



Edmund Rice Camps
VICTORIA

Rice Grains

Number 78, February 2010



Contents

Editorial / EO Report / Board Update

1 2

PHOTOS: Amberley Family Camp / Santa Monica Older Boys

3

PHOTOS: Shoreham 1 / Shoreham 2

4

Reflections

5 6

PD opportunities / Amberley & Reconciliation

7

Happenings / Get Involved!

9 10

Calendar of Events

bAcK pAgE

Editorial

This summer I had the pleasure of participating in the Santa Monica Older Boys camp. It was my first camp in almost two years, and so my initial thoughts were preoccupied with rustiness. However, the minute I met all of those amazing leaders for the first time I knew I was right back in the mix. It felt fantastic. It felt like I had come back 'home' again.

I have always had trouble articulating the camp experience to those who've had no prior knowledge of ERC. Not so much in what the experience means for me, but more so trying to encapsulate the unbelievable number of inspiring and beautiful moments that comprise a camp. This level of sharing is therefore unique amongst campers, and I really treasure that.

Over the years, my work/travel/study commitments have meant I could only ever camp once every blue moon. However, no matter where I had been in the world, coming back to Camps was almost like I was coming back 'full circle'. It was as if after the end of each camp, I felt completely rejuvenated and realigned. I was always reminded of what was really important in life, and I felt reconnected within a community of passionate and like-minded people.

This camp has reignited all of those feelings for me. I feel re-energised and completely ready to embark on the next big chapter of my life. It is an absolute testament to the ERC executive and all of its unbelievable volunteers that we have been able to bring Camps to where they are today. The impact this organisation has on so many children and families is phenomenal and it will continue to be as long as we are all here to make it so.

I've had the privilege of being involved in a number of different volunteer organisations, but none can compare to the feeling I get from being involved with Eddie Rice Camps. I want to thank you all for your amazing contributions over the years. Keep up the awesome work, and I wish you all the very best of success, health and happiness for the year that lies ahead.

Adam :)
adsypadsy@hotmail.com

Executive Officer's Report

Mark Monahan

Recently I heard an Indian student challenge a radio presenter by saying that people in Australia need to get back in touch with their religion or personal faith tradition (even if this is non-denominational). He said this because he was wondering who actually determines the value system that Australians live by. He then commented that a value system created only amongst human beings, is not enough. In his eyes, the values present throughout all the different religions/spiritual traditions are what provide us with the greatest lessons about how to live a harmonious life.

I consider myself to be part of the ever-growing generation that struggle to find Church as a guide for strengthening my spirituality. Last year I attended the Edmund Rice Network Gathering and was moved by how our universe and its ecology can play a significant part within our own spirituality.

Another aspect that has played arguably the biggest role in my life so far is the immeasurable mystery of unconditional love, care and compassion that is present on an Edmund Rice Camp. I think I could make an assumption that our participants value system and spirituality is affected when they experience an Eddie Rice Camp too.

Within this edition of Rice Grains you will see some opportunities to further your own spirituality and deepen your value system. They may seem foreign. For example, the ecological retreat in Apollo Bay aims to explore the relationship between humans, the earth, and an ever unfolding universe story. The Indigenous immersion could challenge you to appreciate another value system that has been passed on for over 40,000 years. A soup van retreat could even further your worldview and encourage you to reflect on issues of social justice here in Australia.

Either way, there can be no doubt that these kinds of experiences will deepen who you are and perhaps provide you with a greater feeling of self-awareness and a value system that includes and impacts on both our Flora and Fauna.

ERC STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

On Saturday Feb 6th the Board of Management (BOM) met with Dr Pauline Meemeduma, who is operating as the interim co-ordinator of camps for the Oceania Province. With Pauline's (much appreciated) assistance we began the task of establishing a Strategic Plan (SP) that will guide and direct ERC in Victoria for at least the next five years. The Plan will take six months to come to fruition. Others ERCs across Australia will be embarking on a similar process as we each come to terms with a different structure, particularly with regards to funding, under Oceania. Edmund Rice Ministries will need to demonstrate very clear direction, and sound and efficient governance, if they wish to maintain a level of support from the Province. It is therefore in our best interest to embark on this process and to be proactive in establishing our SP.

When a final draft of the SP has been completed in mid May 2010, some feedback will be invited from stakeholders outside the BOM. If you are interested in being involved in this part of the process please contact me at batsmith@iprimus.com.au before the end of February. I should stress that for the foreseeable future volunteers will see no effect of this new direction on current programs. It is the firm belief of the BOM that our current structures, both in the areas of governance and operations, are of the highest standard and that the development of the SP will only serve to enhance the experience of camps both for volunteers and participants.

