Christmas in July

Manchester Unity Hall
8 Main St, Blackburn
Parking will be available across the road

July 21, 6.30 pm
$25 a head, includes dinner and entertainment

A night for all with rousing entertainment provided by Sammy and Harry singing the oldies.

Don’t miss out on this great night out!

Frankston Dialysing Art
page. 10

Fletchers holiday in Singapore
page. 6-7

40 Years of ShoeString!

Joan’s Angel Award
page. 9
Hello everyone, hope you are all well.

The month of July is always special for DATA, as we hold our annual Christmas in July function. The evening is a great opportunity for our members to get together and meet new friends or catch up with old friends. There is still time to book tickets for this wonderful night. Details on the flyer mailed out with last ShoeString edition or you can contact DATA.

ShoeString is an integral part of DATA and has been for an amazing 40 years. Adrianne and I would like to express how honoured and proud we feel to be involved in the publication of this newsletter. We send out our thanks to all past editors and contributors and, of course, to you our readers.

Past Editor of ShoeString, and long term committee member, Joan Eastwood, was one of only a chosen few to recently accept an Angel Award, given by Kidney Health Australia. Congratulations Joan! DATA is so fortunate to have someone as kind and generous as you.

Our Secretary, Sue, had an unfortunate accident a few weeks ago, is on the road to recovery and is taking a well earned holiday with her family, our well wishes go out to Sue and hope she soon has both feet back on the ground.

There is an array of reading in this bi-monthly edition, including two winter warming soup recipes to stave off those nasty colds and flus, also some funnies to keep you smiling. Jan and Geoff Fletcher share with us their Singapore experience and you may want to check our holiday homes, there are some dates that have become available due to cancellations; a winter escape could be just what the doctor ordered!

June & Adrianne, 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 up-side-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
President’s Report

My husband Charlie is planning to retire this year and will become my full time carer. Makes me feel I am quite disabled! I attend many outpatient clinics and, because of my limited eyesight, am unable to drive myself so I will soon have a personal chauffeur. It will also make it easier for me to attend any DATA meetings and activities held at Blackburn.

Our recent committee meeting was interrupted by the unexpected 5.4 earthquake. It was strange with the house shaking and groaning, and a little scary!

My big congratulations go to Joan Eastwood on receiving an Angel Award. This award is for people who have contributed significantly to the renal community. Joan has contributed many hours of volunteer work over a number of years, editing Shoestring and managing the catering of various functions that DATA has held. A most deserving reward! Alan Rawson was awarded this several years ago, so we now have two angels gracing our organization.

DATA house at Blackburn will soon have new neighbors. The units next door are almost finished and many have already been sold; how this will affect us remains to be seen. There are also units further down the street on the same side which are well on the way to completion. Across the road, there are plans for more units to be built. These plans include a restaurant, a bottle shop and another retail outlet. Perhaps the restaurant will provide us with another venue to patronize. This will raise a number of different things for DATA to consider over the coming months.

After taking some time, (due to personal commitments, etc.) our new treasurer Eleanor has settled into the job, and we thank her for the effort necessary to attend to this job.

Some members of our committee are suffering and in pain. Michael Allan, a committee member has had to have an operation on his back, and so he is getting lots of physiotherapy to help him heal. Our secretary, Sue fell and broke her hip, and with her husband Nick (also on the committee) in a wheelchair and Sue on a walker, what a sight it must be. Luckily for them Sue and Nick have an adult son to take over their care. Kaitlyn, who looks after the Rosebud house is having trouble with a very painful toe. Being on peritoneal dialysis, and a diabetic, means it needs to be attended to.

Hope to see you all at our Christmas in July, it’s lots of fun!

Ros Ball, President

I forgot to mention that the 14 to 20 of May was volunteer week. I really meant to mention this in the last ShoeString. I wish to give a BIG Thank-you to all those volunteers who help the running of DATA. Each and every one of you is appreciated!

Get Well Soon…

Accidents do happen even to carers. Sue, our secretary, who cares for her husband Nick, had a fall and broke her hip. OUCH! Off to the Alfred hospital she went. The following day, pins were inserted into her hip and now she is in the recovery stages, and having to use a walker to get around. On behalf of all committee and DATA members, we wish Sue a speedy recovery and send our best wishes.
**Holiday Homes**

**Rosebud:**

There have been a lot of cancellations with holidays at Rosebud over the past couple of months, thankfully most of which were filled at short notice. We still have vacancies for the following periods: 8 to 22 July, 29 July to 5 August, 12 to 26 August and 2 to 23 September.

