

## Stress-free Xmas?

### November event provided useful tips

Our final event for 2014 focussed on de-stressing our lives – and how fitting that was in the lead up to the busy festive season!

Guest speaker for the event, Damien Adler, presented a practical approach to de-stressing our lives and reminded us how vital this is to our general health and wellbeing.

He pointed out the four main *Stress Signs*:

1. Changes in our thought processes
2. Physical symptoms or changes
3. Changes in emotions
4. Changes in behaviour

Damien highlighted the importance of recognising stress signs and provided some simple, but useful, management strategies.

When you are feeling under stress, the following may assist:

- **Write a list** – jot down what's on your mind (keep a pen and paper by your bed!)
- **Relax your breathing** - Slow your breathing: **In**, two, three, **hold**, two, three, **out**, two three, **hold**, two, three (or whatever slow rate feels comfortable).
- **Do a body scan** – ensure you are in a comfortable position, relax your breathing and slowly focus your attention to each body area
- **Take a Walk** (Mindful Walking) - Take a short walk. Focus your attention to each of the senses. Notice everything you can!

Lifestyle is also an important element in managing stress and Damien emphasised the need for:

- 7 to 9 hours sleep per night;
- Exercise 3 times per week for 30 minutes (or more)
- Balanced diet and good hydration;
- Social activities;
- Relaxation; and
- Doing some things for FUN.

Damien's practical presentation provided some useful tips to help us reduce the stress in our lives – certainly handy in the lead up to Christmas!



Connect Planning Committee being kept under control by Sovereign Hill Redcoat!

### Great Venue

The Comfort Inn, Sovereign Hill, proved to be an ideal venue for the event.

Members were welcomed by a Redcoat at the entrance and a glass of sparkling wine. Following the presentation, we enjoyed a Christmas buffet lunch.

Our traditional Christmas Hamper Raffle, won this year by Georgina from Ray White Real Estate (see pic below), raised \$146 for the 3BA Christmas Appeal. Well done!

The door prizes at this event were sought after – “hand pampering” for six lucky Connect members. (Our thanks to Bree and The Body Shop).

Great speaker, great venue, great food and great prizes! Overall a fantastic event.



Raffle winner, Georgina from Ray White Real Estate, with her Christmas Hamper

## In Brief

### February event

“Take a Dip” (well not literally!) and learn more about Nicholson Construction with a tour of the swimming complex in Gillies Street on 17 February at 12 noon. Your invitation with more details will arrive soon!

### Save the Dates!

Connect Networking events for 2015:

17 February

21 May

10 July\*

25 August

19 November

Events will be scheduled at lunch times, normally from 12 noon to 1.45 pm.

\*10 July will be an afternoon session (3.30 pm – 5.00 pm) followed by Xmas in July (5.00-6.30 pm)

### Your contributions welcome

The second edition is hot off the press!!

To keep the newsletter interesting and one you want to read, we would welcome your suggestions (and contributions) for future editions.

We plan to publish four editions a year (summer – Feb, autumn – May, winter – Aug and spring – Nov).

Please email your thoughts to Gayle at Committee for Ballarat.

# People make the difference!

So that we get to know Connect members and understand the diverse skills and experience they bring to their roles, we will profile a Connect Networking member in each issue of the Newsletter. This newsletter profiles Trace Rayner.

**Name:** TRACE RAYNER  
**Job role:** Executive Assistant to directors/owners at Nicholson Construction (and loving it!)



Trace, a member of Connect's Planning Committee for the past twelve or so months, has had a varied and interesting career.

## Experience:

- Five years as Business Support Officer at MaxiTRANS Ballarat, reporting to the GM Manufacturing.
- About a year with FedUni working for Head of Student Services.
- Nine years with AAV Australia, a film and video production and post-production facility in South Melbourne, as EA to the CEO, CFO & COO.
- Peasant farmer in Greece for the previous four years, growing olives and grapes.

*How far back do you want me to go? It's been a long ride. No, seriously, we could be here all day!*

- My first full-time job – check-out chick at Tjou's Hardware in Glenferrie Rd Hawthorn (?Hawthorn - I think it was! A long time ago now.)
- My first full-time OP job - secretary to five Account Executives at George Patterson Advertising in Melbourne

## Career Highlights:

- Came into my own as a good office professional whilst working for an independent home video distributor. It was the boss who made the difference - he set up deals and left me to manage them, from contract negotiation to getting the films onto video – I learned a huge amount that way.
- Learning who I am, and that it was ok to change my mind. I didn't want to be a 'secretary' initially, I'd planned to work with animals. I was working in a biology teaching laboratory and, as the junior female, ended up doing the admin work. I realised I was good at it and a bit queasy watching students dissect various carcasses, so went to get professional secretarial training at Stott's Business College in Melbourne.
- Arranging the official opening event for Nicholson's new office in Wendouree, and just feeling so proud of our lovely building and how it showcased our work.
- I think the clincher, though, is the people I've met along the way and assisted and learned from. I like that - a lot - enough to keep me coming to work each day with a smile.

## Some Good Advice

Watch your thoughts for they become words.  
Watch your words for they become actions.  
Watch your actions for they become...habits.  
Watch your habits, for they become your character.  
And watch your character, for it becomes your destiny!  
What we think we become.

*Quote from Margaret Thatcher in 'The Iron Lady' movie*

## Dressing for Success

Those at our May 2014 Connect Networking event will remember presenter, stylist Colette Werden. Colette (pictured below) was featured in *The Age* motoring section (December 2014) with her Alfa Romeo.



## An Opportunity Awaits!

### Join the Planning Committee

Late last year, Connect Networking Planning Committee member, Shelley Best (Harwood Andrews) resigned her position on the committee due to work commitments in Geelong. Shelley's enthusiasm and great ideas for events will be missed.

Following Shelley's resignation, we now have a vacancy on the Planning Committee.

The Planning Committee is responsible for the planning and delivery of Connect Networking events (normally five each year). The Committee meets monthly for an hour and over a lunch-time.

If you would like to help set the agenda for Connect Networking and organise events, register your interest in joining the Planning Committee by emailing [gayle@committeeforballarat.com](mailto:gayle@committeeforballarat.com).