

NALAG News

National Association for Loss & Grief (NSW) Incorporated August 2017



GRANVILLE DISASTER

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE - HOW NALAG BEGAN

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From The Editor

Jen Cowley

Jen Cowley is a member of the NALAG board and has been a volunteer "ambassador" for the association for the past six years. She is the author of *Grandpa's Hat*, a semi-autobiographical book written as a resource for NALAG for both children and their adult carers.



Three powerful words: You're not alone

In the overall scheme of things, I'm a relative newcomer to the NALAG "family".

It's only been seven years since I poured my broken self through the doors of the Dubbo centre, but the emotional baggage I dragged behind me across the threshold that day had been an anchor for more than thirty – I just didn't realise it.

Without the gentle but forthright ministrations of the NALAG team, I may never have acknowledged or managed to shed that weight. My life would undoubtedly look a whole lot different had it not been for that liberation.

The lifeline thrown to that drowning 40-something year old was moored to the notion that my accumulated and stifled grief was perfectly "normal". That I just needed to give myself permission to grieve. And, perhaps most importantly, that I wasn't alone.

This month – with some years' "ambassadorial" experience and a NALAG board seat under my arm – I was given a timely reminder of just

how powerful is the appropriate counsel of this organisation in the rescue of those drowning in a sea of loss and grief.

It has been my great privilege to put together this 40th anniversary edition of *NALAG News* as NALAG prepares to mark four decades of service in the loss and grief "space" – an anniversary shared by the tragedy that gave this unique association its origin.

It's also 40 years this year since Australia's worst rail disaster on record – the Granville catastrophe that killed 83 and in effect claimed countless hundreds of other lives in terms of the grief and loss and trauma that's been the 40-year fall-out from that dreadful day.

For all their deeply moving recollections it was one recurring statement that struck a chord: that comfort came – whenever it came – from knowing they weren't alone.

In preparation for the edition's feature article, I spoke with people very close to the Granville disaster, and for all their deeply moving recollections it was one recurring statement that struck a chord: that comfort came – whenever it came – from knowing they weren't alone.

It was the recollections of Meredith Knight – who lost her father in the Granville disaster – that resonated deeply with my own experience. We lost our fathers within six months of each other – I was 12, Meredith was 15. We both have brothers who were so deeply affected by loss and grief as to succumb to schizophrenia.

And we both finally – many, many years later – came to know some comfort through recognising that we weren't alone. That our experiences were shared, and from that sharing came a sense of closeness and an end to the isolation of profound and long-held grief.

Of course, our lives have differed markedly in other ways but we forged a connection in that brief sharing of lived experience. We were both again reminded that we're not alone.

It's a sentiment echoed by others who spoke with Barry Gobbe, himself a first responder to the disaster, for his books about Granville and it is heartbreaking to think that many of these poor troubled souls have spent much of the past four decades feeling the desperate isolation of loss, grief and trauma that is compounded by the misconception that no-one understands or is listening.

So we who have been helped and "healed" by NALAG in one way or another, owe a collective debt of deep gratitude to Professor Beverley Raphael for her vision and compassion in recognising, as a result of the impact of Granville, the need for such a service.

Thinking and attitudes surrounding loss and grief have, mercifully, shifted significantly away from the "stiff upper lip" Victorian-era mantra that has plagued so many lives for so long – mine included.

And for that shift, we largely have Professor Raphael and those who stood alongside her in the establishment and nurturing of NALAG to thank.

My personal congratulations and heartfelt thanks to those who turned those first sods and to those who have contributed, and who continue to contribute, to ensuring that there is a lifeline ready and waiting for those who are suffering with loss and grief.

Thank you – on behalf of NALAG clients everywhere – for helping us to understand that most important of human needs: that we are not alone.

Here's to the next 40 years and beyond.



From HEARTACHE
to HEALING

How NALAG grew from the tragedy of Granville

It's been four decades since 83 people lost their lives in what remains this country's worst rail disaster but from that dreadful day in 1977 came an organisation that has since dedicated itself to helping people navigate through loss, grief and trauma. Some of those closest to the Granville train disaster spoke with **JEN COWLEY** as the National Association for Loss and Grief (NALAG) prepares to commemorate its own 40th anniversary.

At nine minutes past six on the clear Blue Mountains morning of January 18, 1977, an eight-carriage train pulled out of the station at Mount Victoria, bound for Sydney and a routine Tuesday morning commute to the city.

Two hours and one minute later – at 8.10am – that train, now packed with ordinary people setting out on an ordinary Australian summer's day, jumped its tracks and smashed into the pylons of a bridge at Granville in the city's western suburbs.

In just seconds, that seemingly ordinary train had slammed its way into the history books, indelibly marking in black the date and time of what remains the worst rail disaster on our nation's record.

The Granville train tragedy claimed the lives of 83 people, injured another 210 and affected countless hundreds of others either directly or indirectly, many for the rest of their lives.

Forty years later, the word "Granville" still sends a shudder down the spines of those Australians old enough to remember the shocking images and heart-breaking stories of loss and grief and raw humanity from that traumatic day.

Left: Photo courtesy Parramatta Sun. Right: Photo credit: Parramatta Advertiser and Parramatta Sun



But for one visionary woman, the heartache gave way to the opportunity for a new approach to healing – one that saw the establishment of an organisation that would spend the next forty years helping those suffering to navigate their way through loss, grief and trauma.

Professor Beverley Raphael, a psychiatrist who worked with many of the emergency services personnel in the wake of the Granville train disaster, soon identified that most were ill-prepared to deal with the impact of the emotional fallout that accompanies such a traumatic event.

“Beverley (Raphael) did all she possibly could for those affected, particularly the emergency service personnel and rescuers but she could only do so much. For some, there was no coming back from the trauma of that day.” – Barry Gobbe, OAM – Chairman of the Granville Train Disaster Association

Already renowned in the field, Professor Raphael saw the need for a formal organisation to which people suffering under the weight of loss and grief could turn, and NALAG – the National Association for Loss and Grief – was born.

Among those who remember the Professor, her work and the genesis of NALAG, is Barry Gobbe – a now retired ambulance officer who was one of the first on the scene when the call came through about the emergency unfolding at Granville that morning.

Although Barry wouldn't feel the deep impact of the tragedy until many years later, it was his experience as a rescuer and first responder that led him to document the story in two books (Revisiting the Granville Train Disaster of 1977 was updated in 2015) and to later establish the Granville Train Disaster Association.

Barry and his partner were paramedics on shift that day and about to start their daily routine when the call came.

“The message we got was “don't rush, it's probably a hoax”,” he recalls 40 years later. “But we'd never miss the opportunity to turn on the red light and siren, so we got there quickly and were able to immediately confirm that this was no hoax.”

The partners were the first two emergency service personnel to arrive. They didn't see each other again until the end of the day.

“I went back to the station at about 4.30 that afternoon and to this day I have no memory of what I did for the next few days.”

Perhaps it's a sub-conscious defence against what must have been horrific scenes, but Barry – who was this year awarded an OAM for his voluntary services to the community – also has limited memory of what he did on that fateful day in January 1977.

“It's only because there was another gentleman there who documented everything I'd said that day in his police report that I know what went on.

“Some 30-odd years later, he showed it to me and it was quite confronting.”

Asked to share his first thoughts on arriving at what would go down in history as Australia's most devastating rail disaster, Barry is circumspect.

“I'm just very grateful I was well trained by the ambulance service – I did what I had to do but we just didn't have the facilities we needed to handle such a large-scale disaster.”

Barry Gobbe at the site of the Granville Train Disaster. Photo: Australian Community Media/Parramatta Sun – Photographer Geoff Jones



As he looks back, the tireless volunteer community stalwart says a whole gamut of emotions have coloured his reflections of that day and the lifelong impact of the tragedy on so many people.

"I guess the loss of memory of those days following is an indication of the strength of the emotion, but we just got back to work and carried on.

"There was no debriefing or counselling."

That stiff upper lip first began to tremble many years later as Barry embarked on writing a book about the event that saw the largest loss of life in a single incident post war.

"I started to talk to people that were involved and who had lost loved ones, and that's when it hit me. I started to realise that these people had been neglected – by the public and by the government. They just weren't looked after."

I ask him to recount some of the residual emotional effects he witnessed while putting together the book and the campaign to elicit a formal NSW state government apology, and Barry takes a long pause before answering.

"Interesting question. I couldn't relate to the suffering people went through but in recent years, I've come to witness the trauma they're still experiencing. "Some can't stand near a railway – it's still affecting them 40 years later, and that includes some of the rescuers," he says.

"Once I'd seen how they have and do suffer still, I broke down."

His continuing commitment to keeping alive the memory of both the disaster and the lives of those it took has helped Barry to empathise.

