

Edition 29, February – March 2013

CEO's Message

April 2013

Hi there. It seems like ages since the last newsletter. Time has certainly been racing by – so much so I'm half expecting to hear Christmas carols soon! Seriously though, the team have been incredibly busy over the last three months, completing a really successful mentor intake in February and kicking off the successful Menslink Midweeker fundraising events. These events, proudly sponsored by Gryphons and Brumbies Rugby, involve a famous speaker talking about their life's journey and the importance of male role models (mentors) and of men talking about feelings and emotions. Speakers so far have included Brumbies' great Clyde Rathbone and Greens Minister Shane Rattenbury MLA. The Midweekers are held every fourth Wednesday and are open to anyone interested in the wellbeing of young blokes. The next two will be on May 1st (featuring Liberal MLA Andrew Wall) and May 29th (featuring Tim Kirk, chief winemaker at Clonakilla Wines).



Clyde Rathbone



Martin Fisk



Shane Rattenbury

The other exciting thing over the last few weeks has been the very successful launch of the www.silenceisdeadly.com.au campaign in high schools and colleges around Canberra. This campaign, run in conjunction with the Canberra Raiders, has the basic message that all guys have hassles at some time in their lives, but strong successful people talk about their hassles and get help early. The Raiders have created a video with us and come to as many schools as their busy schedule permits. So far we have visited around seven schools and spoken to over fifteen hundred young blokes ranging from twelve to eighteen years old. The response has been phenomenal, with lots of thought-provoking questions from the crowd, a large number of follow-up hits on our web site and a bunch of requests for help. It seems like the Raiders' boys have really struck a nerve with our young blokes out there in schools.



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I hope you all had a great Easter and will also have a good time over the Anzac Day school holidays. I look forward to catching up with as many of you as I can when I get back from leave at the beginning of May. Thanks for all your help and support. Take care and all the best.

Training Fine Dudes, One and All

We've just had the first of three Mentor intakes for the year, and I gotta say - WHAT A FINE BUNCH O' DUDES.

Eight men started Mentor Training on a fine February Night here at Menslink Central. They met up with Gaz, Ben and Harbs in the foyer, put on their name tags, made a cuppa and said, "we're here to train, so train us".

So we did and we had a great night. We played our games, got to know each other and ate our pizza. We were joined by Eric at pizza time and he gave us a bit of his Mentoring story. It was great to hear, he really spoke from the heart.

It was a productive night and set us up for an even better Training weekend out at Camp Innabaanya.

We assembled out there on Saturday morning that, weatherwise, was a bit iffy. Concerns were raised that it may well mean the traditional evening

fire may be rained out. But anyway, we had to get there first, so we buckled down and got into our training.

Ben decided that with the impending arrival of his first born it'd be better if he stayed home with his lovely wife and be ready to catch the little one if it decided to make a quick appearance. But he was present in spirit.

So, instead of Ben, we now had Gaz, Harbs and Mr S Cassidy as trainers and of course the extraordinary Gonzo, Boof and Muttley taking on cooking duties.

Training went smoothly and the eating went superbly. The cooks prepared a great burger lunch, a spectacular roast dinner and a special brekky. The cooks, led by Gonzo the Great, get a massive thanks and can consider themselves LEGENDS.

The weather held off and we got to have our fire. A beauty it was too. Thanks to the fire starters/stokers/extinguishers – Harbs and Poatey. That fire is crucial to the weekend and you certainly did a crackerjack job.

Ben's decision to be with his wife certainly paid dividends, as young Cameron came in a mighty hurry on the Sunday morning. So well done Ben. Congrats from all.

So, anyway, it was a fine weekend and we now have 8 dudes ready to become Mentors. Excellent work.

Link-up

Sailing on LBG

Ahoy! Menslink seafarers gathered on a superb Summer's day for the annual sailing Link-up on February 16th! After a rather token instructional from one of the Yacht Club's junior sailors it's fair to say we knew even less about sailing than before. Nonetheless, the only thing to do before we hit the water was the ole once-over. Sun-screen? Check. Indemnity form? Check. Life-jackets? Check. Wind? Wind? Where art thou wind?

Breezes did come in spits and spurts early on in the session and some of the lads managed to get their vessels up to moderate-at-best speeds. But later on things ground to a halt and as the sun gradually descended some of us were wondering if we might have to let off a flare or two.

Some of the luckier crews received a free tow back to land courtesy of the supervisor's speedboat, while others resorted to paddling. It was at this time that our Captain Kieran muttered something about the wonders of the internal combustion engine...

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But despite the lack of adrenalin-pumping action, it really was quite enjoyable. Just being out there on the water had a something of a therapeutic quality to it. And at the end of the day, if nothing else the old adage “don't sail out farther than you can row back” seemed more relevant than ever.



LinkUp Barefoot Bowls & Pizza

Well, Thursday the twenty first of March 2013 was the day for our Barefoot Bowls and Pizza Link Up. The day dawned grey and drizzly, but were we worried?

NO

Here in the office Ben and Gaz were completely unfazed. We had contacted the Bowling Dude at the Labor Club and he assured us they had a wet weather bowling green.

Ben and Gaz took that to mean they had an indoor, all weather, no worries, you beaut bowling facility. We were wrong, but as we didn't know we were wrong, we thought we were right.

So, we headed down to the club at about five thirty, found the Bowling Dude and said, “right, here we are, where's the indoor bowling green?”

And he said, “We ain't got one.”

“What! Whaddaya mean “you ain't got one” we thought you had one.”

“No, it's a green made from carpet, it's outside, but it can be used in all weather.”

“So, you mean, if it's raining we can use it but we'll get rained on.”

“Yes.”

“Aaaaaaaaargh. Let's get some pizza.”

So we did. And we ate. And we had some damn fine conversation. Just a bunch of men hangin' out, chillin' and fillin' our tums. Lovely.

As we were eatin' we did notice the sky was a clearin', and a clearin' sky meant a bowlin' might be a happenin'. And yes the Bowlin' Dude came and got us and said “let's bowl.”

So outside we went, got a few instructions, and started a bowlin'. FUN. You don't have to be an old geezer to enjoy this fine game.

After a while, the Bowling Dude said he had a skins game type format competition for us to play so that we could determine the Champion Bowler for the night.

So all the Young Dudes faced off in a kind of knock out type thingy where one person ends up as the Last Man Standing and can be declared the winner, and this winner got to take home a trophy declaring him to be the Champ. He also gets the kudos from all present.

It was a fun night. Thanks to everyone who participated.