Mark Smith

CHAIR, BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Amberley Family Camp



Santa Monica Older Boys Camp



Shoreham #1



Shoreham #2



Santa Monica Older Boys Camp

By Cody Ludenkins

As I entered Amberley all I could think about was if people would look upon me as still a participant and not a leader, but as I walked inside, all the leaders approached me as if I was one of their close mates. This moment was one I was worried about, but it was nowhere near as satisfying as the moments that were to come in my new camping experience as a leader.

When I attended the camps as a participant I would worry because I thought I would be judged, but during the transition into becoming a leader I came to the realization that it didn't matter if you had met anyone on the camps before as they would treat you as an equal. Some of the differences I noticed between roles (e.g leader/participant) were the increased responsibility, the bonds and the after-effects of the camps.

The difference within a participant when they come to camp from the time they leave I can acknowledge first hand. These kids may not have the best backgrounds but each one of them left the camp with a smile, a new perspective and a break from their day-to-day routines. I know this because when I left the camps I was always disappointed that they were over.

As a result of this camp, I believe I have taken away a new perspective on my own way of life, the choices I make and the judgments I make on people. These camps may do a lot for the kids, but I now know they affect you as a leader in the same way.



Amberley Family Camp - 'Find her voice'

By Anna Cerreto

She is fixed to her mother's side. Eyes down, face blank – this one's going to be a challenge.

On this first day of camp, I barely heard my nine year old buddy's opinion on anything apart from a nod for more cordial as Amberley sweated in 40 degree heat. As camp cooled off in the pool that afternoon, Hannah started talking. In whispers at first, then yelling over the other kids as she swam, relaying dreams of being a marine biologist – even though she hated boats.

Hannah's mum mentioned that her talking to me in the pool was the first time her daughter had left her side and talked to someone outside the family. Hannah told her mum she'd opened up because she didn't think there were safe people in the world, "but these people are safe."

The security of camp gives many kids the inner assurance to freely express themselves, whilst others begin to appreciate just listening. On a family camp, change in one individual reverberates through the family group. This gave Hannah's mother hope of stripping away layers of shyness created by negative experience, revealing who her daughter could become as "my girl's found her opinion and voice on this camp. I pity anyone who tries to persuade her otherwise".

Changes like this were happening all over camp, and it will be difficult to forget the one I witnessed, in the knowledge that for her week at camp, nothing was able to cloud Hannah's sound.

Shoreham #1: Kiwi-Style!

- By Connaire

I was unsure of what to expect as I pulled up to Amberley on the first day. I had suddenly come to the realisation that I was going into this alone, a solo Kiwi in the wilderness amongst a pack of Aussies. I thought I was doomed. However after enduring a few sheep jokes the ice was broken and I was welcomed into the community.

The leaders on camp could not have been more friendly which I was extremely grateful for, and I was then comfortable to let loose and embark on a week of wackiness with the children. I soon noticed that although there may be subtle differences between Victoria and Dunedin camps - the overall vibe and feel of community spirit and belonging is the same. The smiles are still there, the songs are the same, and the kids still don't get my lame jokes.

It takes a special kind of individual to be a camper, which is why I think we all gelled so quickly. I would like to thank all the beautiful participants of Shoreham 1 for showing me how camp works in Victoria and extend an invitation to any Campers in Victoria who want to experience Camp New Zealand style to come on over, I'll make sure you have an amazing time!

Connaire xx



Sorry mate I couldn't resist!

ERC Exchange Program TAS/VIC

- By Will Smith



During the January summer camp period I was very fortunate to be involved in the exchange program to Victoria. The purpose of this exchange was to send a Tasmanian camper to Victoria in order to experience a Victorian Edmund Rice Camp and complete a report on the differences between the two states on my return.

Both my before, during and after camping experience was absolutely amazing - something I will remember for a long time. This was due to both the amazing support and kindness of the leaders in Vic and the camp itself. Some of the differences that were evident while in Victoria was the use of a buddying up system - having a very strict one on one ratio, the camp halving - splitting the group into two groups to complete a day's activities, and something I found very beneficial the use of a pastoral facilitator.