Summer bookings are now being taken and there are places still in December and February. Please call if you would like any of these for a weeks holiday at Rosebud. Please remember to call after midday. Many members have called before that time, and I only vaguely remember the conversations as I'm still half asleep.

I recently spent the weekend at the holiday home myself and had a wonderful time. Despite it being winter and extremely cold for me, a break in Rosebud was just what I needed. I ventured back to the Enchanted Maze Garden and so many more activities have been added to this place since I was last there 2 years ago. It is the perfect place for the young and the not so young. Even my parents had a go on the tube slides they have. The coastline is always a favourite of mine and a trip to Portsea and Sorrento was a must - seeing the changes over different seasons fascinates me.

To help keep rent low, we do not employ a cleaner or a routine maintenance person (in any of the houses), we therefore rely on people who stay at the house to clean the home before they leave and ensure it is left in a clean condition ready for the next person who has booked the home. It would be appreciated if members can replace light bulbs and clock batteries when necessary.

Please call me if there is any mishaps or problems with the house as notes left at the house can be misplaced and the information is unlikely to be passed on.

**Rosebud Holiday Home Secretary**
Kaitlyn Steavenson
Ph. 9785 3036, Mob. 0403 561 624
*Please ring after midday.*

**Yarrawonga:**

Vacancies are still available all weeks between 5 August until 2 September as well as 28 October to 4 November and between 18 November and 2 December. We do get cancellations so please ring me.

Don’t forget you Haemo Patients to ring the Yarrawonga 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.

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.

**Yarrawonga House Secretary**
Alan Rawson, 22 Tarwin Drive Croydon 3136,
Ph. 9723 3019, E-mail: fayal_rawson@hotmail.com
Holiday Homes

Rent Increase

Due to the rising costs there will be a rent rise at both houses from the start of February 2012.

New rates are $180.00 per week between December 1 until Easter. The off-peak rate will be $160.00 per week from Easter to the end of November. Extra guests are still $20.00 per night each.

If you have already received a form for 2012 with $160.00 stated as the rent this is what you will be charged for your holiday.

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.

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 a night per couple and $50 for the family room, it is great value.

Blackburn House Secretary
Sue Hatzimichalis
Ph. 9378 9222, Mob. 0412 469738

Blackburn Development Update

Once again our headquarters at Blackburn is under pressure from developers.

There are developers who are seeking approval from VCAT to build quite a big complex opposite us, from the church hall, to the corner. This complex also includes two retail shops and a restaurant. DATA was unaware of this until we received a notification from the local council about their objections and that the planning was going to VCAT. From my own experience, VCAT approves building permits, with only subtle changes.

What does this mean for us? There are units being built further down the road, towards Whitehorse Rd, units beside us, and now even bigger units opposite us. I am assuming lots more traffic and pedestrians, which will increase the noise level and, with a proposed restaurant and bottle shop, we can expect this interruption to continue well into the evenings. Increased parking on the narrow road, will potentially impede traffic.

Once again it is time to consider selling and moving. Personally, selling will be the easy part, but finding somewhere else to go will be difficult. Thoughts are that DATA should move towards the city, which may encourage more country people to stay at our house and visit Melbourne. Remember that these changes will affect those who visit the Blackburn House more than those who do not, yet if it encourages more people then it will be a good thing.

I invite you all to let us know your ideas and thoughts.

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.
We travelled to Sydney, Singapore and Malaysia in late February early March 2012. Dialysis Abroad (now Unique Travel Pty Ltd) organised a holiday to a new destination: Singapore and it included a 3 night cruise to Malaysia, so Jan and I decided we would like to give it a try.

We contacted Nancy at Unique Travel and were told there was room on the tour for us and that the tour was leaving from Sydney. That gave us a chance to catch up with one of our sons and his wife.

I was able to dialyse at St George’s hospital in Kogarah on the day before leaving for Singapore, so I arranged a flight to Sydney and accommodation close to the Sydney airport and the dialysis unit.

As usual I arranged to have bloods and swabs done for both St George’s Hospital and the Singapore dialysis units but this time, I also had to have a chest x-ray which the dialysis units in Singapore requested to prove that I did not have TB.

With all tests ok and all tickets in hand we proceeded on our holiday.

We left Melbourne on Thursday, at about noon, and arrived in Sydney where we picked up our hire car, found our accommodation and checked directions to the hospital for dialysis the next day. We also managed to get in a little tour of the area.

