



Merry Makers Central Coast Inc.

Providing social activities for people with an intellectual disability living across the Central Coast since 1987

Volume 3
June 2014

"Let's Dance" – Quarterly Newsletter

Welcome to the third edition of "Let's Dance", the new Quarterly Newsletter for Merry Makers Central Coast. We are undergoing changes at Merry Makers to help improve the services we provide for you. One thing that we realise is that unless you attend one of our dances or outings, you probably won't hear about our upcoming events. This newsletter is the first step in rectifying this problem.

Please fill out your details on our mailing list so that we can post or email you a copy each quarter.

Please Spread the Word

We would love to have more clients join Merry Makers so they can enjoy our dances and outings. Please spread the word to friends, housemates, family etc. about Merry Makers.

About Merry Makers

Merry Makers Central Coast is a non-profit organisation that is run by a group of passionate and dedicated volunteers with the aim of bringing fun and enjoyment into the lives of adults with intellectual disabilities.

The main event that Merry Makers Central Coast hosts are the **Thursday Night Dances** which are held at the Entrance Public School hall between 7pm and 9pm.

The evening usually starts with everyone's favourite dances, the hokey pokey and the chicken dance followed by a variety of music and dancing.

Dance games with prizes are often a feature of the evening and fun is always had dancing the limbo or the Scottish reel. The evening finishes with some refreshments and a bit of a chat.

Once a month Merry Makers Central Coast hosts an outing or a dinner dance. Our day outings, usually held on the second Sunday of each month, have taken

the Merry Makers group to many places including ferry rides, train museums, animal parks, sports events etc. Our dinner dances, which are usually held every 3 months, are held at the Toukley Senior Citizens club hall and include a live band and a smorgasbord feast.

Our New Website

Merry Makers now has a website at merrymakerscentralcoast.org.au. It is pretty basic at the moment but will continue to grow and improve. Some of the features of the website are the Calendar showing the upcoming events, the Outings page showing details of the previous and future outings and the Photo Gallery with lots of pictures of our dances and outings.

Save These Dates

- ❖ Saturday June 14th – Dinner Dance.
- ❖ Sunday July 13th – Toukley Motor Boat Club.
- ❖ Sunday August 10th – Chinese Lunch.
- ❖ Saturday Sept 13th – Dinner Dance.

Last Quarters Outings

March Dinner Dance

On Saturday March 8th, Merry Makers held their first Dinner Dance for 2014. As usual it was held at the Toukley Senior Citizens hall with about 100 of our clients attending. Music was provided by the Remixes, a band we have had many time. Our clients love rhythm, get carried away with the music and sing along.

A lucky door prize is a great attraction, when the lucky ticket is called out, about a dozen hands go up



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claiming to have the winning ticket. But there can be only one winner and the compere soon gets that sorted. Brendan Ridgewell was the lucky winner of two very nice padded fold up boxes. Brendan had a great idea of putting beer in one and coke in the other, but his mother had other ideas. She put her wool in one, and hand knitted squares for the church in the other.

This was the first time having North Lakes Catering who provided us with an ample meal of very tasty meats which were carried into the hall on the BBQ racks and carved straight onto the plates. The variety of roast vegies and salads were fresh & most enjoyable. The selection of sweets were delicious.

Then the serious business of dancing began, our clients always enjoy group dances such as the hokey pokey and the chicken dance. It is lovely to see everyone having such a great time together.

A lot of work goes into organising these nights. A big "Thank You" to President Charles, Secretary Chris, Treasurer Lloyd (isn't he great giving us such a great time at a minimum cost), Michael, Charles, Michael Hale, Bob, Isabel, & Brendan helping to organise the drinks, tables and chairs. Rhonda for table decorations and her talent coming up with ideas each and every dinner dance. "Thanks" also to our wonderful bus drivers who give a lot of hours running around. Last, but not least, the man with the golden tonsils, who spends all night talking on the mike, Michael Wildman.

Don't forget to check out some photos from the night in our website [picture gallery](#).

