

Quiet Minds, programme from those who know

If you watch TV you will know that mental health issues are part of life for many of our population. Did you know that one person in five in New Zealand will at some stage in their lives, experience some form of mental illness?

Quiet Minds is a half hour programme that may be heard on plains FM 96.9 weekly. It is presented by mental health consumers to reach out to all listeners, that they may be better informed about Mental Health issues. Quiet Minds also seeks to provide a platform where consumers themselves have a voice.

Each week a different perspective explores a different aspect of mental health. Those interviewed are mostly people with experience of one or more of a wide and varied number of mental illnesses. As the stories unfold with the guidance of an empathetic interviewer, the listener cannot help but be enriched by this sharing. As well as persons with experience of mental illness, sometimes Quiet Minds interviews are with appropriate health professionals who work in the field of mental health. For example, a recent interesting interview with Merryn Statham director of Suicide

prevention in New Zealand As Merryn works in Auckland which took place by telephone. This was successful and inexpensive. It was a new experience for the interviewer but we hope to do more telephone interviews. This will extend the number and type of people we are able to interview.

There are a very wide number of categories of mental illness. These include drug and alcohol dependency problems. People in recovery from drug and/or alcohol dependency have been included in the speakers on the Quiet Minds programme. Many people have more than one mental illness, eg., it may be that the person has a mental illness and

a physical disorder, e.g., diabetes and schizophrenia. The existence of two or more conditions is known as co-morbidity. We have covered the topic of co-morbidity in a Quiet Minds programme.

Copies of the CDs of Quiet Minds programmes are available at the library of the Mental Health Education and Resource Centre, Securities House, Latimer Square. The information contained in the programmes may also be accessed on line at www.plainsfm.org.nz and click on podcast. Quiet Minds broadcast may be heard every Saturday at 1pm and 10am Wednesday. For further information, phone Pam Barnett on 3582286.

The historic Wigram Manor becomes Canterbury's multicultural function centre

The La Famia Foundation NZ, a Christchurch charitable trust offering community based family support services throughout the Canterbury region has established its new headquarters as of 1 July, 2009 at the historic Wigram Manor located at 14 Henry Wigram Drive, Hornby. Along with its principle aim of providing good old fashioned professional family services; La Famia now offers a significantly expanded dimension to the tradition of family and community support from this magnificent venue. This grand facility has now become La Famia's multicultural establishment for community and corporate events, family functions, and an international resident training academy.

Wigram Manor, built in 1938 as the original Officers Mess for the Royal New Zealand Air Force, is now available to the public by appointment, providing luxurious conference rooms, private celebration opportunities and a main dining hall / ballroom with an extensive commercial kitchen and scullery. The complex is designed to accommodate corporate and family

training courses, social events, and private functions with gourmet catering capacity from small family gatherings to formal receptions serving hundreds.

This distinguished La Famia venue includes a complete Hall of Residence in the main edifice with fully furnished room accommodation for up to 40 guests / residents including the availability of room service, in-room phone, and high speed broadband. The two acre estate also offers expanded lawns and mature gardens for al fresco events as well as the historic free standing Wigram Air Force Chapel to accommodate weddings, celebrations and all types of indoor and outdoor activities.

To top it off, this splendid Christchurch monument presents the latest in boutique licensed café and cookery; introducing Jessie's Café and Coterie. You might ask, what's a coterie? Webster's dictionary says, "An intimate and often exclusive group of persons with a unifying common interest or purpose". "Welcome to the Family!" (www.wigrammanor.co.nz)

Has the property market turned the corner?

The Christchurch property market is showing good signs of recovery if attendances at open homes are any guide reports real estate agent Bill Cornelius.

According to Cornelius open home attendance numbers have increased noticeably and with the increase in enquiry levels sales information is reflecting the improving market conditions.

Real Estate Institute of New Zealand sales data for the June quarter shows that nationally sales were 41% ahead of the same quarter a year ago.

Christchurch property owners can take comfort from the fact that property values in Christchurch suffered a decline of only 7.3% over the twelve months to the end of June. In the United States the average decline so far recorded has been 33%. Anyone sitting on the fence waiting for prices to drop further in New Zealand is probably going to be disappointed. The national median price in January 2009 was \$325000 by the end of June the median had climbed to \$340000. A shortage of stock in the marketplace has been compounded by a sharp drop in new home building activity.

There is an interesting balance in the supply and demand ratios. Buyers are increasing in numbers attempting to take advantage of favourable mortgage interest rates and sellers are hanging out for better prices as they try to take advantage of the stock shortage.

For each group it is a good time to be in the market place, under the willing seller willing buyer principal there should be many sales made over the summer months.

After the cold wet winter we had this year we are all looking forward to blue skies and lots of sunshine over the spring and summer months and what a difference that makes to attitudes.

I'll finish this article with one last thought. Just because you have lived through a recession does not mean you get another three or four years added to your life span, your time for doing things is now, always remember, no one is in charge of your happiness but you.

For assistance with property matters anywhere in Canterbury phone Bill Cornelius 3556444 or 0274 344234.

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Bill Cornelius, Ph: 355-6444

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