"It's not so much a healing for me, but definitely for others. Some people still don't want to talk about it, some are still under treatment – but I became close friends with some of the people in the book and they thank me for writing it and for helping with their healing."

He begins to cite the example of one particular fellow ambulance officer who was "about third on the scene" and then stops, the emotion in his

voice audible.

"Sorry – I get choked up talking about it," he says quietly.

"This bloke came to me and said he'd been suffering for 40 years but that the book had made him realise he's not alone. He'd spent all those years feeling like he was alone in his suffering."

"(Having something like NALAG) would have been so valuable for us all. I lost my father, yes, but the worst thing was seeing the absolute torment my brother went through. We didn't know how to help him." – Meredith Knight, whose father was killed in the Granville train disaster.

Even now, people are still seeking Barry out, having not spoken about Granville in 40 years.

"In fact," he says, "I'm talking to a bloke this week who has stuff to tell me that he's never spoken about – he not only lost his father in the tragedy, but he was actually called to the scene as a rescuer. This will be the first conversation he'll have ever had about it with someone."

That the National Association for Loss and Grief had its genesis in this disaster is one of the few bright patches in the otherwise dark blot the Granville tragedy left on our national landscape, and Barry is quick to acknowledge the value of Professor Beverley Raphael's care and efforts.

"Beverley did all she possibly could for those affected, particularly the emergency service personnel and rescuers," he says. "But she could only do so much. We really had no-one to turn to and yes, there have been suicides among some of those who were involved at Granville, members of the ambulance service included. For some, there was no coming back from the trauma of that day."

Over the years, the acknowledgement of the



Top: Barry Gobbe at the site of the Granville memorial site. Photo: Australian Community Media/Parramatta Sun – Photographer Geoff Jones

Bottom: Photo courtesy SBS



the tragedy, that apology finally came in May this year.

“It was overwhelming – a very moving moment to come to that point,” Barry says. “We only formed the Granville Train Disaster Association 12 months ago – to take over and run the commemoration ceremonies and to keep the memories of the victims alive in the public consciousness.

“Part of that was pushing for the apology. It was very emotional for us all when that happened.

“It’s not about compensation, it’s about acknowledgement.”

Standing alongside Barry Gobbe in the fight to elicit that formal acknowledgement has been Meredith Knight, whose father died as a result of the injuries he received when the 170-tonne Bold Street bridge collapsed onto the third carriage of the ill-fated train.

impact of loss and grief and trauma have come a long way in Australia, and much of that is thanks to the efforts of Professor Raphael.

“But it’s only been in the past 20 years have things really improved in the emergency

Just 15 at the time of the disaster, Meredith was living with her mother while her brother – four years her senior – was living with their father, her parents having separated three years before.

I remember them. We will remember them. We will remember them.

services, and I believe it’s still lacking,” Barry says.

If those changes have been slow in coming, the wait for a formal apology to victims and families from the NSW state government has been interminable.

Four decades after 83 people lost their lives in

The teenager was about to go to work at her school holiday job when the television news told of an horrific accident at Granville.

“I don’t know what it was and I can’t explain it,” she recalls. “But something told me right then and there that my father had been on that train. I just felt it.”

Meredith’s father was one of only three to

survive the initial impact and was flown by helicopter to hospital but never regained consciousness and died three days later.

The impact on the family was huge on a number of levels, but it was the devastating effect on her brother that Meredith cites 40 years later as being the most destructive.

“He was a wreck. In terms of grief, the death of our father had more of an impact on him. He sobbed for weeks. He’d cry day and night. He would call out in his sleep in the middle of the night.

“My brother should have had psychiatric help, but we just had to get on with it.”

Meredith believes that the assistance of an organisation such as NALAG would have made “a huge difference” and is glad the tragedy that took her father’s life gave rise to such a service.

“It would have been so valuable for us all. I lost my father, yes, but the worst thing was seeing the absolute torment my brother went through. We didn’t know how to help him,” she says.

“He would go to the railway tracks and just sit there – we were really concerned we were going to lose him too.

“We had no counselling – nothing. Even when we went to see our father the day before he died – he was unconscious and had tubes and stuff hanging out of him and was obviously in a bad way – there was no “de-briefing”. “Nothing to help us process that. No opportunity to talk

Meredith believes there are so many things that could have been said and done to help those two grieving teenagers better process their emotions during that awful time.

“Or even to help give my mother support in terms of how to look after two children who had just lost a father, and in the case of my brother, also a home.”

The trauma has continued to plague Meredith’s brother throughout his life. “On the tenth anniversary (of the Granville train disaster), he saw the footage on the television and that prompted his first schizophrenic episode.

“He’s well today and is happy, but he hasn’t been able to work since 1987 and he still won’t go to any of the memorials or talk to others because it’s just too painful for him.”

Meredith echoes the sentiments of Barry Gobbe’s fellow ambulance officer in saying that being involved with the Granville memorials and now with the Granville Train Disaster Association has helped her to realise she isn’t alone.

“Losing someone in



Remember them. We will remember them. We will remember them.

to anyone about how we were feeling. He died the following day.”

With the benefit of hindsight,

Right Top: Meredith Knight

Bottom: Meredith Knight at the Granville memorial site during the memorial service.



such traumatic circumstances brings a different perspective, and I came to realise I was part of a community of people affected by that same event. We'll always have that in common – they understand the grief and pain and the anger. None of us had any grief support or counselling – we all had to just process through it ourselves.”

Unlike her brother, Meredith finds a healing power in talking to others, and being involved in and going to the memorials each year where the practice of casting 83 roses onto the railway tracks from atop the Bold Street bridge has become a tradition.

Of the apology, Meredith says: “People talk about “closure”. There can never be closure but there is a sense that you can move on with your life. The apology was a big part of that.”

“The photos tell only some of the story...”

Mudgee-based Bruce Hogan – whose wife Nola is a volunteer with the Mudgee branch of NALAG – was 29 and working as a cameraman for Channel 10 News in Sydney at the time of the Granville train disaster:

“I was sitting in the canteen when we got an urgent call to go out to an incident at Granville.

“We didn’t know how serious it was at the time but when we got there, I was quite shocked by what I saw. Then when we realised the bridge had actually come down on top of the train... that was pretty awful.

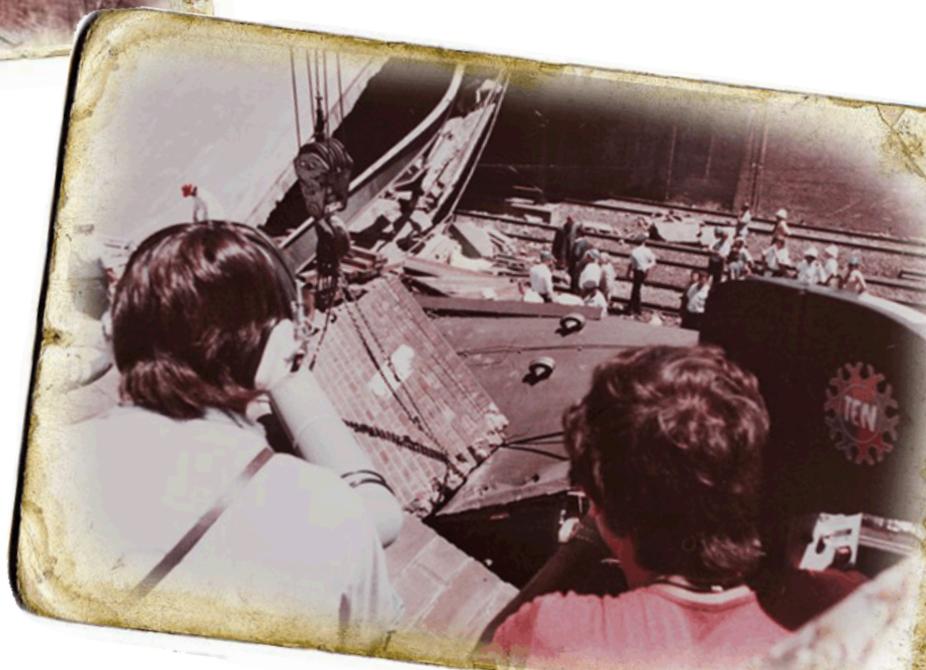
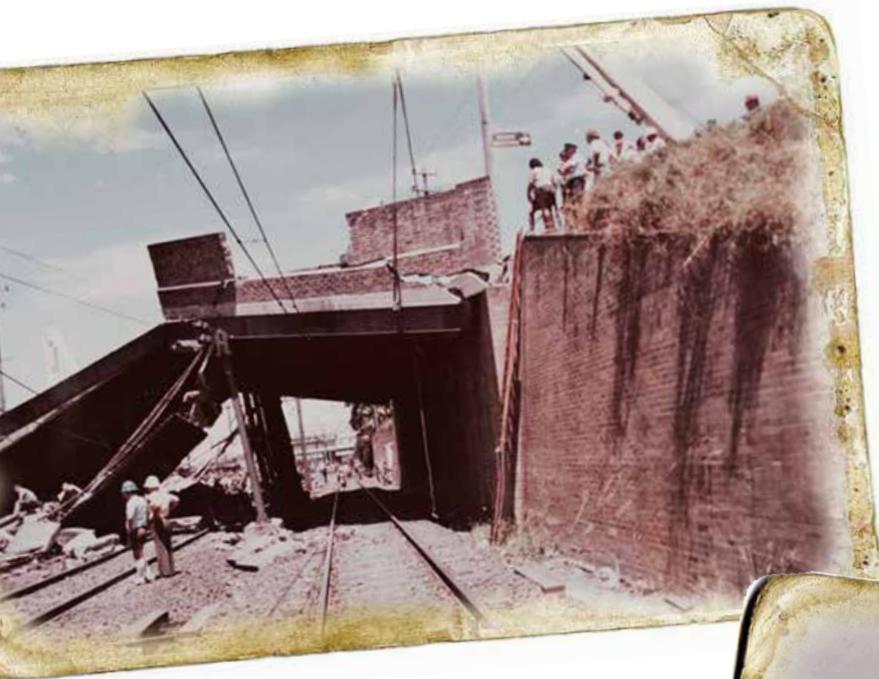
“It was fairly chaotic in the beginning – the first responders were there desperately trying to help the victims and doing what they could until the rest of the services got there and put up barriers and so forth.