Whilst I was at dialysis Jan caught up with some reading and that evening we met up with our son and daughter in law at our hotel for dinner.

Saturday we proceeded to the airport, returned our hire car and met Nancy, Enzo and his wife Maria at the check in lounge. There were to be 19 on the tour but some had travelled separately to Singapore. Our small group were all seated together on the top deck of the aircraft for a very comfortable flight to Singapore.

We were met at the airport by our tour guide Marco. He sent our luggage to the Orchard Plaza Hotel in a van and we all went in a coach driven by Sonny who was to be our driver for the duration of our trip. We checked into our rooms and, after a small rest time to get settled, met for a welcome dinner at an Italian Restaurant which was adjoining the hotel lobby.

Sunday, we had breakfast in the dining room and Marco met us at 9am in the foyer to take us on one of our many tours of Singapore.

First stop was the Botanical Gardens, some walked around the gardens and some went to the orchid house. We went up Mount Faber for a view of the city and a diorama of Singapore, then to Marina Bay where we had lunch and looked around. Some of the group had a go on the Singapore Flyer, a ferris wheel.

After lunch we hopped on the open-top bus and visited Clarke Quay and enjoyed a walk around the old port area. Back on the bus to return to our hotel for a relaxing dip in the hotel pool.

Monday was a free day and Jan and I went to Universal Studios on Sentosa Island. On returning to our hotel I met the other 6 dialysis patients in the foyer of the hotel and we were picked up in a mini van at 4.15 pm for dialysis at 5 pm at the Gleneagles Dialysis Unit.

After doing the paperwork they required and making payment for our dialysis treatments we were all put on our Fresenius machines and, after about an hour we were given tea or coffee and some biscuits. One of the renal doctors came in to see us all, Dr Akira Wu, who was acquainted with one of my renal doctors at Monash Medical Centre and did some training at the old Prince Henry’s Hospital in Melbourne. After dialysis we were taken back to our hotel.

Tuesday, we were picked up again at 9 am by Marco and Sonny and taken to see another part of Singapore.

We visited Little India, Arab Street and the mosque, and Singapore’s emblem the Merlion (half fish half lion). We were taken to view an urban plan building where a scale model of the future plan for Singapore was displayed before we headed to lunch. We returned to our hotel to change for High Tea at the Raffles Hotel.

We visited the museum and shop, then all went to High Tea that required a formal dress code and was very nice. After High Tea we visited the Long Bar, where peanuts in the shell are provided at all the...
tables and you shell and eat the peanuts, leaving the shells on the floor. We then returned to our hotel. Wednesday was another free day and Jan and I, along with Ros one of the other carers on the trip, went to see the Titanic Exhibition which we missed when it was in Melbourne. It was at the Art Science Museum. After returning to our hotel I got ready for dialysis, Dr Wu attended again. On Thursday, we were picked up again and taken back to Clarke Quay to catch a ferry to tour the harbour. There is a lot of redevelopment and reclamation of Singapore alongside some of the original buildings. After the ferry ride we were taken to the Zoo where we explored at our own pace, it is an open Zoo and you can walk or catch the hop-on/hop-off tramcar. There are elephant rides and there are shows in the amphitheatre and at the elephant enclosure. We then returned to our hotel to rest and have dinner.

Friday: up early and all taken to early dialysis at a different unit for a 7 am start. The hotel supplied us with a breakfast box as today we depart on our cruise to Malaysia. Most of us only took a single case and stored the other luggage at the hotel as the cruise was only for three nights.

We were picked up again late morning and taken to the port to catch the ship.

More paperwork required: our passports were all collected by the ship’s staff and we were each given a cabin entry passcard and eventually we all boarded the ship. We found our cabin, which was a State Room with balcony (very nice), and the buffet for a bite to eat and then explored the ship which had plenty of things to do if you wanted to or just relax and listen to the music at the various venues.

Saturday, after sailing all night and having a very restful sleep we arose to have breakfast, a great choice. We then explored more of the ship, had lunch and arrived in Penang.

We were asked to go meet in the theatre where we were put into various tour groups, we were then called to go to our coaches. The tour of Penang we chose was the UNESCO heritage area, where the dwellings are built out over the water. This was a very poor area with electricity and water but no sewage. We then visited museum which had formerly been the residence of someone very wealthy and, after a stop at a Temple and a general tour of Penang, we were taken back to the ship. To finish the night we had a drink while listening to musicians, had dinner and to bed.

