

Best Years

REVIEW:
MENTAL
ILLNESS
PAGES 2-3

I'm sorry I didn't know him better - Ruth Park



Frank Morris

"I'm sorry now that I didn't know him better," said Ruth Park. Miss Park penned these words on a character I thought would be ingrained in her memory - Frank G. Greenop. Deep down, as you read the letter, you'll realise this too.

Ruth Park could only give so little for a man who played such a dominant role in her early life. Time can be quite strange. Frank Greenop, a magazine editor, was one the first mentors in her young life. Ruth Park died in December, 2010. She was 83.

Dear Mr Morris

I'm so sorry I shall, for your research purposes, be a washout.

I don't really remember anything significant about Frank Greenop, except that he was a small dapper man with a moustache.

I fancy he was a most competent editor, sailing diplomatically over the parsimony, constant late payment and general disorganisation of the K. G. Murray set up.

Any stories about Frank G. would have come from D'arcy. I can't check anecdotes from The Drum, as I have no copy.

We lived fairly close to Mr Greenop and he sometimes visited casually. He was an easygoing bloke, I fancy.

I'm sorry now, I didn't know him better.

I'm glad anyway that you're collecting his work for publication - a tangible tribute to a competent and industrious man.

All good wishes for your success.

Yours Sincerely

R. Niland (Ruth Park)

■ AGED CARE PROPOSALS COME AT THE RIGHT TIME, P3



TREATING DEPRESSED ELDERLY

"Elderly people expose themselves less frequently to bright environmental light," Dr Lieve wrote in the journal *Archives of General Psychiatry*, "and might also absorb less light through their retinas. They were also more prone to medication side-effects. The beneficial effects might in part be due to the resetting of the body clock."

**JOHN COULDN'T FUNCTION
NORMALLY: FRANK MORRIS**

Depression - 1 out of 5 people can get it: Study

John was known as a "real good bloke". He always had a compassionate ear for anyone in trouble.

The only person he didn't encourage was himself. In the last 15 years of his life he found it impossible to find a way out of his depression.

He reached the point where living had become an insufferable task to him; he no longer had the ability to function in a normal way.

At age 52 John took his own life.

One in five Australians will experience a mental illness, of which there are about 200 types.

The problem is compounded by a high level of misunderstanding about mental health disorders, which are every bit as crippling and disabling as a physical illness.

WHAT IS IT?

Mental illness covers a broad group of illnesses, of which depression and anxiety, bipolar (manic depression) and schizophrenia are the most common.

Depression is something people can't just "snap out of," says Australian National University director of mental health research.

"It is not a fleeting sadness but a pervasive and relentless sense of despair".

People experience varying degrees of hopelessness, loss of energy, changes in sleep patterns, relationship problems with partners, family and friends, thoughts of death and

**◎ NEXT ISSUE:
Adults talk about divorce & separation. But what about kids. What do they think?**

suicide, and isolation. These symptoms can sometimes be the tip of the iceberg.

A study published in the British journal *The Lancet* comes out in favour of long drug therapy.

The study based on 30 years of research, suggests patients should stay on antidepressants as a barrier against further relapses.

Depression is sometimes confused with bipolar disorder.

Once known as manic depression, bipolar disorder has always been recognised as a ferocious and volatile form of mental illness, which strikes men and women equally.

Not all bipolar states are alike; they cover different parts of the mood arc.

According to US research, a child with one bipolar parent has up to 30 percent chance of

▲ CONTINUED ON P3



One of these people has depression. Which one?

Crunchtime - it's coming!

JESSICA

I would like to see mental health being top of the political spectrum. I would like people to be saying, "This is an issue of importance, it impacts on so many families, let's bring it out in the open, let's talk about it and let's put light into the lives of everyone who is touched by mental illness".

Mental illness affects an estimated one in five Australians at any stage in their lives.

It's a confronting statistic which aims to throw a national spotlight onto mental illnesses, such as depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

The most common forms of mental illness in Australia are depression and anxiety disorders (for example, phobias, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders).

Mental illness is responsible for suicide in about 10 per cent of patients.

About 20 per cent of Australian adults

will be diagnosed with mental illness at some point in their lives. Three per cent will be seriously affected.

With treatment and support, the majority of people with a mental illness will recover well and lead a fulfilling life within the community.

"Mental illness in some way touches many people. Nearly every family knows or is affected by someone suffering the illness. Sadly, a lot of people who suffer some form of mental illness are not diagnosed, and they struggle with day to day living. This makes life hard for them, and for their friends and families".