“I used to go into these kinds of jobs fairly clinically – just get in and do the job without thinking too much but I remember it being just a chaotic and really awful scene.

“It was certainly an extraordinary tragedy and an extraordinary day.

“The photos from the day tell only some of that story.”

Photo credit: Bruce Hogan



Strong foundations

Reflections from the first president

Professor Beverley Raphael AM is a life member and patron of NALAG. She was a founding member of NALAG when it was formed in 1977 after the Granville Train Disaster and NALAG's first president. Current NALAG president JULIE DUNSMORE recently paid a visit to this remarkable woman, whom she says she's privileged to have had as a mentor and friend. Beverley has been a true friend to NALAG and an inspiration and guiding light in the organisation's evolution over the past four decades. Here, Julie recounts some of her mentor's recollections.

Through her research, publications and advocacy, Professor Beverley Raphael has been one of the most influential individual contributors to the area of loss, grief and trauma both in Australia and internationally. She has been a pioneer in the area of mental health response to disaster and terrorism, indigenous emotional social health and initiatives that have addressed loss and trauma in children and adolescents. Her research and advocacy work has changed both public policy, professional and community responses to loss, grief and trauma and promoted a humane response to suffering.

In late June of this year, I caught up with the recently retired Beverley to reflect on NALAG's journey and lessons learned over the course of 40 years of responding to loss grief and trauma.

Beverley has witnessed the evolution of NALAG from the early days of her presidency to today, four decades later. In the beginning the focus of NALAG was on providing guidance, support, education and camaraderie opportunities for health professionals, emergency personnel and first responders after traumatic events.



Forever humble, Beverley says she's proud to have played what she calls "a small part" in the inception of NALAG and her advocacy work for NALAG within health and government. She has provided expert guidance to the association throughout its life and has watched with enthusiasm the shift to the inclusive whole of community focus of present day association.

"In the work we do, we can't underestimate the power of human kindness".

As NALAG grew it became evident to Beverley that there was a great need to address loss, grief and trauma in all aspects of life and within the many different communities that make up this vast and eclectic land. She has welcomed the volunteer base of NALAG's grief support work and the quality of the professional training and community education programs, the focus on resilience and empowerment.

To use her own words, Beverley is “now in the terminal stages” of her own life, and she speaks freely about what she says is just the reality of advancing years and compromised health. This doesn’t cause her distress, but has meant many changes and she acknowledges that her life would sooner than later come to an end. For Beverley, thinking about the future is still as important as it always has been.

Looking toward the future is important, she says.

“Thinking of what we have now, what we have suffered, our pain and loss, our joys and passions, what we have in the present, but to continually ask what is the next best action I can take...”

For Beverley, the need to ask questions and to find a way through challenging situations is vital. She encourages NALAG to embrace a culture that continually reflects on why we exist and what we can learn in order to be the very best we can.

According to Beverley, NALAG’s work is particularly relevant when there are few supports for people. The organisation plays such an important part in assisting people to find some respite from their pain and often ability to go from surviving to thriving. Over the years, Beverly has continued to reiterate one particular mantra: “In the work we do, we can’t underestimate the power of human kindness”.

She believes NALAG was built on and continues to operate with this premise at its core.

As we talk about the beginning of NALAG 40 years ago, Beverley recounts the shock and great sadness she experienced through being part of the response to the Granville train disaster. The horror and grief impacted so many people and the impact on all concerned was lifelong, including Beverley. This was her first experience with such a large-scale traumatic event, and led to her ground-breaking work to understand the impact of disasters and how we can best respond.

As she looks back, Beverley believes NALAG has a unique place in providing support and advocacy along all steps of the recovery path. She feels that the “heart” in this organisation is its biggest strength.

“We are in a position where sometimes we need

to make it real for people,” she says. “Grief and loss is a part of life, but still today there is a sense of denial, of trying to silence people’s grief, of not allowing them to tell their story and make choices about their own grieving.

“The relief I have seen when there are simple acts of kindness and a “holding” in times of great sadness.

“NALAG has been so good at that. Meeting people where they are at and providing opportunities to safely process and have the support to take the next steps. Allowing them to face the new realities can also provide hope – hope the best- strength to take with you.”

In understanding the issues and impacts of loss and trauma, Beverley believes we need to keep the human component as a central theme, and in many ways developments in technology and science concern her.

“In many aspects there is a great “missing” for the humanity to be a critical part of our response to human suffering; to acknowledge and support the human aspects of life going forward.”

The challenge as she sees it is how we continue to support each other in our work. How can we keep going in difficult times and still be caring and decent and think of those we care about and continue to do the very best we can?

For Professor Beverley Raphael, seeing the courage, skill and humanity of those who contribute to the work of NALAG gives her hope for the association’s future and the hope for those who are suffering.



Prof Beverley Raphael and Julie Dunsmore.

Looking back

Reflections from an octogenarian



Dr Geoffrey Glassock as been involved with NALAG since its inception four decades ago following the Granville Train Disaster in January, 1977.

In 2010, he was awarded the Order of

Australia for his contribution to the fields of loss, grief and bereavement, and he shares with us here some reflections on 40 years of NALAG's service to those who grieve.

By Dr Geoffrey Glassock, AM, FAPS

In January 1997 after an enjoyable summer break in the Snowy Mountains, the Glassock family was en-route to Gippsland and listening to the ABC when the program was interrupted by the announcement of a major train accident at Granville, an inner western suburb of Sydney.

As the day wore on the severity of the accident with the train from Mount Victoria became clear and the number of people dead or injured seemed to increase by the hour.

Little did I realise that major disaster would set in motion a series of events culminating in what would become The National Association for Loss

and Grief (NALAG).

Professor Beverley Raphael, with her experience of the Cyclone Tracey natural disaster in Darwin, became involved in providing assistance to those involved in the Granville disaster. Confronted with a major disaster and the subsequent loss of life it became evident that the police, ambulance and fire brigade as well as medical personnel and other helping professionals were ill-equipped to manage the physical and psychological effects of a disaster of this magnitude. Professor Raphael organised a group of helping professionals to assist the workers and survivors. It was this group which became the nucleus of NALAG NSW.

In the early days of the association, many others including Dr Murray Lloyd and Mal McKissock, who became the first chairperson of the newly formed association, joined Beverley.

During the 1980s as a result of the growing interest in the area of loss, grief and bereavement and with the Beverley's encouragement, branches of the association formed in the other states.

An early brochure for a NALAG event indicated that:

"NALAG's main aim is to encourage and promote professional and community education in loss and grief. Since its formation in 1977, after the Granville (NSW) train disaster, it has been involved with the establishment of many of the support groups throughout the country and has contributed to their education and training."

This resulted in a name change after the NSW branch was incorporated and we became the

National Association for Loss and Grief (NSW). This act of incorporation was to enable the NSW branch to make a major decision to hold an international conference. The second International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society was held in London in 1988.

With the support of Professor Raphael (a keynote speaker at the conference) I presented, as the NSW President, a proposal to host the 1991 Conference in Sydney. With Prof Raphael as the program convenor and me as the conference convenor, ably assisted by Faye Cameron as conference organiser, three years of hard work resulted in an overwhelmingly successful conference.

