

## DATA Christmas Party

### Melbourne Zoo

4th December

Lunch and afternoon tea provided

**RSVP NOW!!**

Details page. 6



### Dialysing in Malaysia

page. 8-9

## Ron Jones Scholarship award and AGM

page.11-12



## In this Issue

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<b>Page 2</b>	A Note from the Editors
<b>Page 3</b>	President's Report
<b>Page 4</b>	Holiday Homes—Status Report and Vacancies
<b>Page 5</b>	Holiday Homes—Status Report and Vacancies—continued
	Notice Board
	Funnies
<b>Page 6</b>	Christmas Party at the Zoo
<b>Page 7</b>	Recipe Corner
<b>Page 8</b>	Dialysing in Malaysia
<b>Page 9</b>	Dialysing in Malaysia—continued.
<b>Page 10</b>	AGM Report
	Funnies
<b>Page 11</b>	AGM Photos
<b>Page 12</b>	Dates to Remember
	Contact Details

## A Note From the Editors...

Hello to all our readers and a special welcome to all new DATA members!

Hope you all enjoyed reading our last issue.

This November/December issue, the last for the year, features lots of goodies that we hope you will find inspiring and useful.

Our wonderfully hard-working President has provided an overview of the year in DATA as have our three Holiday Home Secretaries. Be sure to read those.

The AGM this year was held with much success at a completely new venue, Café Vanilli in Blackburn, with the Ron Jones Scholarship being awarded. Check out the report and photos on page 10 and 11.

Our member story this issue comes from George Seears and is a wonderful exploration of some of the options available for people who are wanting to travel outside of Australia and are on dialysis.

We have also included some great recipes for you to try and some quotes to tickle your funny bone.

We are still taking RSVP's for the Christmas party and are really looking forward to an exciting and fun-filled day.

Who can resist elephants? We hope you, your family and friends can join us!

We wish you and your loved ones a safe and happy Christmas and blessings in the New Year!

*June & Adrienne, Editors*

The Dialysis and Transplant Association of Victoria, Incorporated, (D.A.T.A.) is a patient self help group made up of people with kidney failure and their families and friends.

Social days are held at regular intervals and the year culminates with the annual Christmas party.

*ShoeString* denotes the feeling of life when it is turned upside-down and that, with Kidney failure, Dialysis & Transplant, you sometimes have to pull yourself up by the shoe strings to get going.

Visit our website at [www.datavic.org](http://www.datavic.org)

# President's Report



It has been a real privilege to be President of DATA, which, when talking to various professional people, one learns is a highly respected organisation.

I must thank all those on the committee, as we had several members resigning this year I thank those people willing to replace them.

I must also especially thank Sue, our secretary, who is the main organizer of all DATA things, attending to our correspondence, paying our bills, running the Blackburn house and many other activities. Thanks must also go to our treasurer, Lloyd who despite being quite ill earlier this year, managed to keep up with the money side of things. No doubt this was quite a headache at times for him. Another thank you must go to the 2 people who run the holiday houses, Alan and Kaitlyn, as this is one of our main activities giving our members a cheap holiday. For those who do not know, Alan celebrated his 20 year anniversary for his kidney transplant at our Christmas in July!

The other major activity we do is our bi-monthly newsletter Shoestring, which helps us keep in touch with our members (and hasn't it changed!) A big thank you to June and Adrienne for taking on this task after Joan decided to give it up, after many years. Many thanks go to Joan for her efforts and contributions.

Our social activities for the past year started with our Christmas Party which was held at Blackburn due to the fact there was only a small group who replied and it didn't warrant hiring the Guide Hall at Halladay Park. It was a great day none the less and everyone enjoyed the day sitting under the big trees at Blackburn and playing totem tennis. Even the oldies had a go! There were lots of laughs, especially when Sue and Joan tried to play, I don't know who missed the ball the most: Sue or Joan, but it was great fun to watch!

This year for our Christmas Party, we have acquired a Pavilion at the Melbourne Zoo, where DATA has decided to subsidise the entrance fee and supply lunch so please send back your replies before the 21 November so Sue can organise the tickets and get them back to you. I look forward to seeing you all there!