While camping in Victoria I was also able to notice other smaller differences between the two states that I have included in my report. I encourage anyone who wishes to read the report to send me an email on smithw@stpatricks.tas.edu.au and I will be sure to send one through to you. Also, I would be very keen to speak with anyone who is interested in my experience and what differences that occurred. I would like to thank Edmund Rice Tasmania for providing me with the opportunity to travel to VIC and experience such an amazing camp. It also comes with a lot of gratitude that I thank Edmund Rice Victoria for their ongoing support and hospitality while I visited their wonderful state. Experiencing a different camping style and structure enabled me to return to Tasmania with a broader view of camping and truly grow and develop into a better leader. So I encourage anyone to travel abroad and experience a camp in another state as such an experience will benefit you and the Victorian camps when you return. I look forward to getting behind some of the differences that may take effect in Tasmanian Camps and sharing many stories and songs from my Victorian experience.

Cheers,
Will Smith

How to apply for a Camp...

- Check out the online calendar page for upcoming camps (www.ercvic.com/calendar)
- Decide on which camp you are available for
- Which role? Leader, Group Leader, Captain, Coach, PF?
- Let the ERC office know which camp and which role via: Email: martine@amberley.org.au or mark@amberley.org.au / Phone: (03) 9439 6142 or SMS: 0416 105 345 / Mail: 7 Amberley Way, Lower Plenty, VIC 3093
- All new leaders will need to complete a medical form

AVAILABILITY DUE:

- 1) Grandparents/Grandchildren Camp - **Thurs 18th Feb**
- 2) Refugee Kids Camp - **Thurs 18th March**
- 3) Indigenous Kids Camp - **Thurs 18th March**

... and don't forget

Refugee Activity Days!!!!

When?

Mon 29th and Tues 30th March

Contact Mark or Martine in the office for more details!

Personal Development Opportunities

Edmund Rice Camps Street Retreat

31 March - 1 April

"More than 32,000 young people sleep on our streets every night" - Open Family

What? A two day street retreat: Incorporating a soup van experience, input from Social Work professionals on homelessness and related social issues and creative reflective process.

Times? Wednesday 31st March and Thursday 1st April

Where? St Joseph's Parish Hall, South Yarra

Cost? \$10.00

For more details, or to register, please contact Brenton Carey brenton@amberley.org.au 0419 389 920 or Matthew Denier matthew.denier@gmail.com. New Leaders more than welcome!

Ecology and Spirituality Retreat - Apollo Bay (29th to 31st March)

Cost \$60 per person

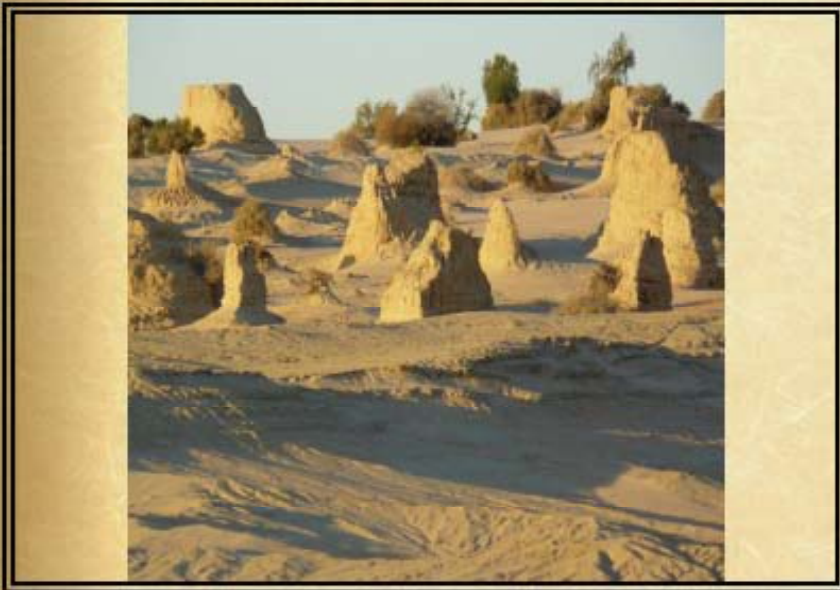
Facilitators: Anne Boyd and Pat Long from Earthsong

Theme: building an understanding of our ecological connections and the appropriate spirituality that will nurture and support these connections.

The retreat will also explore ways in which young people throughout the world are being mobilized in response to the current ecological state of our planet earth.

