

Oxfam - Diamond Valley Newsletter



November 2008 Web: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~dvoxfam>
Email: AHIE.Stewart@bigpond.com

Next Oxfam-Diamond Valley Meeting

**8pm Friday November 21st at
Nillumbik Living and Learning
Centre, 739 Main Rd Eltham**

1. The Raaso Project, Ethiopia

Abdurahman Sanei of Banyule Community Health Service will talk about the Raaso Project, which supports a hospital in Raaso in the Somali part of Ethiopia. This is obviously good for the people there, but from the point of view of the Banyule Community Health Service, it is also very good for the local Somali population, whose quality of life is improved by being able to contribute something to their homeland and the family and friends they have left behind. You can find more about it at www.bchs.org.au

2. The Annual General Meeting will follow our speaker.

The Oxfam-Diamond Valley Book Fair

From Coordinator Beth Pender: 'Many thanks to everyone who helped in any way for the Bookfair, from the packers and sorters to the "cleaner-up-ers". The total of about **\$12,700** was phenomenal. Now for the good news!! The hall has been booked for 2009 on Saturday October 17th, so start saving your wine boxes now!! We already have \$5 in the tin and several promises of books.'

Although most donors delivered books to the 'dungeon', Beth & Michael Pender did some pick-ups from as far away as Hawthorn.

Oxfam Quiz Against Want

Also on Friday 21st November, 6.30pm for 7pm., at the **MCG**, Jack Ryder Room, Jolimont St, Light Tower 3, Great Southern Stand; Mel.2G C6. Host: **Jane Clifton**. Delicious supper & desert platter, drinks at bar prices.

The winning table wins ten "Luxury packages for two at a holiday destination in Victoria," but there are many other valuable prizes. Contact Chris Rawlinson **9439 8908** or chrisra@oxfam.org.au .

World Matters: Rights, Responsibilities and Risks

Here are descriptions of a few of the sessions:

Kungan, Ngaarrindjeri Miminar Yunnan

Aunty Eileen, Aunty Alice and Aunty Rita, elders of the **Ngarrindjeri** nation in the **Coorong**, South Australia, along with anthropologist, **Diane Bell**, came to tell stories about their country, their culture, their families and their sad history.

Ellen & Tom Trevorrow live and work at Camp Coorong, a unique residential cross-cultural awareness and education facility near Meningie. Here Eileen teaches her internationally recognized cultural weaving and tirelessly supports her Sea-Country kin to rescue and protect Ngaarrindjeri life and land.

Aunty Ellen brought fresh water reeds and instructed others to weave. Aunty Alice and Aunty Rita showed how to make feather flowers. We listened, we watched, we were blessed.

Joan Pickard

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The 'Jihad Seminar' by Hanifa Deen.

Hanifa Deen is a 5th generation Australian Moslem from Kalgoolie of Pakistani heritage. Perhaps these stereotype-busting characteristics destined her to write a book about the intriguing case of three Muslims of western heritage taking action against Asian Christian Fundamentalists.

In March 2002, in Melbourne's Eastern suburbs, the Muslims attended a 'Catch the Fire Ministries' seminar promoted to reveal the inner secrets of 'Holy Jihad'. Shocked by what they heard, they lodged a complaint under a controversial new hate speech law. A case expected to be over in three days lasted five long years.

In discussion with **Joumanah El Matrah, Director of the Islamic Women's Welfare Council**, Hanifa revealed some fascinating insights into this contest of free speech vs freedom from vilification, together with her accounts of the personalities of the people involved observed over such a long period. Adding an extra dimension to the session, several audience members, apparently from an anti-Moslem group, used question time to attack the Islamic religion. Hanifa's dignified reply invoked her faith in Islam as the source of her sense of justice, peace and compassion.

Thanks to Meera for another great 'World Matters' series. Don Stokes

Resistance: A childhood fighting for East Timor.

Naldo Rei spent the first three years of his life in the jungle, where his family had fled for safety after Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975. When his father was murdered for his work in the resistance movement, nine-year-old Naldo joined the clandestine resistance and began his own

extraordinary journey fighting for East Timor's freedom.