Dame Leonie Kramer, Chancellor of Sydney



The Conference Committee from left to right:

Gail Sunderland, Peter Harrington, Dr Louise Rowling, Robert Hockley (dec.), Veronica McLellan, Geoffrey Glasscock and Faye Cameron. Not present were Fay Neville (newsletter editor for many years) and Prue Gregory (lawyer).

University where the conference was held, opened the proceedings which set the tone for the rest of the conference.

Overseas speakers included Dr Colin Murray Parkes, Dr William Worden, Dr Thomas Attig and many local researchers and practitioners who contributed to the success of the conference.

With the profits earned from the conference, the committee decided to award travelling scholarships of \$2500 for Australians selected to present at the conference in Stockholm in June 1994. The three successful recipients were Judy Griffiths (WA), Patricia Bazeley (NSW) and Fran Spora (NSW). After the Swedish contingent, Australians made up the second largest group of participants in that conference. Part of the agreement on receiving the scholarship was that the recipient would present their paper to an Australian audience.

Following the conference, Bruce Hosking invited me to New Zealand to establish a national association in New Zealand. Then, after a visit to Cape Town in South Africa, an Association for Loss and Grief commenced there.

Reading the National Newsletter of December 1994 it was interesting to note there were chapters

in Queensland (Dr David Donaldson, President) Western Australia (Judy Griffiths, President), Victoria (Chris Kearney, President), South Australia (Jenny Dawes, President) and New South Wales (Peter Harrington, President). With the exception of NSW, time has seen the demise of NALAG in the other states, and 20 years later NALAG as a national body no longer exists.

In keeping with the aims of NALAG in 1992, the NSW education committee commenced a series of 12-week Introduction to Bereavement Counselling courses, which the current President Julie Dunsmore and I ran for a number of years. At the request of participants, this was followed by an

advanced course.

NALAG (NSW) has continued to grow and develop over the years not least because of the untiring work of Trudy Hanson OAM. When I looked at the October 2006 membership the total number for NSW 209. Of that number, the Dubbo group with 58 had the highest number of participants, about a quarter of the members, followed by the city members, Coffs Harbour and the Central Coast.

When I think of the many friends I have made through my involvement for almost 40 years with NALAG, I am reminded of Ruth Bright, a former President of NALAG NSW and a gifted music therapist; Barbara Walsh, Tamworth; Simone Mason, Port Macquarie; Dr Penny Egan-Vine, Albury; Ken Shakespeare, Central Coast; Peter Hill, Lismore; Anne Graham (former National President, SA); Gabrielle Egan, WA, and all the members who have supported the aims and objectives of NALAG in so many ways over the years.

The ongoing work of NALAG primarily through the efforts of those at the Dubbo office and its expansion into new and exciting ways, is a fitting testimony to the dedication of the pioneers of NALAG in this its 40th year.



Julie Dunsmore, May Little and Trudy Hanson at the 10 Year Medal Dinner in 2011.



Former Member of the Orana Bereavement Service Dubbo Mary Mathews receives her 10 Year Service medal.



NALAG Dubbo Members receive their 10 Year Service Medals.



Mary Ellen O'Donoghue from Good Grief, Mary Mathews and Trudy Hanson at the 2011 Grief Week Service in Dubbo.



New initiatives, the NALAG Masquerade Ball for Mental Health Month 2011 promoted the Blue Healers Depression Program.



"Mummy, what's terror?"

How media coverage can affect children

Disaster and traumatic global events are nothing new. Neither is the news coverage that follows such occasions. But these days, with the relentlessness of the 24-hour news cycle and the omnipresence of social media, the understandable inclination to shield children – particularly very the very young – is giving way to a need to help little minds to process what they see and hear in the media. With the growing threat of terrorism around the world, the need to lessen the impact of this coverage has never been more important or topical.

Extensive media coverage of terrorist attacks, violence, conflict and war in the international community means many of today's children are aware of and watching world events as they unfold. Parents are faced with the challenge of explaining traumatic, violent events to children. These are difficult but extremely important conversations that give parents and teachers a chance to reassure

children that they are safe and secure. These conversations also provide an opportunity to model skills in how to cope with distressing events and manage difficult feelings, and to help children make sense of complex events and develop their understanding of the world.

When even as adults, we are often traumatised by what we see and hear with this rolling coverage of global events, imagine how hard it can be for a child to understand.

According to a study that was conducted in the wake of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings, people who were exposed to more than six hours of daily media coverage were more likely to experience acute stress than those affected directly by the event (Claudine Ryan, ABC Health & Wellbeing, June 2016).

Children, it seems, can be even more deeply affected and might fear the same thing happening to them, according to Susie Burke, a senior psychologist for disasters with the Australian Psychological Society, as quoted in the aforementioned article.

Intense media coverage of disasters, she said, can trigger strong emotional responses and this is particularly so for young children who may project those fears for themselves and their family.

NALAG founder and renowned loss and grief expert, Professor Beverley Raphael, is quoted as saying evidence showed that excessive exposure to disaster-related news coverage could traumatise some children, which is why the World Health Organisation recommends trying to shield very young children from graphic coverage of disasters and traumatic events. Professor Raphael said evidence exists to suggest that video footage in particular could be “much more unsettling and can stick in a child’s mind more than still images or audio reports”.

So what can we, as parents, carers and teachers, do to help children process and cope with this saturation of media coverage in the wake of disasters and traumatic events?

Don’t try to ignore it, but do limit viewing time:

It’s important to protect children from excessive media coverage, but according to Professor Raphael, parents should not try to shield children when these kinds of events happen. As with discussions about death and dying in general, it’s important to be age-appropriately honest.

“When you try to hide it, that becomes more terrifying or more strange for a child, so it’s really important for parents to explain what’s happened and to comfort the child.”

Stay with them while they are watching the news or reading stories on social media:

By explaining what’s happening, parents can help children to better understand and to reassure and comfort the child if they’re feeling anxious. This helps to avoid the child misunderstanding, and parents can help correct misconceptions. According to Professor Raphael, parents can help children build “emotional literacy” by speaking to children about their feelings.

“You can help them to give names to the feelings they’ve got, and saying they are feeling sad and developing a naming vocabulary for the feelings they’re having ... These are valuable conversations to have.”

Remind them good things happen too

As Professor Raphael points out, media coverage largely shows the violence, pain and fear that comes from traumatic global events – very seldom does it focus on the good side of humanity that often accompanies such events. So it can help to remind children that good things happen in the world too, and that even under tragic circumstances, there is often some good to be found as well – like people helping each other.

Give comfort and affection:

Mostly, children become upset rather than traumatised by media coverage of disastrous events and this isn’t necessarily a bad thing because it gives parents/carers an opportunity to embark on difficult but important conversations. Psychologist Susie Burke is quoted as noting that having conversations with children about losing loved ones or things that you love or about grief can be very valuable. It’s an opportunity to tell children it’s okay to cry and that talking about how you’re feeling is okay too.

Distract them when enough is enough

Yes, it’s important not to shield children entirely from media coverage of bad news, it’s just as important to know when enough is enough. Keep the exposure to a minimum, then try to move on to a new activity or game afterwards. Refocusing their attention limits the time a child has to dwell on what they’ve seen and heard.

Sources: How to help children cope with shocking news coverage: ABC Health & Wellbeing – Claudine Ryan, June 2016; Disasters, the media and your child – Prof. Beverley Raphael, Amanda Harris - The Trauma and Grief Network, Australian National University.

Branching Out

NALAG (NSW) Inc Centre and Branches



A world of stars

News from NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief Mudgee

Have you looked up into a clear night sky and seen with wonder the shining light of countless stars? So many! Symbols of hope for many.

Queensland artist, Maryann Talia Pau is collecting one million woven stars across the globe to form an impressive installation with a powerful message. Each star has been woven as a statement to end violence, some woven for forgiveness and healing and some to continue the conversation.

Here at NALAG in Mudgee, as part of the community outreach which is a strong part of the association's work, the Star Weavers have been hard at work.

Every second Tuesday, as part of the Yarning Group, people have gathered to learn how to fold brightly coloured paper into a star. Aply led by Margaret Doble and assisted by Sue Grant Frost and Bec Cunningham, people have come to enjoy community and make a statement against violence.

NALAG provides a safe place for people to gather and share, and the branch in Mudgee has been responsible for 2,000 stars being made for the installation.