For more details contact Peter Hay (peter@amberley.org.au) or Mark Monahan (mark@amberley.org.au)

Lake Mungo Indigenous Immersion 2010



When: 28th June – 2nd July

Cost: \$650 per person all inclusive

Preparation Evening:

Thursday 20th May

7:30 – 9:00 pm

Edmund Rice Centre Amberley

7 Amberley Way

Lower Plenty 3093

Supper included

**Lake Mungo – the place where people and the land become one,
where our people walk with the spirits of our ancestors.**

The Edmund Rice Centre Amberley and Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Melbourne offer you this fantastic opportunity to immerse yourself in an ancient culture by walking in the footsteps of Mutthi - Mutthi woman, Vicki Walker Clark. Vicki will lead the group in an experience of 'my Old People and feel their presence in the emus and kangaroos.'

For further information and details contact Peter Hay – peter@amberley.org.au 0409008319 or 94398282

Edmund Rice Camps is able to provide financial support to anyone that is interested in these experiences. Please contact Mark with any expressions of interest or queries.

Amberley and the Reconciliation Covenant

*Amberley has just released its Reconciliation Covenant for 2010 and in doing so has made a commitment to promote reconciliation in all its programs and work. As Campers we are partners in this commitment and as such I thought it may be an appropriate time to reflect on what Reconciliation is, how we might learn more and ultimately develop better and more educated partnerships with Indigenous Australians.
Peace - Brenton Carey*

What is Reconciliation?

Reconciliation involves building mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and other Australians that allow us to work together to solve problems and generate success that is in everyone's best interests.

Achieving reconciliation involves raising awareness and knowledge of Indigenous history and culture, changing attitudes that are often based on myths and misunderstandings, and encouraging action where everyone plays their part in building a better relationship between us as fellow Australians.

Reconciliation Australia

An important dimension of Amberley's Reconciliation Covenant is its respect for Indigenous Spirituality. We are privileged to have the use of two symbols of Indigenous Spirituality for use in our community gatherings and celebrations; a Message Stick, and a Coolamon. Message Sticks traditionally granted safe passage to people traveling across other nations land. Today the Message Stick is a symbol of a commitment to 'continue the journey towards Reconciliation by spreading the message of justice' and a 'commitment to respecting the ancient Dreaming' which is an integral part of the spirituality of Australia. The Coolamon is a receptacle used by Aboriginal women for carrying food, water and small babies. The Coolamon is a symbol used during advent and is a sign of waiting for the birth of Jesus.

How can I get involved?

* Learn more about Reconciliation by checking out the following websites:

ANTaR: <http://www.antar.org.au/>

Reconciliation Australia: <http://www.reconciliation.org.au>

** Come along to Blak Nite Cinema!

Featuring 2 nights of cinema showcasing the best in Indigenous Film:

Where: **Treasury Gardens**

When: **19th and 20th Feb**

Web: <http://www.thatsmelbourne.com.au/WHATSON/BLAKNITE/Pages/BlakNiteCinema.aspx>

*** Get down to the Koorie Heritage Trust on King St:

<http://www.koorieheritagetrust.com/>

Below: The Amberley Message Stick and Coolamon



Watch this space as there are some great opportunities coming up!!

Happenings

THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW PEOPLE CELEBRATING THEIR MILESTONE 18TH BIRTHDAYS IN RECENT TIMES. ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE ERC COMMUNITY:



WE HOPE YOU ALL HAVE A FANTASTIC DAY!

*Luke Thornton
Julie Zakryszka
Azy Hasan
Sam O'Bryan
Sebastian Kleynhans
Thomas Weereratne*

*Samuel De Roza
Jo Vu
Alana Bana
Ranga Peries
Micaela Butland
Jordan Mark*

*Pierre Dao
Connor Bourke
Luke Gill
Holly Smith
Rebecca Hepburn
Matthew Weightman*

“What do we think of these guys?”

Massive thanks must go out to the following people:

- 1) Ansett Aviation Training Centre - For donating the use of their flight simulators for our Family Camp!
- 2) Grower's Fresh in Greensborough as always for supplying all our fruit and veg FREE!
- 3) Presentation College Windsor - For donating \$838.70 to ERC!
- 4) Poppy at Parade College for printing Rice Grains
- 5) Parade College, St Bernard's College Essendon, St Joseph's College Geelong, Mt Lilydale Secondary College & Penola Secondary College - For the generous use of their buses!
- 6) Mary Mackillop Primary School Narre Warren - For donating \$716.25 from their Casual Clothes Day!
- 7) St Bernard's College - For the use of the Santa Monica Campsite

“THEY'RE ALRIGHT!”

Baby Bonanza!