Earlier in the year we held a working bee at Blackburn, to get the garden back in control. We had many members attend and thus had a very successful day. A big thank you to those who helped out and a really big thank you to Better Bin Hire for the bin to take all the rubbish away. Thanks to Ken Smith for bringing the bin and taking it to the tip. If not for Ken we would still have lots of branches still there, nobody

stamps down tree branches better than Ken!

Our summer BBQ at Blackburn was held as it is each year with our new members especially invited so they could meet us and we them, and this included a look around the house.

We held a very successful Christmas in July, even though a change of venue was necessary after very short notice. Sue took this challenge on and found an alternative venue, and let everyone attending know, including Santa. For the first time we had the catering provided allowing everyone to be able to join in the fun and spend some time with their guests. A big thank you to all those behind the scenes, setting up, doing the dishes and cleaning up. I must thank these people who are always at our functions, and in the background, seeing that all runs smoothly and doing the dishes at the end, especially Joan, Angela and Elizabeth (and some husbands too).

We have had a few unusual happenings occur this year. At one stage it was thought that our house in Blackburn would be sold, due to the building of many high-rise apartments to the left and right of us. This caused quite a lot of anxiety among our members and so it was decided to stay where we are. Consequently, DATA has set up a subcommittee to look at all things DATA and so far that has lead us to renovate our holiday house at Rosebud. The subcommittee has yet to finish its work and I thank those who have taken on this task.

*President*  
Ros Ball

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## THANK YOU...

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A big thank you all of you who returned the feedback form included with last issue of ShoeString. We had some lovely comments and suggestions and will be taking them all on board.

If you missed out or would still like to contribute your feedback or any jokes or articles please feel free to email the editors at editor.shoestring@gmail.com, or write to DATA, PO Box 165 Blackburn 3130.

# Holiday Homes

## Rosebud:

### Rosebud Holiday Home Report

We have had a very busy year regarding the Rosebud holiday home. Since January the house has been fully booked with only 3 weeks remaining vacant. Currently the house is fully booked until mid-April 2012. I am happy to take bookings if anyone would like to book for either of the last 2 weeks of April or for May. There is a waiting list for cancellations but as there are already 10 names on that list, I do not wish to add any more to it at this stage.

We have made some renovations to the house, which will be quite noticeable when past users of the holiday home return for a holiday in Rosebud. The sunken floor has been raised to be level with the rest of the flooring, and a ramp has been installed from the driveway to the front door for wheelchair access, all which is now covered by a veranda. The driveway has also been made more user friendly and comes straight out from the carport onto the street.

The carpet has been removed from the living area, dining area and hallway, and linoleum has been laid in these areas as well as re-done in the dialysis room and en-suite. To make everyone's stay more comfortable, ducted heating and cooling has been installed through-out the entire house. These areas have also been repainted and awnings have been added to the front of the house.

A new coffee table, hall table and TV unit has been ordered and should be delivered in November. Once this furniture arrives we shall purchase a new flat screen LED television.

Some thank yous go out to Leigh, for becoming another emergency contact for the home; to Dorothy, who has been the emergency contact for the home for many years; to the Rosebud Hospital dialysis unit and the wonderful Renal nurses that work there, who have dialysed many of DATA's members who have stayed at the holiday home over the past year and to all those who attended the working bee last September.

All in all – it has been a very successful year, and I hope many more members get the opportunity to take a holiday at the Rosebud home.

### Rosebud Holiday Home Secretary

**Kaitlyn Steavenson**

Ph. 9785 3036, Mob. 0403 561 624



## Blackburn:

Blackburn House is not being used as much now for country patients, it seems that the patients we used to get when they were being trained for home dialysis or had a transplant are staying at the hospital's accommodation, which is nearer to the hospital.

The building next door is going ahead in leaps and bounds and there has not been too much inconvenience with trucks or parking etc. however, the noise has been a bit loud.

On the whole Blackburn has been quieter than the other houses. People from the country should feel free to come down and have a holiday in Melbourne, it's cheaper than a hotel: at \$35 an night per couple and \$50 for the family room, it is great value.

### Blackburn House Secretary

Sue Hatzimichalis

Ph. 9378 9222, Mob. 0412 469738



# Holiday Homes

## Yarrowonga:

No vacancies left this year but bookings are open for next year. Don't forget you Haemo Patients to ring the Yarrowonga Renal Unit (Phone: 57438189) to find out what is available and then ring me to book that time into the house; Haemo Patients get first preference at the house.