Sunday, after sailing overnight again we arrived in Malacca. As there is no pier large enough for the ship to berth, the ship anchored and those doing tours went in by lifeboat. The tour we chose was of George Town. We visited houses and many Temples, had Malaysian High Tea then back to the ship again by lifeboat (just as well we had flat seas) then more exploring of the ship. That night, we had our group farewell dinner which I did not attend as I was sick with diarrhoea and vomiting (not caused by the food but by the extreme heat of Malacca). Altogether, a bad night for me.

We arrived back in Singapore very early the next morning, disembarked the ship, and returned to our former hotel to rest for the remainder of the day till dialysis that afternoon.

I spoke to Dr Wu about me being sick and he examined me and came to the conclusion that it was heat related (we did a lot of walking, very hot and not much shade), discounting the food as the cause as no one else on our tour was sick. We all thanked the nurses (the head nurse said we were welcome back at any time) and returned to our hotel again.

Tuesday: breakfast as usual then some free time till departure for the airport. We packed our cases and put them in storage and got in some more walking and site seeing before being picked up to go to the airport. After we had checked in our luggage we said our goodbyes as we were the only ones going back directly to Melbourne.

We flew overnight and managed to get some sleep, picked our car up and came home to our two very happy to see us dogs.

It was another great holiday well organised by Nancy and Enzo but it is good to be home.

Geoff Fletcher
Recipe Corner

Hearty, winter-warmer soups, straight from the Highlands of Scotland. Enjoy!

Minestrone Soup

**Ingredients**
- 3 rashers bacon, chopped
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 1 or 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 60 g parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp. tomato paste
- Mixed herbs
- 100 g frozen peas
- Celery (optional)
- 2 medium potatos, chopped
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 leek, chopped
- 30 g spagghetti
- 2 tbsp. cornflour
- 500 ml beef stock
- 1 liter water

**Method**
Cobine bacon, carrots, potato, onion and leek in large pot and sauté for 5 min. Add tomato paste. Add beef stock and water and simmer for 20 min. Add pasta and simmer for another 20 min. Combine cornflour with 2 tablespoons of water to form a paste and add to soup. Boil for 1 min and serve topped with parmesan cheese.

Cauliflower Soup

**Ingredients**
- 60 g butter
- 60 g flour
- 1 1/2 liters stock
- 1 cauliflower
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup grated cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Method**
Melt the butter in a pot and stir in the flour. Mix until a paste forms. Gradually add stock and heat to boiling. Break cauliflower into small florets and add to the stock, simmer for 45 min. Blend or mash soup to form a smoother consistency. Add milk. Sprinkle top of soup with grated cheese to serve.

Dietary Considerations

For people on low sodium or potassium diets, you may want to consider using low or reduced-salt stocks that are available from most grocery stores. Homemade stocks will always be the best option as you can directly monitor the salt used. Avoid commercial vegetable stocks as they can be high in potassium.

Remember, soups are part of a fluid allowance.

Avoid soup mixes and use rice, noodles or pasta to bulk up the soup.
Angel Award

Kidney Health Australia’s Operation Angel Awards are presented annually to recognise the contribution of outstanding members of the renal community for their dedication and support. We are proud, though not surprised, to have had one of our long-time members of DATA, Joan Eastwood, to be amongst one of those acknowledged as a true Angel.

Thank you.

Monday, 28 of May 2012, I was invited to a dinner in town to receive an Angel Award from Kidney Health Australia. I was quite excited to receive this award in the company of seven other Angels from all over Victoria. The evening was held on the fifth floor of the KPMG building in Collins Street, Melbourne. We were treated to drinks and a beautifully presented three course meal provided by KPMG.

Jo Fairbairn of Kidney Health Australia went out of her way to see that we were well looked after.

The award was presented by Anne Wilson, CEO of Kidney Health Australia.

I was honoured to receive this award. My thanks to Ros Ball for the nomination.

Joan Eastwood

PS. Now Alan Rawson and I can play our harps together, he received his award in 2008.

Carer’s Night

We all had a good time on Friday night 15 June at the Carer’s night at Blackburn, our small group turning it more into a friendly dinner than a gathering. Along with myself and Margaret, Val and Graham Shepherd, from Metung, who were staying at the house for the week also attended. They were very pleased we were there to welcome them into the house, and they were looking forward to doing all the things they have wanted to do for ages. We laughed the night away and enjoyed Margaret’s Stuffed Cabbage Rolls, my Lasagne and Val’s tomatoes. During the course of the night we talked about many things and I am sure Val & Graham learnt quite a bit about Kidney disease.