The entire Eddie Rice Camp community congratulates the following couples on their new additions to the network:

Mick & Tess White - Anabel Tesni
Threse Morgante & husband Shanker - Lachlan
Cleona Feuerring and Richard Biscoe - Curtis Maximilian

& also Dan Butler and Anne Fulton for getting married on the 9th January!!!!

We wish you all a happy and healthy future together.
“EDDIE EDDIE EDDIE!”

Get Involved!

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is on again!

Where: Treacy Centre, 126 The Avenue Parkville
When: Tuesday 27th April 2010
Time: Paperwork, drinks and nibbles from 6pm
Meeting starts at 7pm (Guest speaker to start: TBA)
Who for: All current ERC members and new volunteers to hear about what has happened over the past year within Edmund Rice Camps.

Indigenous Pilgrimage to Corranderk Mission



When: Friday evening the 14th to Sunday afternoon the 16 May
There will be an option to attend one day only on Sat.

What: The weekend is intended as a reflection based on the First Australians' episode on Victoria with the story of William Barak as a focus. On Saturday, there is a bushwalk from our accommodation (cabins) at the Badger Creek Caravan Park to the Meeting Room at Worowa College. The First Australians episode will be shown and discussion will take place after the viewing. We hope Wurrundjeri elders will be able to join us. There is also a walk to Coranderrk Cemetery to visit Barak's grave.

On Sunday morning, participants will attend Mass at St Brigid's in Healesville with an Aboriginal Liturgy. We will then re-gather at Worowa to develop and commit to actions arising from the pilgrimage. We aim to conclude after lunch, by 2.00pm.

More info: Contact Brenton Carey - brenton@amberley.org.au

Exec. Training Dates

Group Leader: Mon 15th March
Camp Captain: Tues 16th March
PF: Wed 17th March
Coach: Thurs 18th March

All trainings at: St Ignatius Church Grounds. The Vaucluse, Richmond. RSVP Mark: ercvic@edmundrice.org

ERC 2010 Footy Tipping Comp!

(Tipping this year includes finals as well as Rd1 to GF - just to spice things up a bit!)

To join, firstly go to this url:

<http://www.footytips.com.au/comps/ercvic>
Comp Name: **2010 Eddie Rice Premier League**
Password: **babysharkdoodoo**



For more information contact Chris @ quiksilva4@hotmail.com.

ERC MAJOR FUNDRAISER!!!!

'In Stiches for Kids' ~ Thursday 15th July

That's right, ERCs biggest fundraiser of the year is making it's mighty comeback in 2010!!!
After the disappointment of having to cancel last year due to a lack of numbers, let's get along in hordes
this year and support this significant event for ERC!!!

Past acts have included: Tom Gleeson, Dave O Neil and Sammy J.

More info will be released soon, but make sure you get in early and snap up your ticket!

Upcoming events!

MARCH

5th March (Fri) - 8th March (Mon)

Santa Monica Grandparents/Kids Camp

14th March (Sun)

New Leader Training Day

15th March (Mon)

Group Leader Training night

16th March (Tue)

Camp Captain Training Night

16th March (Tue)

Be the Change - Volunteer Info night

17th March (Wed)

Pastoral Facilitator Training night

18th March (Thu)

- Camp Coach Training Night

- Easter Volunteers Registration Due

Today

24th March (Wed)

- Easter Pre Camp Vol. Executive Meeting

- Easter Vol. Post Camp Executive Meeting

29th March (Mon)

Ecology and Spirituality Retreat - Apollo Bay

29th March (Mon) - 30th March (Tue)

Teenage Refugee boys Activity Days

29th March (Mon) - 30th March (Tue)

Eddie Rice Camps Leader Retreat

APRIL

2nd April (Fri) - 6th April (Tue)

Shoreham Refugee Kids Camp

5th April (Mon) - 9th April (Fri)

DOXA Indigenous Kids Camp

27th April (Tue)

ERC Annual General Meeting @ Treacy

MAY

22nd May (Sat)

Long Walk to the G'

23rd May (Sun)

New Leader Training Day

@ St Joseph's College Geelong

28th May (Fri)

Queens Bday Family Camp Volunteers

Registration Due Today

Don't forget to check out the website!

www.ercvic.com

What can I find on the ERC website?

PROGRAMS & application forms.....what is on for VOLUNTEERS.....what is coming up in the ERC CALENDAR.....how to help with FUNDRAISING... and much much more!



Edmund Rice Camps
VICTORIA

Registered by Australia Post
Print Post No. 344103/00017

Rice Grains

Edmund Rice Camps Victoria
7 Amberley Way
Lower Plenty, 3093

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**