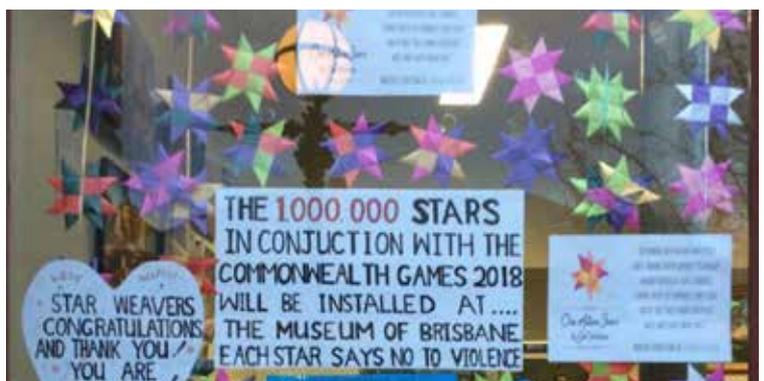
Not content with staying at the NALAG premises, Sue and Bec went off to Cudgegong Valley Primary School and Margaret went to St Matthew's Catholic school as part of the schools' anti bullying program to, yes, make stars. It has been a wonderful experience to be a part

of such a creative and powerful message across the world that violence of any kind is not to be tolerated.

NALAG at Mudgee has been at the forefront of this project in the town and sees such projects as a strong part of its work for the community.

Look up into the night sky and wonder. And then make it a promise that you will do all you can to prevent violence in your community.

Jorie Ryan - Mudgee NALAG Member



'Tis the Season for Healing in the Alice

Loss and grief workshops help indigenous community heal

Loss and grief are experiences shared by all humanity, but for indigenous Australians the grieving process can be particularly fraught.

That's why representatives from the National Association for Loss and Grief (NALAG) made the trip to Alice Springs recently to conduct a series of educational workshops designed to help indigenous communities and individuals to navigate the difficult path through loss and grief.

NALAG manager and experienced grief counsellor Trudy Hanson, along with NALAG board member and volunteer Jen Cowley – both from Dubbo in NSW – were in town to present Seasons for Healing, a program designed specifically for indigenous communities.

At the invitation of the Central Australia Aboriginal Congress (CAAC) and funded by not-for-profit organisation Good Grief, which developed the program, Trudy led the four-session workshop with representatives of indigenous agencies from as far away as Katherine.

Developed with small groups in mind, with "companions" leading the discussions, Seasons for Healing was developed by Good Grief in partnership with Aboriginal Family Support Services (SA) with funding from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation.

It was developed in response to requests for a culturally appropriate program to support Aboriginal adults in responding to their often-complex experiences of change and loss.

Designed as an education program, rather than counselling or instruction as such, Seasons for Healing is cleverly based on a parallel with the changing seasons as a metaphor for the cycles of



loss and grief.

According to NALAG manager Trudy Hanson, the four day program (which includes two days of training participants to themselves deliver the sessions) is a relaxed and inclusive exercise.

"It pretty much involves just having a good ol'

fashioned yarn, although in a structured way.

"The sessions are designed for maximum flexibility and can be enhanced and restructured to reflect the cultural and linguistic needs of specific communities."

NALAG representative Jen Cowley said the experience was as much a learning exercise for her as for participants.

"I very much enjoyed talking about how we all experience loss and grief, regardless of ethnicity, but I also learned so much about some of the significant cultural and social differences in the "healing" process."

Gwen Troutman-Weir, team leader of the Congress Link-up Service in Alice Springs thanked the NALAG representatives for coming all the way from Dubbo to conduct the sessions.

Gwen, who is herself formerly from Dubbo, said the Seasons for Healing program was a valuable exercise for participants, and could be adjusted and tailored to the diverse and specific needs of indigenous communities throughout Central Australia.

"Loss and grief is something we all experience, but to have a program such as this, specifically designed for indigenous people and adaptable to cultural and linguistic needs, is very valuable."

For further information or interview, contact Trudy Hanson (NALAG) on 0438 829 200 or Gwen Troutman-Weir (Congress Link-up Service) on 0447 839 620.

On the road...



with *Trudy Hanson* OAM

CEO of the NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief, Dubbo
NALAG State Manager & Grief Counsellor and Educator

Trudy Hanson has more than a quarter of a century's experience in loss, grief and bereavement support and education. In her role as CEO of the Dubbo NALAG Centre for Loss and Grief, Trudy travels throughout the remote regions of NSW and beyond to promote loss and grief awareness and education. She has a particular interest in indigenous grief and the grief experiences of infants and children.

E: trudyhanson@nalag.org.au Ph: 02 6882 9222 Mail: PO Box 379, Dubbo, NSW 2830

Welcome to the anniversary edition of the NALAG News celebrating our 40th year. Can you believe it has now been four decades since NALAG began providing its services to NSW?

I have been on the NALAG road since 1980 when I joined as a volunteer with the Orana Chapter after the death of my father-in-law, when I sought help for my children who were grieving.

What followed was a roller coaster of experiences and positions – over the years I've been treasurer, secretary, vice president, president and chapter coordinator for NALAG NSW Inc. In 2000, after a successful funding application to NSW Health, the organisation received a grant of \$100,000 to set up a centre in Dubbo and to employ a coordinator and staff to run the centre. I was fortunate enough to be the first paid employee of NALAG NSW Inc., with Judy Kelly looking after administration and Joan Dunn in charge of finance.

As I look back on the 37 years that follow, I reflect on what has been a remarkable journey, with so many adventures and experiences gained through bringing NALAG services to those who grieve.

The past year has been no different and what follows are some of the highlights.

Healing days in remote communities

Walgett is a remote Aboriginal community in the north west of NSW. The NALAG Team visited the town for a "healing day" to support the community in the wake of a number of traumatic incidents that had occurred during the year.

In Bourke, another remote and largely indigenous community in north west NSW, NALAG partnered with Mission Australia for a day during Mental Health Month, with "Growing through Grief" the theme for the day. Then it was on to neighbouring Brewarrina, where we presented a "Coping with Grief at Christmas"



Below Left: 1. Attendees at the Walget Healing Day.

Right from top to bottom: 1. Attendees at the Walget Healing Day with NALAG Volunteer ?? from Mudgee. 2. Participants at the NALAG Walk Towards Hope for Suicide Prevention take a sprig of wattle to place during the remembering ceremony. 3. The first participants of the Walk Towards Hope finish the walk across the LH Ford Bridge in Dubbo. 4. The Walk Towards Hope order of service.



healing day for the community. This proved a very effective program, and was also rolled out in Mudgee, Dubbo and Wellington.

Walk toward Hope Suicide Prevention and Remembering Ceremony – Dubbo

An appreciative and engaged group of around 150 people attended this event in Dubbo, with the walk aiming to raise awareness of World Suicide Prevention Day. Local media was very supportive of the event, and the local daily newspaper, The Daily Liberal, ran a front-page story featuring the reflections of one of those who took part.



For Kate Dhu and her family, the walk was both to honour her grief and to get support.

"I met a lady who lost her son earlier this year, and my husband had depression earlier this year and was suicidal" she said.

"I'm struggling with him. I'm struggling and this gives me hope to go on."

Looking at those who were grieving, Ms Dhu said "that could have been us."



It was her children who were helping to keep the family strong, Ms Dhu said, and she wanted them to be involved in the walk to help them understand their dad's depression.

Grief Awareness Month

August is Grief Awareness Month, and for 2016, the theme was "Mustering the Courage to Grieve". Commemorations and events around the state took many different forms and in Dubbo, NALAG again hosted a photographic "treasure hunt", with entrants encouraged to





capture images and expressions of grief and hope. In partnership with TAFE Western and the Fire Station Arts Centre, an evening's exhibition of the entries was held and we received double the number of entries from the previous year. Photographers were asked to take images to reflect each of the themes: healing, grief, growth and resilience. The results spoke for themselves, with some very moving images captured.

Maternity Ward, Dubbo Base Hospital

As part of our services, NALAG provides support to families who have experienced the loss of a baby, for instance by arranging photos of the babies to be printed and presented to the parents. This has proved beneficial for the processing of their grief, as has the placing of a remembrance stone that can be engraved and put into the Baby's Remembrance Garden in the grounds of the NALAG Centre.



Coping with grief at Christmas

NALAG partnered with Uniting Care Dubbo to stage a commemoration of the Bringing Them Home – Stolen Generation project, which was held in Dubbo's Victoria Park just prior to Christmas and involved having people make and place a Christmas decoration for a loved one who has died. This is a way of continuing bonds in a new understanding of the grief process.

A ceremony was held at Victoria Park in Dubbo by Uniting Care in support of the Aboriginal Bringing Them Home project. NALAG had a stall at the event to promote our activities in partnership with Uniting Care. The day proved a great success and was well attended.



Above Left: 1. Kerry-Lynn Strain's entry for "unite" for the 2016 Photo Treasure Hunt. 2. Jo Lincoln's entry for "loss for the 2016 Photo Treasure Hunt. 3. A commemorative stone from the Remembering the Babies Memorial garden. 4. Participants at the Don't be Blue for Christmas event in Dubbo.