"As a community, we need to look out for each other and offer support and assistance to our friends and family who may suffer with a mental illness," Jessica said.

■ WHAT'S WRONG WITH A WILL KIT, P4

WE HAVE WAITED TOO LONG FOR ADEQUATE MENTAL HEALTHCARE

BY ANNE DEVESON

One day in the future, we might look back at the way people with mental illness were treated in the year that has just begun – and we will be ashamed of our failures.

When my elder son, Jonathan was 17, he was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, and admitted to hospital. (He was) given so much, yet walked and talked like a zombie.



"My son is pacing the darkened corridor talking to himself. He's fearful. So am I," Anne Deveson.

Seven year later, Jonathan died of an overdose of cheap wine and sedatives. Did he die from the overdose or from neglect?

He wanted to die. Whenever I saw him I would want to weep.

In recent years I served as a member of the NSW Mental Health Tribunal, and began to feel hopeful that before long, we would have good services for every phase of mental health care and for everyone in need.

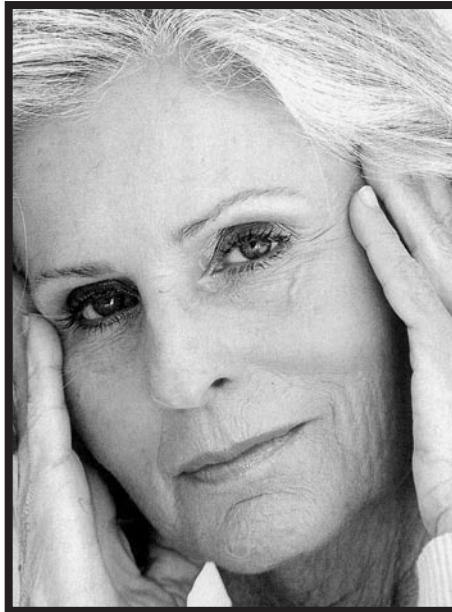
It wasn't to be.

In Sydney, 24-hour crisis services no longer exist in most areas. Many services now operate in the community from 9 to 5, Monday to Friday. When Jonathan was so ill, I had to rely on the police.

Last year, when dollars were being liberally dispensed, mental health was pushed to the back row. Mental illness eats into families, erodes relationships and denies people the chance to live normal lives.

Letter to the Editor NOT SO ELDERLY

A reader asks: Is 50 the new 80? "How depressing. Apparently there's nothing left to live for as I near 50," our writer says. "I refer to a story which said 'people in their 30s, 40s, and 50s.' I know time's not on my side, but I wasn't aware it had begun to run out 20 years ago!"



The highs: Horrible mood swings.

BIPOLAR: THE HIGHS AND LOWS

We all experience highs and lows, for people with a bipolar disorder these become increasingly disconnected from everyday events and out of control.

Each person's way of expressing these moods is different, but people experiencing mania commonly become excessively self-important, expansive and over confident.

Depending on their inner beliefs and hidden desires, they may become excessively religious, financially irresponsible, intolerant, verbally aggressive, irritable, overcommunicative and incapable of listening to or empathising with other people.

Sleeplessness and overactive behaviour are common among people with mania.

Untreated the person can experience hallucinations, delusions and paranoia. Before the advent of drug treatment, people with bipolar disorder were recorded as dying of hunger and exhaustion.

Depression - 1 out of 5 people can get it

▲ CONTINUED FROM P2

becoming bipolar; if both parents are, "the odds are about 75 percent".

The condition is treated with drugs, after which comes individual therapy and lifestyle changes.

One of the most severe forms of mental disorder is schizophrenia, whether it be paranoid, disorganised, catatonic or residual schizophrenia.

The causes are unclear, but scientists believe that it could be triggered by an im-



EYEVUEW
Frank
Morris

AGED CARE: RIGHT TIME

In my recently published eBook on retirement villages and aged care facilities I had this to say: "This book, hopefully, will serve as a 'road map' through the bureaucratic maze that is the aged care system.

"There's no easy route. It may be unwieldy, but there are no short cuts."

Last issue, in my EYEVUEW column, I wrote: "The main ingredient is MONEY – more money than you can poke a stick at. Money, money, money. The right time is now." I have been saying that for 25 years.

The Productivity Commission has been tacking this problem for many months.

Although the report is in its 'draft' stage, it has been said that the proposals "are bold".

"The report calls for the abolition of the 'redundant' position of the aged care commissioner and says there is a plethora of 'unnecessary, complex and burdensome regulations,'" the Herald reported.

"This is the ideal time to release this report," the PC said.

PROBLEMS

SYSTEM too complex to navigate.

