



*Bringing toys, smiles and fun to the kids of the Murrindindi area.*

22 April, 2010

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing seeking volunteers to assist in the running of the Murrindindi Toy Library.

As a little background information, the Murrindindi Toy Library is a not for profit incorporated association established on 16 November, 2009. It is a gift to the families of the bushfire affected Murrindindi Shire from families of Melbourne's eastern suburbs. My name is Kathryn Goldsmith, and I have been facilitating the establishment of the Toy Library, following interest in the project from Murrindindi residents and consultation with them. Marysville and Kinglake have both previously had Toy Libraries, but they were not operational at the time of the fires.

The Murrindindi Toy Library commenced operation on April 13th. It operates from 2 custom made trailers, one which covers Alexandra, Eildon and Marysville, the other covering Yea, Flowerdale, Kinglake West and Kinglake. The Trailer Timetables for the Eastern and Western Corridors can be downloaded from our website. Membership is \$20 per family per year, and borrowing is on a roughly fortnightly basis. Where possible, we have tried to alternate sessions between playgroup times and Saturdays, to suit the requirements of more families.

Much has been achieved since November, including:

- ★ Rotary District 9810 Bushfire Relief Fund have funded 2 custom made trailers
- ★ Apelright Trailers have made the trailers for us, and Sign-A-Rama in Dandenong have provided the signwriting
- ★ A team of volunteers have collected, cleaned, coded, summarized and bagged over 650 toys.
- ★ Volunteers have also Incorporated the Association and written the constitution, proposals, cashflows, forms, website and publicity copy and grant applications.
- ★ Many businesses have donated money, goods and services, such as website establishment, computer assistance, logo design etc.
- ★ The National Australia Bank funded the purchase of two "party packs" (valued at \$3,800), which are larger toys that we hire out to families for children's parties.

★ In early April we were delighted to receive a \$37,000 grant over 2 years from the Helen Mcpherson Smith Trust, which is to be used to purchase more toys, cover trailer and administrative setup costs (such as internet connections, stationery, plastic bags for toys, insurance, registration etc), petrol reimbursement for volunteers and perhaps cover the wages of a coordinator.

However, the funding does not resolve our need for volunteers to drive the trailers from town to town, and to assist with the borrowing and returning of toys. We also need volunteers to do other administrative roles, many of which can be done from home. We are hoping that by spreading the tasks over many, it does not become such a burden on just a few!

The library service is offered to families of the Shire at a reduced rate for the first two years of operation. After this time, we are determined that the Toy Library will be self funding. This will occur with the increase in member numbers, and an increase in the annual fee. As a community project, it would be hoped that once the residents of the Shire have their homes and lives back in order that they will contribute their time to the running of their Toy Library. If they are not prepared to offer their time, but would still like to have the Toy Library, then they will have to charge high enough membership fees to cover the labour costs involved.

At the present time, for the Toy Library to be financially viable we need to rely as little as possible on hired labour. I believe there is a great opportunity for retired people to contribute to their community by assisting in manning the trailers, towing them between towns, and assisting with administrative tasks. The Men's Shed in Kinglake is already assisting us in that district.

To be involved in community life is very important, and with ageing comes the possibility of feeling isolated. Being involved with the Toy Library may just give some older people an activity that connects them with the younger generation – it could help them feel wanted, needed, worthwhile. We will also provide them with computer and internet training!

The younger generation can learn so much from older people (my 91yo grandmother is a constant source of valuable advice for me!). We hope that the mixing of the generations would benefit both the older generation and the young parents. With the passing of ideas, values and viewpoints, helping the generations interact together could foster a better understanding between them, and certainly foster community spirit which transcends the usual generation gap.

The volunteer roles we have identified are listed in the attached table. For all positions, it is important to us that the applicant does what they have told us they will do, and within a timely manner. We operate under a small (and very friendly!) committee, and we are a very organised group! Currently things are moving at a fast pace, so we need people who are efficient but accurate too! Applicants need to have a passion for assisting those who have suffered the Black Saturday fires, and understand these residents need empathy, space and privacy. Volunteers do not need Working With Children checks, however an ability to interact well with children would be a bonus!

