



# Welcome...

## to our very own alternative newspaper!

As we move into the year, and begin to become aware of the subtle changes that mark the end of one season and the start of another, I cannot help but reflect that this March/April 2010 issue marks the beginning of my fourth year with the paper. What a journey it has been and how far it has taken both of us!

While we are still based on the Mornington Peninsula, last year's change of name from Peninsula Alternative to An Alternative Voice actually reflected what had become a 'fait accompli'. In response to demand, we had already expanded our distribution and were set to increase it even further.

By the end of 2009 An Alternative Voice was being read and enjoyed by people living in the inner Melbourne, Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges and beyond. Their response to the paper has been absolutely wonderful. The phone calls and letters we have received have really made us feel we have been accepted as part of their communities.

This is of great importance to us as we believe that An Alternative Voice should be a voice for all, with each new community we reach adding their own special message. This means our vision for the paper as a forum for those people working towards creating more balanced and positive lives for themselves and their communities is being achieved.

I took advantage of the January break to travel up to the North-East of Victoria to visit long-time friends living in what can only be described as a glorious part of our state. I took 'time-out' from my journey to visit a number of country towns along the way and met some fantastic people.

As a result of my 'slow trip' up to the border, An Alternative Voice is now being distributed to the far North-East of Victoria. So if you're from up that way – we'd love to hear from you!

On a more reflective note, I could not let this issue pass by without paying tribute to those people whose lives were changed forever on February 7th 2009. While the first anniversary of that terrible day has come and gone, and with it the memorial tributes, the media coverage and the services of remembrance, they are still carrying the burden.

Many are struggling with the emotional aftermath of the tragedy. Those who lost family, friends or neighbours, those still living in temporary (and often unsatisfactory) accommodation, small business owners who have been literally 'wiped out', and those who are battling to re-establish their lives. It is not an easy journey for any of them!

The losses they have experienced have changed their lives forever. Their circle of family and friends, their homes and their communities have all been affected irrevocably. I'm certain all of you will join us here at An Alternative Voice in paying tribute to them, to their courage and their resilience, as they continue to re-build their lives and their communities.

*Robyn.*

### an alternative voice

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