SHORTAGE of workers fuelled by uncompetitive wages.

CUMBERSOME and unnecessary regulation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FORM single agency for aged care.

MAKE co-contributions reflect user's ability to pay.

LIFT caps on care packages and residential beds.

GIVE older people power to shop around.

ABOLISH office of aged care commissioner.

balance of brain chemicals (serotonin and dopamine), viral infections, highly stressful situations or all three.

Symptoms range from delusions, hallucinations and disordered thinking of speech to social withdrawal, extreme apathy and emotional unresponsiveness.

TREATMENT

According to the Mental Health Association, your GP will assess your symptoms and provide you with a referral to a health professional or specialist-psychiatrist, psychologist or counsellor. Out of this will come a managed treatment program, with ongoing support and understanding.

What's wrong with a will kit?



James Kelly

The purpose of 'making' a will is to provide certainty and give you peace of mind. Will kits may not achieve that objective.

There are a number of reasons:

No two people's circumstances are ever the same. A will kit, no matter how comprehensive, cannot cover all the various tax and other issues which are particular to your circumstances.

A will kit which involves ticking boxes and filling in gaps can lead to uncertainty or fraud.

Some issues are just too complicated to cover in a do-it-yourself will. For instance such wills do not cover the establishment of a testamentary trust or other particular circumstances. They may not cover conditional



Your bank account might be a mess . . . but what about your will?

bequests – i.e. bequests which are subject to certain pre-conditions being met.

The estate planning process involves more than just making a will. At a bare minimum, it also entails powers of attorney, enduring guardianships and superannuation death benefit nominations.

Depending on the complexity it can also include trust deeds, shareholder agreements, buy-sell agreements, and so on.

A large percentage of wills are not signed or witnessed properly if the simple will kit is used. These formal requirements for making a will are often not satisfied by will makers using will kits.

There have been many court cases on the validity and interpretation of wills prepared using a will kit.

The costs of running such cases would of course far exceed the costs of seeking professional advice on the estate planning process in the first place.

We note the following disclaimers on a website offering a "do-it-yourself" will kit:

"... It is a condition of use of this site that you will not hold us liable for any claims of compensation, or damage, as a result of any action or inaction. You should understand that we are a low cost service and you will not have the luxury of suing us should something go wrong. We will endeavour to make sure that documents obtained from this site are accurate and legal. However we cannot guarantee it ... We are NOT qualified legal advisers. We CANNOT and will not provide you with any legal advice ..."

You only have one chance to get your will right. Once you have passed away, the will cannot be changed without the intervention of the High Court, the cost of which will far out weigh the cost of seeing your solicitor.

It is therefore important that you get it right the first time! This is our commitment to our client

■ If you would like further information please contact the Estate Law Team during business hours on 1800 770 780.

CHILD DROWNING

NSW Ambulance paramedics responded to 55 cases of near drowning in the past month and 526 cases in 2009-10. One in five drowning incidents involved children under five.

Paramedics are urging residents to eliminate the chance of drowning by making sure proper fences are installed around pools. People can minimise the chances of drowning by always supervising children, never relying on someone else to watch them and making sure they swim between the flags when at the beach.

Depression - can you help?

Someone who has depression can find it difficult to accept any support or help. This doesn't mean you should sit back and do nothing. Loneliness, stress, anniversaries, keeping a structure - they're all areas where we can lend a hand.

UPDATE

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FINANCIAL
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Owen Hodge has had a long association with Eclipse Prudent Mortgage Corporation Ltd and has acted on their behalf on numerous mortgages.

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The minimum investment is \$10,000.

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Because investments are made in a particu-



Dancing always . . . dreams do come true!

lar mortgage, there can be some delay while a suitable security is found.

Investments may only be made on the terms set out in Eclipse's Product Disclosure Statement.

■ **If you would like further information please contact our Special Counsel Richard Farmer, 9549 0771. Richard has many years' experience in mortgages and property.**

UPDATE

Types of depression

There are several different types of depression. (A) Clinical depression (B) Dysthymia or minor depression (C) Bipolar depression of highs and low mood swings (D) Seasonal affective disorder, and (E) Postpartum depression. See your GP.

DEADLY DISEASE

There were 3528 new cases of melanoma in NSW in 2007.

Melanoma accounted for 482 deaths in NSW in 2007 and 342 of those deaths were men. Melanoma was the most common cancer in adolescents and young adults, with 105 cases, or 19 per cent, of all cancer cases for both sexes.

Melanoma was the second-most-common cancer in people aged 30-49 in 2007, with 650 cases reported.

