some way every Mothers Day which is such a nice thing to do. I see them as Warrior Mothers working tirelessly to help make the world a better place.

I am developing this idea and this year I shared Mothers Day with two other women who are also childless. We just got together for afternoon tea, exchanged gifts, talked about the origin of Mothers Day and had a lot of fun. It was so enjoyable I am glad I made the effort.

Pauline

Who is Meghan?

*Gazza sat down with our newest staff member, Meghan.
Meghan has joined us at Clubhouse as casual staff.*

Where you born, Meghan?

Darwin, Australia.

Do you remember the big cyclone in 1974?

No, definitely not.

So, how long have you lived in NZ?

I was brought up here, came when I was a baby. But I spent three months in Perth last year, looking after my dad.

What are some of your previous jobs?

I worked for a long time in the dementia units in Christchurch.

How long have you been in Auckland?

Five years now.

In the same kind of work?

I've been at home with my children, and studying as well.

Is there a difference in emphasis between this job and your previous ones, apart from old people?

The biggest difference in emphasis is that in the dementia units it was more a matter of containing clients – no forward planning.

Did anything in your life start you off on a caring career?

Not at first, but after I looked after my Dad after his stroke that's when I became interested in rehabilitation.

What are your first impressions of Crossroads Clubhouse?

This is really a different model, I like the way its run with all the different members helping out.

Where do you see yourself going from here?

I'll stay till I finish University, which is in a few years off. I'll finish with a degree in Psychology so I guess I'll be around mental health for a bit.



Gazza

Up and Coming Events

7th June	Queen's Birthday—Clubhouse Closed
19th June	Social Recreation
24th June	Employment Dinner
14th July	Mid Winter Christmas Party
29th July	Employment Dinner



If you would like to know more about Crossroads Clubhouse please don't hesitate to give us a call. We'd be more than happy to give you a tour. Tours times are **Tuesday** and **Thursday** between **11am** and **12pm**.

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The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Arahura Trust or Crossroads Clubhouse.