If you would like to learn more about the Toy Library, visit our website at [www.murrindintoylibrary.org.au](http://www.murrindintoylibrary.org.au). It provides a history of the Murrindindi Toy Library, details on the benefits of a toy library and how it works, borrowing rights and costs, care of toys etc. Membership and Party Pack Hire forms and Trailer timetables can be downloaded. It also has a “kidz biz” page, which provides craft ideas to do with kids. We have a “WOW of the week”, which brings to the attention of members some of the different toys we have on offer. There is also a “perspective reflective” – a regularly changed quote that will hopefully help frazzled parents to stop and reflect on the wonder of their children. Our sponsors are acknowledged on the “sponsors” page, with details of the sponsorship they have provided and a link to their website.

Should you wish to volunteer, or if you have any queries or require any further information, please feel free to have a chat! My contact details are as follows:

Home number: 9874 7673  
Mobile: 0409 50 20 10  
Email: [goldsmithkp@internode.on.net](mailto:goldsmithkp@internode.on.net)  
Postal: 3 Sunnyside Ave, Nunawading, 3131

Yours Sincerely

Kathryn Goldsmith  
President  
Murrindindi Toy Library Inc

| <b>Work type -Include task description</b>  | <b>Time commitment required</b>   | <b>Times/Days of week volunteers are required</b>  | <b>Location of work :</b>   | <b>Supervised position Y/N</b> |
|---|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Towing Volunteers:<br><br>Assistance with towing trailers between venues and returning and borrowing of toys (recording toy codes in a book).   | Various, depending on where they live and the trailer route they are assisting with.  | Various, depending on the trailer route they are assisting with.                                 | Marysville, Alexandra , Eildon, Yea, Flowerdale, Kinglake West, Kinglake                        | No, but training is provided   |
| Trailer Manager:<br><br>Responsible for training would be towing volunteers and ensuring their vehicles are suitable. Also ensuring the trailers are serviced each year to comply with Health and Safety Standards. Advising the Committee of any repairs or improvements required. | Various, depending on the number and turnover of towing volunteers, and their location.   | Various – Trailer Manager would organise times suitable for themselves and the volunteer towers. | Various, but including Marysville, Alexandra , Eildon, Yea, Flowerdale, Kinglake West, Kinglake | No, but training is provided   |
| Updating of Website   | Various, the more updates the better as we use this as the major form of communication with our members, but approximately 1-2 hrs per week | Whenever suits   | From home, so long as they have internet access   | No, but training is provided   |
| Newsletter Writing  | Newsletter is published once a month, and “copy” will be provided. Need someone who can format it and make it look pretty! Probably 3-      | Whenever suits   | From home, so long as they have internet access   | No                             |

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|   | 4 hrs per month   |   |   |                              |
| Membership Officer:<br><br>receiving member applications, putting onto database, issuing membership cards and receipts, banking money   | Various, more at the beginning as hopefully lots of members will be joining!  | Whenever suits  | From home, so long as they have internet access | No, but training is provided |
| Point of Contact/Publicity Officer:<br><br>Being a mobile phone contact (mobile provided), and assisting with publicising the Toy Library within the various communities. Ensuring Maternal Health Centres, Playgroups, Neighbourhood Houses etc have a supply of MTL flyers, posters etc | Various   | Various   | From home, so long as they have internet access | No                           |
| Grants Officer :<br><br>Responsible for finding and applying for grants which are suitable for the Toy Library  | Various   | Whenever suits  | From home, so long as they have internet access | No                           |
| Executive Committee (President, Treasurer, Secretary)   | Part of the plan of the Toy Library is that by 2012 the MTL will be run by the Murrindindi community. If residents would like to step up to the plate prior to that, that would be great! | Various. Committee meetings can be conducted via electronic means, and meetings will be every 2 months. | From home, so long as they have internet access | No                           |

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| <p>Database Officer (one required for each corridor):</p> <p>Updating database with new toys, deleted toys, returns and borrowings.<br/>Chasing up members with overdue toys.</p> | <p>Various, depending on toy purchases and number of members borrowing</p>                               | <p>Various</p> | <p>From home, so long as they have internet access</p> | <p>No, but training is provided</p> |
| <p>Party Pack Co-ordinators (one required for each corridor):</p> <p>Coordinates hiring of Party Pack by members</p>  | <p>Various, depending on number of Party Pack borrowings</p>   | <p>Various</p> | <p>From home, so long as they have internet access</p> | <p>No</p>                           |
| <p>Trailer Roster Co-ordinator (one required for each corridor):</p> <p>Coordinates drivers to ensure there is a driver for each scheduled visit</p>                              | <p>Various, possibly more at the beginning as drivers work out which and how many trips they will do</p> | <p>Various</p> | <p>From home, so long as they have internet access</p> | <p>No</p>                           |