

Join the Planning Committee

GREAT OPPORTUNITY

Are you looking for a chance to share your ideas and demonstrate your event management skills? Then register your interest in joining the Connect Networking Planning Committee.

Over the past three years, a core team of Connect members has been responsible for organising the events/activities for Connect. And the team has done a fabulous job!

And while committee members are keen to continue their involvement, they would welcome some new members (say, two or three) who would bring some fresh ideas and approaches.

The Planning Committee is responsible for the planning and delivery of Connect Networking events (normally five each year). There is not a huge time commitment involved – the Planning Committee meets monthly for an hour over a lunch-time with possibly some additional time in the lead up to a specific event.

If you would like to help set the agenda for Connect Networking and assist in organising the events, register your interest in joining the Planning Committee by emailing gayle@committeeforballarat.com.

In Brief

Save the Dates!

Connect Networking events for 2016 will be held on:

Tuesday, 16 February

Thursday, 19 May

Wednesday, 13 July

Tuesday, 23 August

Thursday, 24 November

Your contributions welcome

Connect is published four times a year – summer, autumn, winter and spring!

To keep the newsletter interesting and one you want to read, we welcome your suggestions (and contributions) for future editions. Contact Gayle on 5332 1240.

Pedalling for your Lunch

Join us for a fun Connect Networking event on Thursday, 19 November.

As well as celebrating the end of another busy year, the November event will provide some tips for healthy eating over the Christmas period.

There will even be an opportunity to assist in the food preparation.

Event: *Pedalling for your lunch*
Date: 19 November
Time: from 12.00 noon to 1.50 pm
Location: Ballarat Community Health
Cost: \$10 pp including lunch

Save the date! Your invitation will be arriving soon!



VECCI women in business

Wellness at work and play with Olivia Newton-John

As a member of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, Sovereign Hill is fortunate to be regularly represented at the quarterly VECCI Women in Business functions.

On 21 September, 2015, I attended this event with fellow Connect Networking member, Rebekah Fraser from Central Highlands Water, to hear Guest Speaker Olivia Newton-John talk about *Wellness at work and play*.

Olivia shared how her personal wellness philosophies have helped her achieve success in her career and personal life.

Some of the key messages she mentioned included:

- Eating well and including lots of plant foods (organic if possible) in your diet
- Staying hydrated
- Everything in moderation
- A little bit of exercise every day – something that makes you feel good
- Surrounding yourself with positive people

To incorporate these philosophies into the workplace, she suggested that we make our work areas positive spaces to allow for creative thinking – making sure

there is natural light, plants, paintings, healthy snacks in the tearoom and even including exercise into the workplace with lunchtime yoga classes etc.

The actress, singer, entrepreneur and philanthropist also spoke about the development of the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre at the Austin Hospital in Melbourne.

She noted how it was essential when agreeing to use her name for this centre that it had to have the word “wellness” incorporated into it. She did not want people to see it as a cancer centre where you go when you are sick – but more of a positive environment for patients to deal with this negative experience.



As well as cutting-edge research and medical treatments, the centre incorporates complementary programs for patients such as massage, yoga and music therapy.

The VECCI Women in Business events are held quarterly and you will find the details about the next function on the VECCI website under the Events tab.

*Janelle Burns
Executive Assistant to CEO - Sovereign Hill*



New Ways with Excel

The August 2015 Connect Networking event saw 20

members really get *their hands dirty* with a very practical Excel training session hosted by Committee for Ballarat member, BGT.

Every Connect member had a laptop and BGT's CEO Garry Doyle guided the group in a relaxed but informative way through a couple of Excel capabilities which were new to most - using a Data Entry Form and creating a Dropdown List.

The detailed notes Garry provided were (and are) a blessing. The afternoon was rounded off with a tour of the BGT training facilities and options. We were impressed with the BGT team's enthusiasm for its work.

*Trace Rayner
Nicholson Construction*



Above: BGT's Garry Doyle explaining some of the features of Excel.

MELBOURNE BECKONS



After working for three years with Ray White Ballarat as Administration Manager, Georgina Shanahan decided to make the move back to Melbourne.

Georgina was sad at having to say goodbye to a wonderful group of people at the Ballarat office but was looking forward to staying

with the Ray White group and working at their Southbank office in a similar role.

A member of Connect since its commencement, Georgina has been a great contributor to the group and has featured on both our banners (Georgina is pictured left in the group photo below).



“Connect Networking is a group that I thoroughly enjoyed being part of as I had not had the opportunity in previous employment to meet people in similar roles and interact outside the office.

“I thank Connect Networking for inviting me to join the group when I first started work at Ray White Ballarat. I would also like to thank our two directors, Trevor Booth and Phillip Lee, for giving me the time away from the office and for the opportunity to be involved with a fantastic group of people.”