Right from top to bottom: 1. Attendees at the Dubbo Seasons for Healing training workshop. 2. Attendees from the Alice Springs Seasons for Healing Workshop. 3. Trudy Hanson, Jen Cowley and Mark Horton at the NALAG Christmas Party 2016. 4. Devastating Sir Ivan bushfires.

End of year celebrations

To wrap up the end of 2016, NALAG treated volunteers to a dinner held at the Dubbo RSL club. Our guest speakers for the evening were Jen Cowley and Mark Horton. Jen is a NALAG board member and author of *Grandpa's Hat* – a children's book about loss and grief that was written and published as a resource for NALAG – and Mark is the illustrator of the book, who was also a 2016 Archibald Prize finalist.



Seasons for Healing

Seasons for Healing is a small group program supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults dealing with issues of loss and grief, which I have delivered in several locations ranging from Dubbo to Alice Springs. Some of the participants who attended the Alice Springs workshop drove down from Katherine in the Northern Territory – a distance of 13 hours by car!



Suicide awareness

In response to a recent spike in teen suicides, NALAG teamed up with headspace to run a suicide awareness workshop over two sessions – one for the general public and a second session aimed at staff working with youth groups. The workshop equipped attendees with skills to identify the signs of a youth who may be at risk of self harm and/or suicide, along with ways to encourage these young people to seek help.



Addressing children's grief

In early 2017, a rural area near Dunedoo experienced widespread and devastating bushfires – dubbed the "Sir Ivan fires" – that saw extensive property and stock losses. Children within the area experienced trauma and grief in the wake of the fires, so to help address this sadness, NALAG staff attended Dunedoo

Central school and presented an education session dealing with the issues of loss and grief.



In total there were 130 students present, ranging from kindergarten to Year 12. Individual support sessions were also offered.

Stormbirds training in Coolah

Shelley Carolan and I attended Coolah Central School to deliver the Good Grief program, Stormbirds, which is designed to assist children who have experienced loss through natural disaster. As mentioned above, the region was ravaged by the Sir Ivan Fires and children who have experienced loss were approaching teachers to talk about their experience. The Stormbirds training assists teachers in helping children to cope with their losses.

In keeping with tradition, on a personal note 2016-17 has brought me 2 new grandies, my daughter's Kim second child Louis Allerick and Paula's 3 third child Leo bringing my total to 10! This also cocincided in Paula's 10th and final year working for NALAG, but continues as a Volunteer.

So that brings us to the end of another challenging but successful NALAG year. I am proud of all NALAG has achieved over the past four decades, and join with all our staff and volunteers to congratulate those who have helped to make NALAG what it is today. Here's to the next 40 years!

Cheers, Trudy



Right from top to botttom:
Trudy Hanson and Jen Cowley at the NALAG Christmas Party 2016.
Trudy and Paula Hanson at her farewell.
Baby Leon (Leo) Robert Hanson Riley
Baby Louis Allarick

Blue Healers News

Shelley Carolan

Administration Officer

NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief, Dubbo



Developed in 2007, the Blue Healers Depression, Stress and Anxiety program is a psycho-educational program that teaches people experiencing depression, stress and anxiety strategies to cope.

The Blue Healers program was developed by NALAG Dubbo in 2008 and has been successfully run in centres around the state including Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, Dubbo, Wellington, Yeoval, Mudgee and Gulgong.

This program is designed to assist those who are suffering mild to moderate depression, anxiety and stress and delivers coping strategies to assist them to manage their mental wellbeing. The program has been evaluated by an external accrediting body and shows positive mood increase between 30 and 40 per cent.

The program is facilitated by trained staff and supervised by a psychologist. Topics covered include identifying the symptoms and signs of depression, stress and anxiety, along with cognitive behaviour therapy and information about the effects of diet on mental wellbeing.

In July 2017, the Rotary Club of Dubbo Macquarie generously donated funds to support the program, which has assisted well in excess of 300 people across the region since its inception.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Blue Healers? A program that looks at different coping strategies for managing the symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety. We look at things like exercise, sleep, diet and changing your thinking patterns.

Can I attend a group? Any adult over the age of 18 who is experiencing mild to moderate depression, stress and anxiety. It is unsuitable for those with severe or chronic mental illness.

Is it therapy or counselling? Neither. The program is about education. We use current research to give you strategies to cope and manage your symptoms.

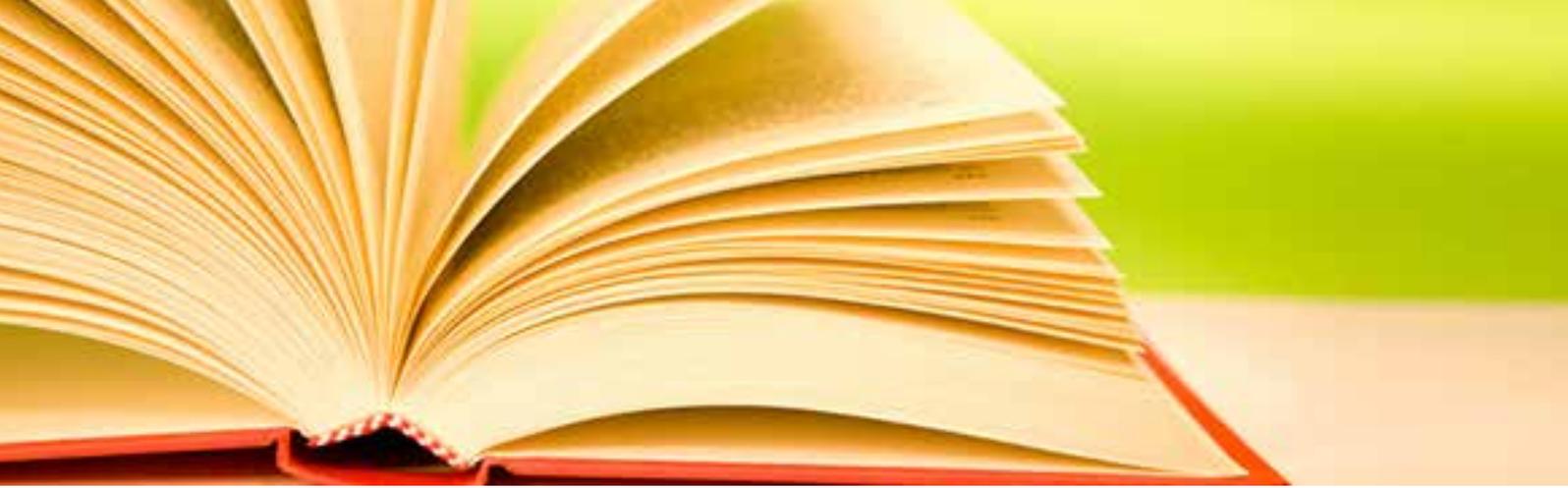
Where can I find out more? To find out more about the Blue Healers Depression, Stress and Anxiety Program please call the NALAG Centre for Loss and Grief in Dubbo on 02 6882 9222 and centre staff can assist you.



Blue Healers mascot "Bluey" with some of the promotional material for the program.



President of the Rotary Club of Dubbo Macquarie, Steve Cowley, presenting a cheque to Trudy and Shelley to help fund the Blue Healers program for 2017/18..



A Matter of Life and Death

Exploring the paradox

After the sudden loss of her mother, author Rosalind Bradley saw a new perspective not only on death, but also on life. So began the quest to explore the paradox that is life and death and the result is a remarkably insightful collection of thoughts and wisdom from people from all walks of life.

Rosalind Bradley's book, *A Matter of Life and Death*, is a collection of thoughts from 60 people from all walks of life who have shared their insights and wisdom. Each contributor chose a passage or image they feel best expresses death and offered their personal thoughts according to their spiritual inclination or "experience" of death.

With a forward by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, the book has five parts: Personal Encounters with Death; Death Brings us Wisdom; Working Closely with Death; Death and the Circle of Life; and finally, Death is Sacred. This final chapter includes views from a multi-faith and multi-cultural perspective. All royalties from the book go to support a hospice in Bradley's native UK.

"All the contributions are strikingly different yet there

are some common threads such as the importance of accepting death, preparing for death and embracing life to the full. My ponderings have led me to understand more about the paradox about death: that dealing with death is in fact a guide for living a meaningful life."

Following the release of the book in 2015, Bradley offered some insights into how it came to be and what she personally gained along the way:

What motivated you to write *A Matter of Life and Death*?

The trigger for this book was my mother's sudden death while she was staying with us in Australia, on holiday from England. It was a few days after 9/11. One day we were strolling around the Sydney Opera House, the next day she was in the emergency department following a cardiac arrest. I can still recall the physical and emotional numbness I felt that day and for many months afterwards. Her death completely shocked me as there had been no signs of any ill-health.

"I found that you could not ask someone about death without asking them about life so this book is as much about diversity in life as in death - hence the title."

