

## *NOVEMBER Dairy 2010*

*"The power is within, but we cannot receive it unless we give it"* Charles Haanel (1866 – 1949)

In Broome and more specifically here at Centacare one experiences Charles's quote to be true. The more we give of ourselves the more that we receive back. I have met many Indigenous clients who come to our door in the last twelve months seeking some sort of assistance. They never go home disappointed whether its food, clothing or a bus ticket back to their own Country. I never cease to be amazed at the richness these people have to offer us. Most are quite friendly and appreciate what we try to do for them. Our aim is to improve their personal circumstances and help them sort out their difficulties. We know that we are making a difference despite the alcohol problem which is ruining many lives. The difficulty for me is I am not sure we are coming up with long term solutions. The question I ask is: will the poor and marginalised be always with us?



I have just completed the first unit of my Aboriginal studies at the Broome NDU and hope to continue the course next year. I found it most enlightening and personally rewarding. November found me down at Safety Bay for a six day retreat which I found restful and inspiring. Michael Godfrey (cfc) and Sheila Barlow (rsj) ran the proceeding and focussed on the Universal Story which also touched on creation spirituality and the Cosmic Christ. Michael has since returned to Africa where he is working in Ghana.

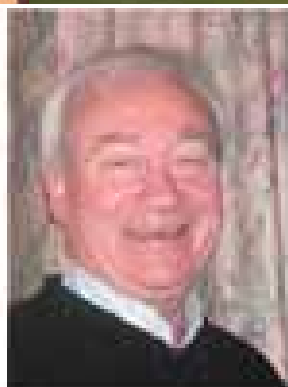
In the last couple of months we were pleased to have Joe Loren and Peter Harney with us for a few days on Province visitation and earlier Pat Kelly our Cluster Leader. We did find time to show them a little of what Broome had to offer. Mid Year, by far, is the best time to come and visit us. Berkeley Fitzharding's Mother past away recently at the age of 94. He was pleased to have been in Perth at the time and he was able to join his family and arrange a moving farewell and a suitable celebration of her life. From what I hear she was quite a marvellous lady and will be sorely missed not only by her family but also by all at the Margaret Hubery, home for the aged, where she left quite a good impression. Our sympathies go out to him and the family at this difficult time. Berkeley has been in the Broome Community for over 20 years and is celebrating his 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a Christian Brother in December. We congratulate him on this great achievement and he looks as if he could go a few more years yet. Shane Wood, our other community member, finishes up here in Broome after 12 years of service to the Broome community and more specifically as a member of the University Notre Dame faculty. He is returning to Melbourne and has taken up a position as a member of the Province Ministry Team. We wish him all the best for his new posting. At this stage Berkeley and I will make up a community of two for 2011.

Saint Marys Catholic School here in Broome ended their scholastic year with a presentation and concert night which we all enjoyed. Tony Tracey, the Principal, is finishing up this year and suitable recognition was given him by Bishop Christopher for his eight years of service. The ecumenical carols by candlelight plus Santa's arrival on the local fire engine helped us realise that Christmas is just around the corner. Centacare's Christmas surprise came by way of a generous grant from Lottery West, which has allowed us to purchase a new mini bus and start building our new homeless outreach centre. The

new Centre should be completed sometime next year. We at Centacare are now under new management. Trish Jones, who had been manager for the last 12 months, has finished up and Fr Matt Digges is acting manager till the end of the Year.

Last Friday hundreds of residents reverently attended the unveiling of a sculpture to commemorate the women who died working in the pearling industry. **Blackbirding** was a sorry part of the Broome story, where young aboriginal girls were kidnapped and forced to dive to dangerous depths in search of the MOP shell. They were treated like slaves and unfortunately many of them lost their lives. The ceremony was a moving occasion where the members of the many families affected by the awful practice were able to express their grief and put some sort of closure to this unhappy episode of our history. At the end of the celebration white balloons were released which, within several minutes, were whisked out of sight over Roebuck bay. Lightening played its song from the distant clouds making the occasion an extraordinary and memorable experience. *(The bronze sculpture depicts a pregnant aboriginal women reaching up from out of the waves with a MOP shell in her hands).*

*Berkeley Peter and Shane at our regular Sunday meeting*



The Broome Community 2010. Ye Old Fire Engine. Unveiling of new the sculpture. Our three visitors, Pat, Joe and Peter.

We here at Broome wish you all a happy and holy Christmas and God's choicest blessing for the New Year. More photos of Broome: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/peterthrupp/sets/72157615616392940/> Till next time. Peter T.