Joan Eastwood

Correction…

Page 5 of May 2012 issue of ShoeString featured a small article on reciprocal health. This is available for visitor to Australia only, those travelling to Australia from England and other participating countries can receive renal treatment under their respective government agreements. However, this is not yet in place for Australians travelling overseas. We apologise for any confusion this omission may have caused.
Hello!

My name is Alan Deery. I am on dialysis in Frankston and would like to tell you about what we have started at the unit. We are doing arts classes, including painting and working with plasticine. At the moment there are only two of us doing it but many others are starting to show interest in joining in and doing something. As I have said to the other patients: you don’t have to be a Rembrandt, just enjoy yourself!

I first did it back in 2001 and had a ball. We have an arts teacher come in to help and the unit has art work all around the walls from previous patients.

Another patient is painting while I’m trying something different and using plastacine to try and model a dialysis machine and chair and set it up with someone even sitting in the chair (well trying). So far it’s going well.

I’m sending this so that people on dialysis know there is things you can do while on dialysis instead of just sitting there. If you'd like some photos or more information, please feel free to ask or ring the dialysis unit itself.

Yours sincerely,
Alan Deery

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$25,000 has already been raised for the fit-out of the bus and KHA has commenced a Big Red Kidney Bus Appeal with Bendigo Bank Community Enterprise Foundation.

GRENDA Corporation donated a bus to KHA; Fresenius gave three dialysis machines and three chairs and Latrobe Valley Buslines donated a qualified and certified bus driver, a place to park the Big Red Kidney Bus and free servicing.

They are also fundraising to support families who cannot afford a holiday so everyone has access to a holiday.

Donations can be made at any Bendigo Bank in Australia and also online at: www.bendigobank.com.au/foundation/bigredbus

Thanks go to Jo Fairbairn, Kidney Health Australia, for permission to reprint this information.

And we wish them luck in making this project a success.
The very first Shoestring newsletter was printed in December 1972…or was it 2-1-73? One date is on the front of the first Shoestring and another date at the end of the issue.

This small newsletter was for those people on home dialysis who attended the Austin Hospital. Shoestring was intended for support and communication between patients, nurses and doctors. Plans were that Shoestring was to be a weekly bulletin to keep people informed of policies and increase education of those on dialysis. The newsletter was originally four plain typed A4 pages. Soon, Shoestring became the responsibility of the home dialysis patients and not the renal unit nursing staff.

This first issue of Shoestring mentions that Elvie and Ron Jones, the namesake for DATA’s scholarship award, were on holiday in Brisbane.

From Shoestring, The Home Dialysis Assoc. was formed sometime before July 1973 and eventually, DATA was formed.

The above picture was first used on the 8th edition, on the 20th July 1973.

Funnies

As you get older three things happen. The first is your memory goes, and I can't remember the other two...
- Sir Norman Wisdom

The secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age.
- Lucille Ball

As we grow older, our bodies get shorter and our anecdotes longer.
- Robert Quillen

When I was a boy the Dead Sea was only sick.
- George Burns

When you become senile, you won't know it.
- Bill Cosby

You know you're getting old when the candles cost more than the cake.
– Bob Hope

Long term DATA committee member and Yarrawonga holiday home secretary, Alan Rawson, caught up recently with old friend Bernie Keeley and his wife Ann. Bernie and Ann live in WA and come over every 2 years to visit, being from Melbourne originally. Bernie is a past committee member and served as president when DATA was a young organisation. He is an integral a part of our history and it is good to see him doing so well.
**Dates to Remember**

* * *

**July 21**

Christmas in July  
*Manchester Unity Hall*  
*Main St, Blackburn*  
*6.30pm, $25 a head*

**August 14-24**

Kidney Kar Rally 2012

**August 25-26**

Kidney Kids Capers  
various events  
*for more information*  
*call 1800 4 KIDNEY*

**October 21**

Annual General Meeting  
*2.00pm*  
*Manchester Unity Hall*

**November 14**

World Diabetes Day

**December 2**

DATA Christmas Party  
*Keep the date free!*  
*Details TBA*  
* * *

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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,  
*PO Box 165 Blackburn 3130*  
*Email:* editor.shoestring@gmail.com

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**Deadline for the next ShoeString:** 20th August