Sarah Wilson has been appointed to the role previously held by Georgina. Sarah has already attended some Connect Networking events and we hope that she will continue to represent Ray White Real Estate in the future.

AFFECT vs EFFECT

The words ‘affect’ and ‘effect’ are quite different, but frequently confused.

Affect – a verb meaning to have an influence on, or to make a difference to. *Someone’s gender need not affect their ability to undertake a job.*

Effect – as a noun, it means a result. *Make adjustments until you get the effect you want.*

Effect – as a verb, it means to bring about a result. *Saving money can only be effected by sticking to your budget.*

Career change but TRAVEL STILL A PASSION

After a long and successful career in the travel industry, both as travel consultant and trainer, Mariska Pelchen changed careers to become an Executive Assistant (EA).

As an EA, Mariska has been able to utilise the skills and experience she gained from working in a variety of industry sectors.



Mariska said that most skills are transferrable. “The organisational skills learnt in the travel industry have been critical in all my subsequent roles.”

A summary of Mariska’s career is included below.

Name: Mariska Pelchen

Current Job Role:

Executive Assistant to CEO, UFS Dispensaries (Lynne McLennan)

Experience:

- Travel Consultant for 25 years
- Trainer of budding Travel Consultants at da Silva College (full-time then part-time over 6 years)
- Trainer, Business & Tourism and Workplace Assessor at BRACE (part-time over 3 years)
- Executive Assistant: Premier PR, public relations and event management (3 years)
- Executive Assistant: UFS Dispensaries (6 years)

Career Highlights:

- Winner of British Airways Harvey World Travel Australia promotion with 2 return tickets to London (*The most expensive prize I ever won having to take my family of five with me!*)

Personal:

Family: Husband Mark, and three sons - Jay, Dan and Luke

Holiday plans: For my next holiday I plan to walk a 100km section of the Camino de Santiago, an ancient pilgrim route in Spain with my girlfriends

Hobbies: dragon boating, travel

That's what being An Assistant is all about!

Gatekeepers ensuring their bosses aren't troubled,
Sorting out plans that have got all muddled.
Booking that last minute trip, no worry,
Typing up documents required in a hurry.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

Planning this and sorting that,
Greeting everyone with friendly chat.
To avoid that risk, thinking ahead,
Booking the restaurant so clients are fed.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

Skilled in Office and much much more,
Long hours on the keyboard 'till your fingers are sore.
Taking exams to develop and grow,
A thirst for knowledge is needed, you know.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

There's so much more than technical ability,
Business and people skills are required and are key,
Strategy, planning, creative negotiation,
Time-keeping, research plus excellent communication.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

As part of a team or working alone,
Often you think, "I need a clone!"
You knuckle down and cause no fuss,
But under your breath you'll sometimes cuss!
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

Trustworthy, loyal, honest and committed,
Making tough decisions when they are needed.
Using initiative to get the solution that's right,
Keeping eyes on the budget when things are tight.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

Thanks and praise maybe long overdue,
Because the results achieved are expected of you,
Probably knowing much more than a lot,
About corporate plans and topics so hot.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

From the shoulders of others, you unburden the load,
You really are worth your weight in gold.
Long gone are the days of, "You're just the typist",
When you're not around, you really are missed.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

So cometh the challenge, cometh the hour,
Unleash your awesome Assistant's power.
To make the world's offices much better places,
And see the appreciation of thanks on others' faces.
That's what being an Assistant is all about.

You'll never be alone with your troubles or fears,
With your supportive communities and helpful peers.
So Speak Up, be proud and let everyone know,
From the newest of colleagues to the CEO.
That's what being an assistant is all about!

from [Ngagement Work](#) website

Thanks to Rebekah Fraser, CHW, for providing the link to this "article".

Think all EAs/PAs/Office Professionals can relate to some, if not all, of it!

Committee for Ballarat welcomes new Chair

After three years in the role, Judy Verlin AM, stepped down as Chair, Committee for Ballarat at the October 2015 AGM.

Judy, who is also Connect Networking's patron, has been an outstanding leader for Committee for Ballarat. Her passion for the region, her great leadership skills and style have been very much appreciated by Committee members and stakeholders alike.

At the conclusion of the AGM, Judy handed over the reins to new Chair, Janet Dore.

Janet, former CEO of TAC, has a long association with Ballarat and the region, including her role as CEO of the newly amalgamated City of Ballarat from 1994 – 1999.

Janet is looking forward to once again taking an active role in the region.

And hopefully we can entice her to attend one of our Connect functions!

Janet Dore and Judy Verlin AM following the 2015 AGM

