



Merry Makers Central Coast Inc.

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

Volume 4
September 2014

"Let's Dance" – Quarterly Newsletter

Welcome to the fourth 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 September 13th – Dinner Dance.
- ❖ Sunday October 19th – Lions Club Picnic
- ❖ Sunday November 9th – Picnic at Kulnura.
- ❖ Saturday December 13th – Xmas Dinner Dance.

Last Quarters Outings

June Dinner Dance

A memorable night was had by all!

We had 105 clients and staff attend the June Merry Makers Dinner dance on the 14th June at the Toukley Senior Citizens club.

Music was provided by a band that we had not had before, the "Pink Cadillac", a husband and wife duo. We really enjoyed their music and songs and the



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clients were all up dancing and enjoying themselves. The wife sang seated as she had a broken elbow, which just proves the show must go on. Everyone really enjoyed the Elvis performance, we will definitely have them back again.

Mark, Kyle and their two daughters provided us with a delicious meal of a choice of meats & yummy baked vegies & salads. Top that off with a variety of sweets which cleared the table in record time, followed by tea and coffee and every one was well fed and extremely happy.

A big thanks once again to the volunteers and helpers who graciously gave their time and energy – many hands made light work.

Games Day at Toukley

On the 13th July we had our Merry Makers monthly outing. We had a good attendance of 64 people. We gathered at Canton Beach for morning tea, which was very welcome as we were all frozen. It could not have been colder if we were at the South Pole. Next year we will choose a different venue for morning tea.

After morning tea we packed up and went to the Senior Citizens hall which was much warmer. Everyone enjoyed playing indoor bowls and various other ball games.

A big thanks to the Fish & Chip shop nearby who opened their doors just for us and supplied us with individual packs of nice hot fish & chips.

After this we socialised for a while catching up with clients and carers we don't see very often. Everyone was able to arrive home quite early and being a local outing, the drivers also had an early day. Thanks to them as they give generously of their time to us.

Chinese Lunch at Maitland

On Sunday 10th August over 50 Merry Makers had their Monthly outing. We all boarded buses early as it takes an hour or more for pick-ups. Everyone is so eager to get out to enjoy themselves they are always ready and waiting. It is also a great time to catch up with each other, have a few laughs and a sing-along.

We stopped at the beautiful waterfront at Warners Bay for our usual very welcome morning tea, some went for a walk in the lovely sunshine. Then all aboard for Maitland which is a very pretty drive and not very far.

We all then arrived at the Chinese Restaurant which makes us very welcome each year. The restaurant had been re-decorated since last year and was really pretty. The food, as usual, was delicious and everyone left well satisfied. We then travelled up to Thornton to McDonalds for our delicious ice cream.

All arrived home well satisfied and tired. Next month is our Dinner Dance which will be a masquerade ball and also our 29th birthday for Merry Makers - yes!! We have been going all those years and hope to continue for many more.

Isabel's Corner

Great to have a large number of clients attending our Thursday Night Dances & Outings as the weather has been very harsh. To anyone not well – hope you will be back with us soon.

Many of our clients are now starting to join in with our dances which is good to see. They are learning fast and it's lovely to see smiles on their faces.



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Until Next time – keep well.

Isabel Ridgewell – 1st August 2014

Welcome back to Eileen, Jenny's mum who had a short stay in hospital and an operation for a detached retina – it has been quite an ordeal for Eileen and very painful. Also our Chairman, Charles, had a visit to hospital but is on deck again now.

To any of our clients and carers who are not well at present – we miss you and hope to have you back with us soon.

On Sunday 10th, traveling on the bus I noticed that most of our clients depart the bus saying "goodbye" to all their seated friends, not one acknowledged the bus driver, it was as if they were invisible. I wonder if they realise the driver has been up since very early to pick up the bus etc, and the runs around collecting everyone. After driving all day he then has to do it all again, dropping everyone off home, then returns the bus to the depot to clean it. A very long day and never a complaint. So I think it would be a courtesy to greet the driver when you are picked up, and thank them when you are dropped home.

A big welcome to a new volunteer Paul, who has come to us as a bus driver and a volunteer, and also his mate Tony. Hope you enjoy being with us, we can always do with more drivers.

It was very nice to have a visit from Jenny's sister Susan, who was up from Tasmania to check on Eileen's progress and have a birthday celebration with her mum. She always mixes with the clients and enjoys a dance.

Isabel Ridgewell – 1st September 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.