Now 33, Naldo shares his incredible life story in his new book, which was the focus of the Sunday morning session. Presently living back in East Timor, he was unable to join us in person. But he was with us in spirit, and in a short, filmed interview, discussed the nature of political resistance, and his desire for national freedom and dignity.

Enlightening us on past and present political contexts to Naldo's amazing journey were guest speakers Kenneth Davidson, *Age* columnist and co-editor of *Dissent magazine*; and Dr Clinton Fernandes, historian and author of *Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia and the independence of East Timor*.

Also presenting were members of an Australian-based NGO, East Timor Women Australia [ETWA], who work with East Timorese weavers to help them create sustainable enterprises and communities. We saw a preview of their documentary '*Heru Ini Lafu: Weaving Life*', a film about tais weaving and its importance to East Timorese culture and social life. It was a very informative session followed enjoyably by East Timor coffee and cakes.

Trafficked

Councillor **Helen Coleman** said **Nillumbik Women's Network** aimed to raise the issue of saying "No" to violence, especially in football clubs, and to bring it to the attention of governments.

Charandev Singh, human rights advocate: In August 2008 in the first High Court case against slavery, 6:1 judges found the

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treatment of trafficked Thai women to be slavery.

Sheila Jeffreys, Assoc. Prof. Politics, Melbourne Uni., teacher of Sexual Politics & the Politics of International Feminism, said prostitution is violence and slavery. It's a huge part of the GDP in many countries, 8% China's GDP; women's bodies are goods on the world market. 16% Australian men are involved. Legalization involves many parts of life: organized crime - 400 illegal:100 legal brothels. Mokbel's money is passed through them. Regulation was removed from police to local councils, which get corrupted. Governments regulate levels of violence in them. Racist labels ensure women aren't beaten up by men finding they're the 'wrong' skin colour. You can't separate trafficked women from legal prostitution.

Kathleen Maltzahn, executive director of Women's Health in the North, founder of **Project Respect**, and author of *Trafficked*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2008:
In the City of Yarra, brothels must have notices: 'Sexual slavery is a crime. Get help from.....'. Madrid has notices at police stations: 'Prostitution is violence against women'. Scandinavia has many female MPs, and Sweden penalizes men with 80% of people approving, as do South Africa and Latvia. Traffickers don't go to Sweden! Earnings here are \$29,000, with no sick leave, no super, no CV afterwards, and usually health problems. Most women are desperate to get out. Korea has 93 exit programmes, but Australia has none.

Elizabeth Stewart

You are warmly invited to the **launch of the book *Nillumbik Now and Then*** by **Marguerite Marshall**

on Wednesday, 19 November 2008

7 pm to 8.30 pm at the ELTHAM library

Bookings: 9439 9266 Refreshments will be provided. No charge.

Author and journalist Marguerite Marshall who first wrote over 25 years ago about this area's history, in the book *Eltham Shire Historic buildings people and places*, will share what inspired her to write about Nillumbik's story Now and Then.

Nillumbik Mayor **Warwick Leeson** will launch this unique collection of stories about Nillumbik's past to the present day, which takes the reader on a journey from when the Aboriginal people were this area's sole inhabitants, to the present day. Nillumbik's history – told in this collection of 96 stories (illustrated with photographs), which are nearly all based on sites – mirrors those of the wider Australian community. It encompasses tales of the Wurundjeri people, a former convict, farmers, a bushranger, gold-mining, soldiers, artists, intellectuals, environmentalists and sportspeople.

DIAMOND VALLEY OXFAM **VENUE**

8.00pm 3rd Friday of each month
Living and Learning Nilumbik
739 Main Rd Eltham, Melway Ref 21 J7

OFFICE BEARERS

Meeting Chairman - Stephen Lavender 9439 2063
Meeting Organizers - Carole Wigg 9439 7272
Marguerite Marshall,
John Kent, 9434 6882,
Joan Pickard
Treasurer & Membership - Alister Rowe 9435 5958
Publicity Officer & Webmaster - John Kent 9434 6882
Minutes Secretary - Elizabeth Stewart 9459 4429
Book Fair Coordinator - Beth Pender 9439 1716
Trade Winds Tea/Coffee - Val Byers

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