Mount Penang Gardens

On Sunday the 13th April Merry Makers went on a day trip to Mount Penang Gardens at Kariong. The weather on the day was unpredictable, with periods of light rain. But it wasn't bad enough to dampen the

spirits of the clients. We arrived at Mt. Penang to overcast skies. Joe was there to direct us to where we were going to have morning tea, a very nice spread of slices, muffins and cup cakes as well as some nice hot tea and coffee.

After morning tea there were some guides available to give us a tour of the park. The gardens were beautifully laid out and the guides were very knowledgeable explaining about the different trees and plants. It was amazing, some of the species were thousands of years old. A great attraction was the Lotus Pond, commonly found in Japan, but here we were in Australia appreciating one. As time would only allow us to see a small portion of the gardens, we were still well informed and appreciated everything we saw. After our tour we ventured back for a delicious lunch of Subway rolls and cookies.

After socialising for some time we were able to wander some more around the gardens and were able to see lots of people doing various activities such as walking, children on bikes, people with dogs, people training dogs, a coach with footballers, a guy with young ones balancing on segways. Our clients really enjoyed the open air. After enjoying the gardens we traveled to McDonalds at Gosford for our usual ice-cream. Everyone arrived home nice and early, thanks to our bus drivers as they are up early and always give us a great day.

Norah Head Sports Club

On Sunday the 25th, we had our Merry Makers outing for May. It was a little late this month as we celebrated Mother's Day on our usual 2nd Sunday of the month. We had rain all night on the Saturday night but come Sunday morning the weather had cleared a bit and we had a pleasant day.

We arrived at Jenny Dixon Park, a very pleasant spot for us to enjoy a cuppa & biscuit. We then drove a short distance to the Norah Head Sports Club where our people all joined in to play Lawn Bowls and Tennis. Playing Tennis with jackets on was a sight to see. Everyone enjoyed both sports



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and we predict some future champions in the making.

After using up so much energy everyone was ready for their lunch, provided by the club, & liquid refreshments. The day ended with the usual visit to McDonalds for ice-cream, then all were tired and ready for home.

A big "Thank You" to all of the volunteers who gave their time to make this day a great success.

Isabel's Corner

Recently we have said "Good Bye" to Bruce Churchill. Bruce was only with us for a short while and was a real pleasure to get to know. We hope he has settled into his new residence and will be very happy.

Our Thoughts & Prayers are with Lloyd and Esma who lost her lovely sister recently after a long illness. She was also an Auntie to Rhonda who organizes the tables for our Merry Makers Dinner Dances.

Pleased to have Eladio (one of our volunteers) back after being away for a couple of weeks. We will be missing Michael Gleeson for some weeks as he and Colleen are off on a well-earned break traveling up north in their van. They will enjoy the warmer weather while we wrap up in our winter woolies.

A big "Thank You" to the ukulele band who give up their evenings to pay us a visit occasionally. Our clients do enjoy a change in their music at times.

Great to see a smile back on Mike Wildman's face after Hazel has returned from her trip to England to visit her dad and family. The family would have enjoyed the visit from Olivia, Mike's granddaughter, who was company for Hazel. They also visited a couple of other countries on their return, quite an experience for young Olivia.

On the 16th May Bob and Isabel celebrated 55 years of marriage. Who said it wouldn't last!!

Hope you all keep well and avoid the inevitable flu. See you all at dancing!!

Isabel Ridgewell – 6th June 2014

See Isabel's previous other posts on the [Isabel's Corner page](#) on the website.

Volunteers

Merry Makers Central Coast is run by a team of passionate and dedicated volunteers. If it wasn't for the hard work carried out by these volunteers, Merry Makers would not be able to operate.

We are always in need of more help. If you are interested in helping us out, or know someone who may be able to, please do not hesitate to contact Volunteering Central Coast or contact us direct on 4396 1808.

At the moment we are looking for help in these areas:-

- ❖ Dance Volunteer (To assist and join in dance on Thursday nights. 7pm to 9pm.)
- ❖ Driver for Coaster or Sprinter (Drive a community transport vehicle on Thursday nights to pick up intellectually disabled clients to transport to and from a weekly dance evening. Pick up 5pm and drop off at 10.15pm.) Note: must have a LR or greater license to be able to drive the Central Coast Transport buses.