I would like to thank the Lioness Club of Yarrowonga for their kind donation of \$300 towards the cost of a set of outdoor furniture. Thanks to Liz Ornsby who organised this for DATA.

We would like to see more CAPD patients using the houses. Everything is up there: a microwave, bag warmer, etc. and your bags can be delivered to the house when required.



## Yarrowonga House Secretary

Alan Rawson, 22 Tarwin Drive Croydon 3136,  
Ph. 9723 3019, E-mail: fayal\_rawson@hotmail.com

**REMINDER: YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SMOKE IN ANY OF THE HOUSES.**



Please consider the health of other members who use these facilities. Any member who does smoke in the DATA house will be dealt with at the discretion of the DATA committee, which will probably include a ban on using any of the holiday homes.

## Notice Board

### RIDE FOR DIALYSIS

Along with the Geelong Touring Cyclists Steven Cartin is cycling on the last Sunday of each Month, in the name of Kidney Health Australia. Funds raised go towards Kidney Health awareness of kidney disease.

Rides leave from Geelong Station at 9.00 am, to a different destination each month.

To make a donation or get more information go to:  
[www.everydayhero.com.au/steven\\_cartin](http://www.everydayhero.com.au/steven_cartin)

### BIG D AND ME

BigDandMe is a blog, written from DATA member, Greg Collette's, personal experiences with dialysis. Updated every fortnight, find his blog at:  
[bigdandme.wordpress.com/](http://bigdandme.wordpress.com/).

ShoeString will be featuring an article from Greg in our next issue so be sure to look out for it.

## Funnies

Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen

Mark Twain

Just remember, once you're over the hill you begin to pick up speed.

Arthur Schopenhauer

All my life, I always wanted to be somebody. Now I see I should have been more specific

Jane Wagner

Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance?

Phyllis Diller

Mistakes are a part of being human. Appreciate your mistakes for what they are: precious life lessons that can only be learned the hard way. Unless it's a fatal mistake, which, at least, others can learn from.

Al Franken

Last night I lay in bed looking up at the stars in the sky and I thought to myself, where the heck is the ceiling.

Scott Adams

# Christmas at the Zoo

## *Christmas at the Melbourne Zoo*

Data would like to invite you to join us at the Melbourne Zoo  
for a Christmas Party this year on ...

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2011**  
**11pm to 4pm**

***We will subsidise \$10.00 off the price of the entrance fee***

That will make it: each Adult: \$15.40  
Concessions: \$9.90  
Children under 16 are free

*So please join us...*

We have booked a Pavilion so we have a place to come  
and rest and enjoy each other's company.

The zoo is a great place for the entire family to spend the day.  
You can wander through the many exciting exhibits or  
just sit and relax, catching up with friends.

**A picnic lunch, of sandwiches, and afternoon tea  
Including cake, coffee and tea, will be provided.**

Please bring your own chairs, tables and blankets  
and have a fun day at the Zoo with DATA.

***Hope to see you there!***

**RSVP: As soon as possible!**

**21<sup>st</sup> November so we can buy your tickets and get them out to you.**



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Cut Here and send back, along with payment, to: DATA, PO Box 165, Blackburn 3130

**Yes!** Please book me tickets to join you at the Melbourne Zoo!

Tickets needed: \_\_\_\_\_ Adults (\$15.40) \_\_\_\_\_ Concession (\$9.90) \_\_\_\_\_ Children (free)

Please find enclosed my Cheque/Money Order for the amount \$\_\_\_\_\_

*Please post to:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

# Recipe Corner

Christmas is just around the corner and what Christmas dinner is complete without the traditional Christmas pudding!

Here are two variations on the traditional recipe, one especially suited for those watching their sugar intake and the other for pure indulgence (if you can't sin at Christmas when can you?).

Both are incredibly simple to prepare, not nearly as scary or time-consuming as the old ways. The ice cream twist is also really well suited to our hot Australian Summers.

Enjoy.