MORTGAGE
OH
SOLUTIONS

Do you own your home?

Are you 65 years or over?

Would you like to free up some of the equity in your home for some worthwhile purpose such as a car, holiday, renovations?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above a 'Reverse Mortgage' may be the answer for you. With a reverse mortgage you are able to access equity in your home now, with payment of the loan not due until you sell your home or once you have passed away.

For further information and advice on whether this type of loan is suitable for you, please contact our lending expert Neil Lewis on 9570 7844 or email nlg@owenhodge.com.au

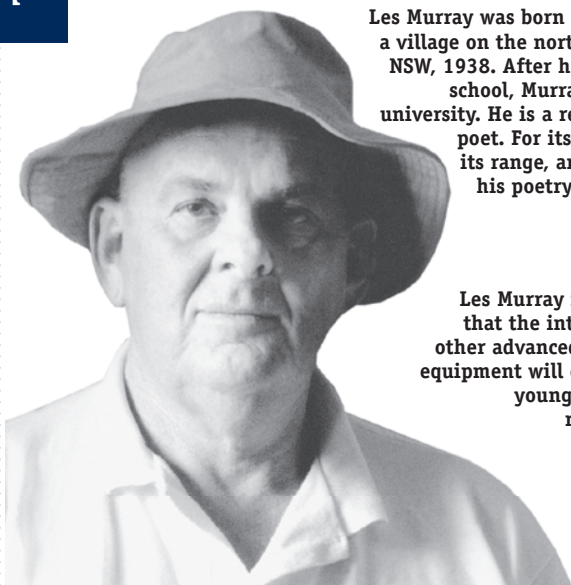
Enjoy your retirement - after all you've earned it!

Les Murray's favourite sayings

Australia was ruled by poetry for tens of thousands of years. Prose only became its ruling principle after settlement in 1788.

Religions are big slow poems. While most poems are short, fast religions.

A true poem is dreamed and danced as well as thought.



Les Murray was born in Nabiac, a village on the north coast of NSW, 1938. After he finished school, Murray went to university. He is a remarkable poet. For its diversity, its range, and themes his poetry is second to none.

Les Murray is hopeful that the internet and other advanced learning equipment will encourage young people to read more.

Early TV show had clean image

BY FRANK MORRIS

Scores of entertainers on the club circuit owe their start in showbusiness to the low budget weekly television program in the 1960s called Bandstand.

According to radio personality Bob Rogers, Bandstand "became one of the classiest and most stylish to be seen on Australian television."

Bandstand replaced an existing program, Accent on Youth, which was based on a famous American show, of the same name, hosted by Dick Clark.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS!



The early shows operated on a slim weekly budget - sometimes as low as a \$100 - with singers miming to their own records.

Eventually, Bandstand formed its own 20 piece orchestra under the direction of Bob "Beetles" Young.

"Bandstand probably was the first of the civilising influences on rock'n'roll in Australia," writes Bob Rogers in his book, *Rock'n'Roll Australia*.

"Certainly it did a great deal to tidy it up and give it professional discipline.

"It presented a good, clean pasteurised image which became its hallmark."

The show's front-man was New Zealand-born Brian Henderson, who had joined Channel Nine in 1957 as a newsreader and announcer.



Henderson (*pictured*), who couldn't sing, dance or play an instrument, was the ideal youthful public patriarch.

Writes Rogers: "He (Henderson) was a benign, benevolent fellow who would rather say nothing than something nasty."

Rogers claimed that Henderson "contributed a sense of security" to the show.

Over the years Bandstand built a close-knit group of performers, many of whom were destined to carve a niche in Australian entertainment.

A lucky few - the Bee Gees, Helen Reddy, Olivia Newton-John and Peter Allen - went on to reach the heady heights of world fame.

Bandstand's high standard was maintained throughout its 14 years run. The show went to air for the last time in August 1972.

After a four-year hiatus a series of Bandstand Specials were aired by Channel Nine, hosted by Daryl Somers, in 1976.

Letter to the Editor

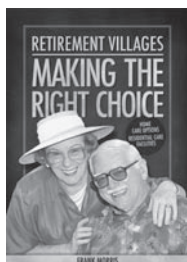
LACK OF FUNDS A MAJOR PROBLEM

Your Eyeview (*Best Years, No 21*) regarding the lack of funds for the support of the elderly is spot on. It is not only difficult to get funds but the right staff is also a problem. After working for 2 years in a retirement/nursing home on the far north coast, I saw first hand the great difficulties and frustration that face these facilities. - Anne Menzies, Roselands

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