I had just started a new job, which certainly suffered as I tried to come to terms with this new reality. I am convinced now that the emotional numbness I felt inside me, which later manifested itself in chronic back pain, was the build up of grief. In the wake of my mother's death and the death and destruction

from 9/11, I became intensely curious about death and gradually, through a long period of spiritual and physical renewal, I accepted what had happened. Several years later, after two close friends who were siblings died, I felt even more driven to come to terms with (the question) "What is death?" I knew I had to face up to my own fears and decide how I wanted to live the rest of my life. Exploring the mystery of death in all its rawness and complexity and gleaning some meaning from it led me to create *A Matter of Life and Death*.

People have very different relationships with the concept of death and dying. During your research for the book, did you discover any particular attitudes that surprised you?

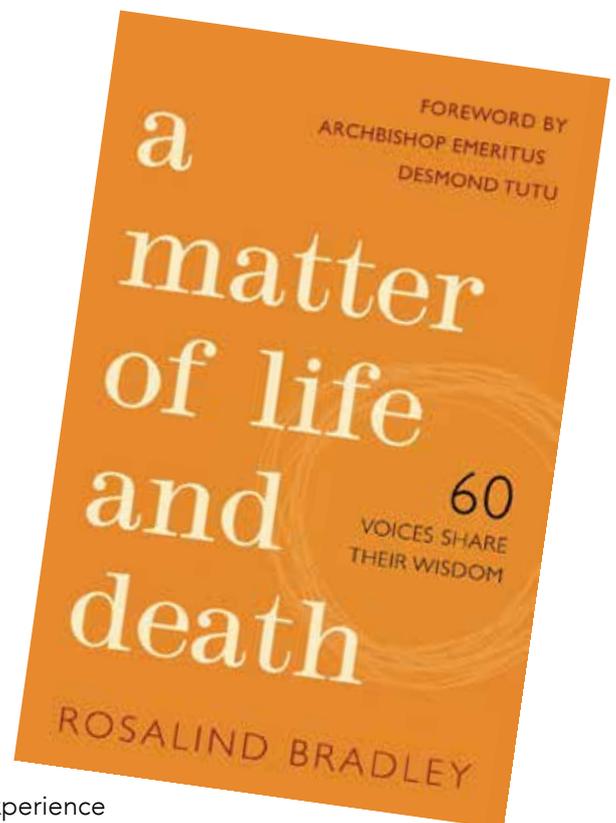
Initially I was surprised and even overwhelmed by the huge variety of different attitudes towards death. Very naïve in hindsight! Perhaps the death row inmate's attitude of not being afraid to die was a wonderful surprise. In fact quite a few contributors wrote that. Before I began the book, I had not understood the paradox of living and dying. One passage says "Keep death before you at all times". I knew that this was not meant to sound morbid but it was to encourage us to be mindful that we are mortal and we could die any time. The realisation of this has in some ways made me feel freer.

There's a lovely story in the book about Buddhist monks who turn their empty water glasses upside down every night before they go to sleep to show the world that should they die during the night, they are ready for the journey.

Some contributors mention the healing potential of dying: How dying can open up an inner spiritual side of us – to both the person dying and to the bereaved. Contributor Dr Irene Adams, an oncologist, shares her experiences of working with cancer and AIDS patients, and says that "as our body fades, our spiritual side becomes stronger".

What did you ask the contributors for?

I asked each contributor to choose a passage or image that best expressed death to them together with their personal reflections on their choice of text/image, based on their spiritual inclination or an



experience with death. Their insightful contributions made me deeply aware that death is very much part of our lives.

The book presents 60 different voices – how did you go about choosing the contributors?

They all originated in different ways. After a tentative start, the book took on its own form. I was constantly on the lookout for leads from the media as well as receiving personal recommendations. When I noticed a gap in the book, I researched to find the appropriate person. Of course there were many more people I could have asked and I found it hard to stop! A few people said no but suggested others. Most people were very generous with their responses and I felt – and still do – very blessed to receive these personal insights on such a sensitive subject. A few people I contacted directly through "cold calling". The following examples – a death row inmate, a coroner and a Holocaust survivor – are typical. I thought including someone on death row would be interesting and Mitchell did not disappoint. The Australian Buddhist nun, Venerable Robina



Courtin, who has worked in US prisons, was my main contact. Overnight she wrote "You must write to Mitchell Willoughby". So I did. Robina sent me a DVD Chasing Buddha, which included footage of a visit to Mitchell and a phone interview with him. The latter was inspiring with both Robina's and Mitchell's humanity shining through. With some trepidation I wrote to Mitchell who replied with five pages of handwritten text. I loved it immediately and edited it for the book. Mitchell is a courageous man and I am still in contact with him now through a prison email system.

I found the London-based coroner through the internet. He replied about six months after I first wrote to him (work pressures had prevented him contacting me before) so that was a surprise. I met the Holocaust survivor, an amazing lady called Olga Horak, through the Sydney Jewish Museum where she is a volunteer survivor guide. There is a touching postscript and photo to her page when Olga reunites with a war artist/photographer who first saw her in Bergen-Belsen in 1945, weighing just 29kg.

Do any of the perspectives strike a particular chord with you?

Many! The theme of impermanence is one that recurs throughout the book and not just in the Buddhist contributions. A Christian contributor, who was dying, wrote a moving letter to colleagues and friends saying he had learnt that "so much of what he valued in life is only of a temporary nature" and at some stage we have to learn to let go of our ego.

This made me ponder on my own temporariness and my ego. He also emphasised the importance of gratitude – how grateful he had been for the love and support he received from friends and family. That struck a chord too.

The importance of preparing for death is a key theme in the book. This includes talking about death with your loved ones – something which, we all know, is not easy but can bring a sense of healing, a sense of peace and meaning to life. Preparing for death helps shape your life and living. The line by Raymond Carver in Late Fragment, chosen by Canon Reverend Rosie Harper, is very poignant: "And did you get what you wanted from this life, even so?"

What are you hoping readers will take away from the book?

I hope readers will gain a greater sense of their own mortality and be more comfortable in talking honestly about death with others, especially to those close to them. If people can come to terms with their own death and fully realise that their own lifespan is limited then often their own lives can become enriched.

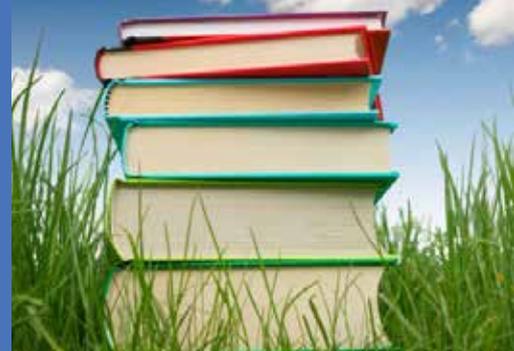
Personally, I believe that death is a natural transition from one stage of consciousness to another. As one contributor neatly put it, "death is a comma, not a full stop". Whether you accept that premise or not, the fact remains that we are all in transit and need to face up to the reality of our own death. How we deal with that realisation is at the heart of this book. As an Irish quote says, "You cannot hide from death."

Source: "A Q&A with Rosalind Bradley – author of A Matter of Life and Death": Jessica Kingsley Publishers, www.jkp.com, 2015.

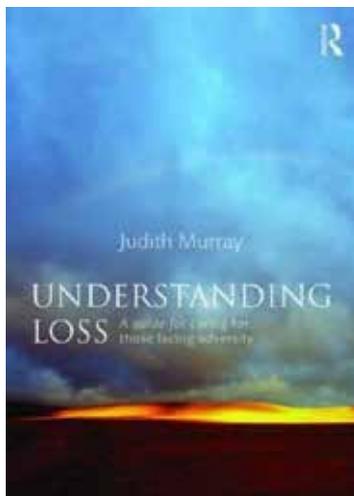
** To secure a copy of Rosalind's book, please visit her website: www.rosbradley.com/books **

Resources

Books, DVD's, Websites and more...



Books



Understanding Loss: A guide for caring for those facing adversity

Author: Murray, Judith

Publisher: Routledge

Publication year: 2016

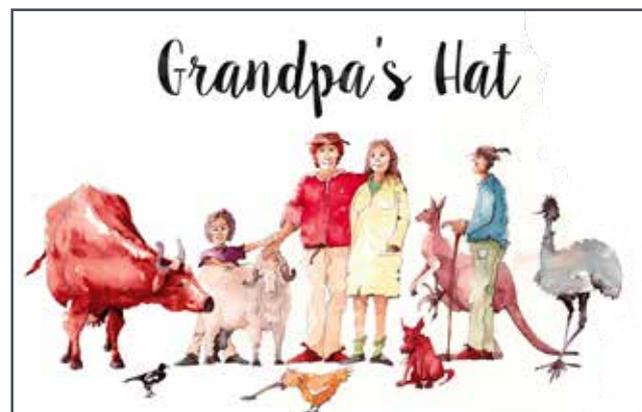
ISBN: 9781138829466 9781138829459

Loss and consequent grief permeates nearly every life changing event, from death to health concerns to dislocation to relationship breakdown to betrayal to natural disaster to faith issues. But while we know about particular events of loss independently, we know very little about a psychology of loss that draws many adversities together. This universal experience of loss as a concept in its own right sheds light on so much of the work we do in the care of others.