## Sugar-free Christmas Cake (Suitable for diabetics)

### Ingredients:

2 cups water  
2 cups raisins  
1 cup unsweetened apple sauce  
2 eggs  
2 tbsp honey  
3/4 cup cooking oil  
1 tsp baking soda  
2 cups plain flour  
1 1/4 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp nutmeg  
1 tsp vanilla

### Instructions:

In a small pot of water, simmer raisins in water until soft. Drain and set aside until cool.  
Pre-heat oven to 180 C.  
Combine raisins, applesauce, eggs, lightly beaten, honey, cooking oil in a pot and mix well.  
Add baking soda, flour, cinnamon and nutmeg, and stir through. Add vanilla and mix well.  
Pour into greased cake tin. Bake for 1 hour or until cooked through.  
Serve with your choice of icing, cream or custard.



## Indulgent Easy Ice cream Christmas Pudding

### Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups mixed dried fruits, including some chopped glace fruits  
2 tablespoons brandy or Grand Marnier  
1/2 cup toasted slivered almonds  
2 teaspoons mixed spices  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
3-4 L carton of vanilla or chocolate ice cream

### Instructions:

Marinate the fruit in the brandy or Grand Marnier for at least 4 hours.  
Remove ice cream from freezer and allow to soften but without becoming 'liquid'.  
Stir all ingredients into the ice cream gently but thoroughly.  
To refreeze, mixture may be returned to the carton or refrozen in a bowl or fluted cake pan. For a richer dessert hollow out a Panettone Italian cake (available from most delis or supermarkets) and fill with the ice cream mixture.  
Place back in the freezer overnight.  
Serve with your choice of sauce; chocolate, custard, or cream.

# Dialysising in Malaysia

It's a big wide wonderful world out there, and services like Dialysis Abroad make it possible for dialysis patients and their partners to see at least some of it, as *George Seers* discovered.

It all began with a phone call to Dialysis Abroad. A lovely lady, Nancy Douglas-Irving, took the call on her mobile whilst traveling to the office, 'I'm not sure if we go to Malaysia, let me check and I will call you back.'

She called back shortly after and the trip was on.

A very rapid application on my part for a new passport, an item that I didn't think I would ever get to use again. With the same lady taking care of the paperwork as the emails went back and forth, and the Bairnsdale Dialysis Unit taking care of the medical requirements, we were soon ready to board the jet.

**Day 1** - We met Nancy at the international terminal at Melbourne Airport. We, my wife, Kay, Nancy and myself, departed that afternoon on a flight to Kuala Lumpur, a direct flight arriving late at night. A driver/guide picked us up at the airport and we were taken into the city to our hotel, a journey of about 45 minutes. The hotel was very nice and, as it turned out, also very central.

**Day 2** - Shortly after seven in the morning, the driver picked up Nancy and I to travel to another part of the city for dialysis. In no time at all I was hooked up to the machine, Nancy took care of all the paperwork, I just had to pay up. I experienced a few cramps near the end



of the session, but a weight adjustment fixed that so that it never occurred again. The rest of the day was at leisure, so Kay and I went wandering, and the evening was enjoyed at a 'welcoming' dinner.

**Day 3** - The day started with a visit to the Batu Caves, home to Hindu deities. Shortly after we visited Royal Selangor Pewter Factory where we enjoyed of the factory and their display shop. We ate lunch at a local restaurant (part of the tour) and then we were driven to the area of the Central Market and China Town, where we enjoyed the rest of the day.

**Day 4** - Day four was a parks day: Lake Garden, Orchid farm, Butterfly Park and the Bird Park. Lunch was provided at the Bird Park Cafe. Then off to Dialysis for me, transport provided to and from the door of the unit.

**Day 5** - A full day tour to Malacca, the highlights included, visits to a Chinese temple, Christ Church, Fort Santiago, Jonker Street—a very old, narrow, and now heritage listed, street—and the Baba and Nyonya Museum. Lunch was provided as part of the tour and was held at a Nyonya restaurant. The Baba-Nyonyas are descendants of early merchants from China who intermarried with local Malay women. On the way back to K L we got our first taste of the rain and it fairly pelted down, but it was still warm, and the warmth was wonderful.

**Day 6** - Dialysis Abroad provided for a visit to the Twin Tower Sky Bridge and shopping centre on day six, with the rest of the day at leisure. Our tickets for



# Dialysing in Malaysia



the sky bridge were for the early afternoon, so Kay and I booked a tour to a water fall which was well away from the city, and a visit to the Palace of the Golden Horses. This is actually a hotel/lodge but what a magnificent place! We then went through an area named the Mines, as it used to be were their tin mines were, now it has a large lake and an almost-as-large shopping complex,

with a boating waterway running through part of the complex.

**Day 7** - Picked up just before 7.00 am by the trusty driver and delivered safely to the dialysis unit. As the girls had spent the morning shopping, while I was 'working,' it was decided that we all should go to the KLCC Suria, the shopping (what else) complex at the Twin Towers.

**Day 8** - We travelled through the rain to Putrajaya. This is a 'new' city where their head of government has his office complex, there is a very large international convention centre—quite magnificent—and a very large Mosque. They permit people of other faiths to visit this mosque although women must cover up and garments are provided for this purpose. Some areas are restricted particularly to women, and of course, as tourists you do not get the run of the place to yourself. Beautiful structure! The afternoon was spent at the Islamic Museum, the state mosque and the old British rail station, which is now also a mosque, then Independent Square. By this time coffee was calling so off to a shopping centre near the hotel to satisfy this need.

**Day 9** - You guessed it: off to dialysis again. Thanks to the ever reliable driver/guide we were whisked away, me to dialysis the girls to another shopping complex. However, due to a power failure the complex was not open for business, so the local street market filled the void. A farewell lunch was provided today at an excellent steak house. The

afternoon was spent packing our bags, as its time to go home. A late checkout is provided, our driver picks us and takes us to the airport for our late departure back to Melbourne.

**Day 10** - Arrived back in Melbourne at just after 7.00 am. We collected our car from the parking station, and headed off for more shopping, eventually arriving home mid-afternoon.

Overall, our opinions of the tour was very positive. It was very well organised; all bookings were made by Dialysis Abroad. At the destination, transport was provided and available to you throughout the tour, the attention and skill of our driver/guides could not be faulted. The hotel was very good, as should be expected from a 4/5 star hotel. You didn't have to leave the hotel to eat unless you chose to, they have seven restaurants/bars within the hotel and I can vouch for the Japanese and the Chinese restaurants in house, as they were excellent. Room service, of course, was available 24/7. Everyone we had dealings with, we found to be very polite, friendly and cooperative, really nice people. The staff at the dialysis unit were competent at their task. The scenery was very enjoyable, the buildings are different and mostly a delight because of this fact. The shopping malls are shopping malls, what more can I say, the countryside was very tropical. Everything the tour promised it delivered.

There's a big wide wonderful world out there, and services like Dialysis Abroad make it possible for dialysis patients and their partners to see at least some of it. They not only book your travel, they are there at the dialysis unit to make sure you are cared for as you should be.

Would I go again to an international destination if the opportunity presented itself? You-bet-cha!

*George Seears*  
Bairnsdale Dialysis Unit



George and the staff from the dialysis unit.

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# Annual General meeting

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**O**n Sunday 23rd October 2011, thirty DATA members gathered at Cafe Vanilli, in Blackburn for our 38<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting.

The meeting was held out in the courtyard area of Cafe Vanilli. The weather was quite balmy, though we had plenty of shade.

Ros Ball gave us the President's report, during which she mentioned Nick Hatzimichaelis was quite ill in the Alfred Hospital, and thanked Sue for her dedication and continuing work.

It was good to see Lloyd Samuel, our Treasurer (flown in from Sydney that morning!). Lloyd gave us the Treasurer's report, taking us through the details of the accounts – incomes and outgoings.

It was also reported that ShoeString editors, June and Adrienne, are keen to continue as Editors for the next year. Sue encouraged everyone to continue to send in their stories and personalise the ShoeString magazine. The colour upgrade and paper upgrade have been well accepted.

The committee members were voted in with some changes to last year. The Committee for 2011-2012 is as follows: President - Ros Ball; Vice President - Kaitlyn Steavenson; Secretary - Sue Hatzimichaelis; Treasurer - Lloyd Samuel; Holiday Home Secretaries: Rosebud - Kaitlyn Steavenson; Yarrowonga - Alan Rawson; Blackburn - Sue Hatzimichaelis; Minute Secretary - Angela Lindsey; Ordinary Committee Members: Joan Eastwood, Ken Smith, Nick Hatzimichaelis, Michael Allan; Brendan Lowry; Paul Murphy; Neil Sixtus; Shoe String Editors: June Salt, Adrienne Betlehem.