This book develops a new overarching framework to understand loss and grief, taking into account both pathological and wellbeing approaches to the subject. Drawing on international and cross-disciplinary research, Judith Murray highlights nine common themes of loss, helping us to understand how it is experienced. These themes are then used to develop a practice framework for structuring assessment and intervention systematically.

Throughout the book, this generic approach is highlighted through discussing its use in different loss events such as bereavement, trauma, chronic illness and with children or older people. Having been used in areas as diverse as child protection, palliative care and refugee care, the framework can be tailored to a range of needs and levels of care. Caring for people experiencing loss is an integral part of the work of helping professions, whether it is explicitly part of their work such as in counselling, or implicit as in social work, nursing, teaching, medicine and community work.

This text is an important guide for anyone working in these areas.



Grandpa's Hat

Author: Jen Cowley

Illustration: Mark Horton

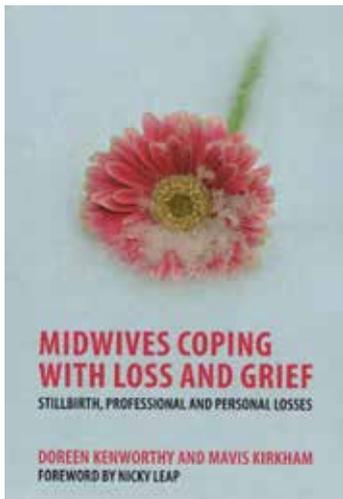
Grandpa's Hat is the story of Jennywren and all her favourite animals, who help her discover that although her Grandpa is gone, he doesn't have to be forgotten.

Grandpa's Hat has been developed with the support of the combined Rotary Clubs of Dubbo and Coonabarabran as a resource for the National

Association of Loss and Grief NSW Inc. (NALAG) to help parents and carers guide children through the difficult time of loss and grief.

Proceeds from the sale of the book go to help NALAG - a not-for-profit, volunteer-supported organisation - to continue the work it does in supporting people who are grieving.

Available through NALAG website – www.nalag.org.au or by contacting the Nalag Centre, Dubbo on 02 6882 9222.



Midwives Coping with Loss and Grief: Stillbirth, Professional and Personal Losses

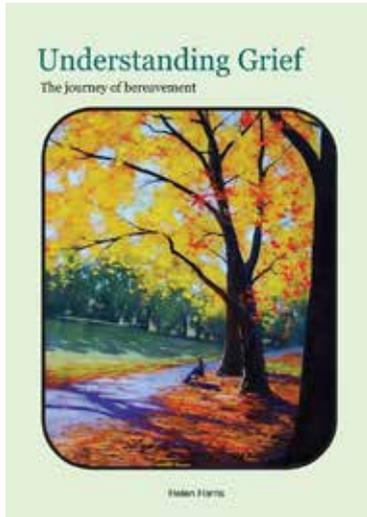
Authors: Doreen Kenworthy and Mavis Kirkham
Publisher: CRC Press; 1 edition
Publication Year: 2011
ISBN-10: 1846193885
ISBN-13: 978-1846193880

The experience of stillbirth and other losses in pregnancy at what is usually a time of great joy is tragic for everyone involved, including midwifery professionals. Although research increasingly shows how profound the effects of loss can be, few studies have explored the effects of pregnancy loss - which often leads to other personal and professional traumas such as loss of autonomy or a workplace - on midwives.

This in-depth investigation uses a phenomenological

approach to capture midwives' experiences of loss and grief in their own words, and encompasses both pregnancy loss and wider professional and personal issues. It then makes recommendations to enhance midwives' resilience and ability to cope appropriately, whilst giving maximum support to their clients. Reflections on the emerging implications for midwifery education and practice further broaden the scope of the analysis.

The insights in this book will be of great use to midwifery managers and supervisors. They will also help midwives to nurture themselves, their colleagues and their clients at a time when pressures on the service can leave support lacking. The devastating experience of losing a baby for women and their families is something that, as midwives, we strive to understand in order to provide appropriate practical and emotional support. Doreen and Mavis encourage us to consider how we are affected by the grief of others at a deeply personal level. Ultimately the message in this book is one of hope: through reflection and the sharing of experiences midwives who have been with women whose babies have died can regain their personal strength and learn to re-shape memories in ways that contribute to personal growth and understanding. (From the Foreword by Nicky Leap)



Understanding Grief: The Journey of Bereavement

Author: Helen Harris
Publication Year: 2016

This easy-to-read book was written with a general audience in mind. Helen Harris explains both the grief process and ideas to help and support someone who has experienced bereavement. The first section discusses the experience of grieving and the kind of reactions and feelings that occur. 'It is important to remember that these reactions are normal and okay and are a natural part of grief', she writes. The second part of the book - Path to Healing - gives ideas that may help someone cope with their loss: looking after yourself; familiar patterns; listening to your own inner feelings; and the benefits of writing, music, art and creativity, for example. The author also includes a section on helping a child who is grieving. 'Children experience grief in their own way, she writes. 'They need adults to listen, help them to feel safe and secure and be open and honest with them.' Helen Harris has worked in the bereavement field for many years and has experienced significant loss in her life as well. She brings together both professional and personal experience in a book that is helpful for all those who have experienced bereavement.



The Trauma and Grief Network – Australian National University (ANU)

<https://tgn.anu.edu.au/>

The Trauma and Grief Network (TGN) connects families, carers and members of the community to resources focused on the care of children and adolescents affected by the impact of trauma, loss and grief. Funded by the Australian government, the TGN is part of ANU's Child and Adolescent Trauma, Loss and Grief Network.

The website includes a resource centre, where there are articles, help-sheets and information on a range of topics to help parents/carers/teachers to cope with the trauma, loss and grief a child might be facing. There is also advice for adults on how to stay healthy in the wake of loss and grief.

Websites

For Your Diary

Education and Training, Healing Days and More...

Events

40th Anniversary Remembering Service

Where: St Brigid's Catholic Church
Brisbane Street, Dubbo

Time: 11.00 am

When: Sunday, 27th August 2017

Each year in Grief Awareness Month we commemorate the losses that our community has experienced over the year. Join us for a short remembering service, release of balloons followed by light refreshments.

Walk Towards Hope Suicide Prevention

Where: LH Ford Bridge
Macquarie Street, Dubbo

Time: 11.00 am

When: Saturday, 9th September 2017

Each year in September we gather as a community in solidarity in the prevention of suicide awareness. Join us at the LH Ford bridge at 11.30am to walk across the bridge, followed by a remembering ceremony, entertainment and BBQ lunch.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Day

Where: NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief
Welchman Street, Dubbo

Time: 6.30 pm

When: Thursday, 12th October 2017

Each year in October we perform a Remembering the Babies ceremony in which we invite members of the community that have experienced the loss of a pregnancy or infant. We have a special garden of stones that may be selected and engraved with commemorative details.

@ the NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief Dubbo - Welchman St, Dubbo

Mates of NALAG Morning Tea

The Mates of NALAG Morning Teas are held on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 10.00am. A mens group of friends of NALAG, this is an opportunity for anyone with a connection to NALAG or in need of friendship to come to the Centre and catch up over a cuppa.

Tea and Talk

The Tea and Talk group is a ladies only morning tea, held every 2nd Wednesday at the NALAG Centre in Dubbo.

@ the NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief Mudgee - 107 Mortimer Street, Mudgee

Yarning Group

The Yarning Group is for people who like to work with yarn (knitting, crochet etc) or for people who like a yarn (chut chat, natter etc) to come to gether in friendship and companionship.

Held at 10.00am each 3rd Tuesday each month at the NALAG Centre in Mudgee.

For more information on any of these events please call the NALAG Centre in Dubbo on 02 6882 9222 or NALAG Centre in Mudgee on 0488 255 710.

Education & Training

In 2017, we will be bringing you new and exciting education and training opportunities. If you have an idea for a workshop that NALAG may be interested in, want to request education in a certain field of loss and grief, or would like to see NALAG come to your area, please contact us.

NALAG also provides customised training to organisations based on need, contact us for more information.

Bookings & Enquiries

NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief Dubbo

Ph: 02 6882 9222

E: education@nalag.org.au

W: www.nalag.org.au for more information.