Karen Manly, a well-respected renal dietician at the Austin Hospital, was our guest speaker. She spoke of her research exploring what changes occur in patients' tastes after contacting renal failure. A most interesting and informative talk.

Ros Ball was presented with a Lifetime Membership by Sue Hatzimichaelis for her relentless pursuit of better deals for dialysis patients and for the promotion of DATA to all with kidney disease. Well done, Ros!

The Ron Jones Educational Award this year was awarded to Joshua Drwecki. Congratulations go to Joshua.

The raffle was drawn before afternoon tea with the first prize, a weeks holiday, going to Kathy White, from Traralgon Dialysis Unit; second prize, tickets to the Ballarat light and sound show, went to Brendan Lowry, and third prize, a \$100 Gift Voucher of own choice was awarded to Lawrence Murphy. Congratulations to all the winners.

Afternoon tea was a sumptuous affair served up by Mona, Sam and Leigh of Café Vanilli, so a big thank you to them; they made us feel really welcome and the coffee was delicious!

The afternoon ended with a catch-up with old friends and much chatter all around. It was lovely to see everyone there.

*Joan Eastwood*

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## Funnies

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I cook with wine, sometimes I even add it to the food.  
W. C. Fields

I used to jog but the ice cubes kept falling out of my glass.  
David Lee Roth

I'm an idealist. I don't know where I'm going, but I'm on my way.  
Carl Sandburg

Money won't buy happiness, but it will pay the salaries of a large research staff to study the problem.  
Bill Vaughan

My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was sixty. She's ninety-seven now, and we don't know where the hell she is.

Ellen DeGeneres

My theory is that all of Scottish cuisine is based on a dare.

Mike Myers

Older people shouldn't eat health food, they need all the preservatives they can get. - Robert Orben

There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full.

Henry A. Kissinger

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# Annual General meeting

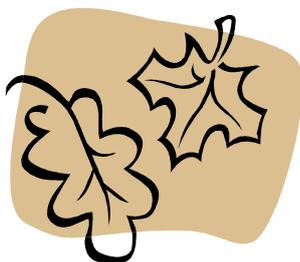


A great turn out! (*above*)

Ros Ball being awarded Honorary Lifetime membership by Sue Hatzimichaelis (*right*)



Ron Jones Scholarship award winner, Joshua Drwecki and DATA President, Ros Ball (*below*)



DATA President, Ros Ball, and guest speaker, Karen Manly.

# Dates to Remember



**P.O. Box 165  
Blackburn 3130  
Ph. (03) 9894 0377  
Fax. (03) 9894 0266**

## Executive Committee

### President

Ros Ball (03) 9439 8866

### Vice President

Kaitlyn Steavenson (03) 9785 3036

### Secretary

Sue Hatzimichalis (03) 9378 9222

### Treasurer

Lloyd Samuel (03) 9509 6637

## Holiday Homes Secretaries

### Yarrowonga House

Alan Rawson (03) 9723 3019

### Rosebud House

Kaitlyn Stevenson (03) 9785 3036  
0403 561 624

### Blackburn House

Sue Hatzimichalis (03) 9378 9222

### ShoeString Editors

June Salt 0404 008 799

Adrienne Betlehem 0411 326 093

## Committee Members

Nick Hatzimichalis (03) 9378 9222

Ken Smith (03) 5977 3580

Brendan Lowry (03) 9589 4894

Michael Allan (03) 9561 4806

Joan Eastwood (03) 9795 1649

Paul Murphy (03) 9779 9386

Nick Sixtus (03) 5977 8903

\* \* \*

**December 4 Christmas Party**  
**Time:** 11.00am-4.00pm  
**Venue:** Melbourne Zoo Pavilion

**RSVP by 21st November**

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## Our thanks to all who contributed to this edition.

Why not spread the word and pass this copy on?

*ShoeString* are always looking for stories to publish. If you have a story to tell and you're not sure where to begin our editors would be more than happy to assist you in writing your article. Or if you have ideas of issues you would like to see covered, contact us.

Write to: The Editor, *ShoeString*,  
P.O. Box 165 Blackburn 3130  
Email: editor.shoestring@gmail.com

*The views expressed in the editorial and the contributed items are those of the authors and are not necessary the opinions of D.A.T.A. Inc.*

**Deadline for the next *ShoeString*: 19th December**