

MANNING CLARK HOUSE

weekend of ideas

A FAIR GO FOR REFUGEES?

dispossession – dislocation – discrimination – resolution

Australia, traditionally “the land of the fair go”, has, in recent years, introduced ever more restrictive legislation and administrative measures targeted against asylum seekers who have independently sought refuge in Australia. This situation has led to the topic for the sixth *Weekend of Ideas*.

The *Weekend* provides an opportunity to explore and debate a topic of concern to Australians — and the world. As the number of refugees grows alarmingly, this problem cries out for urgent attention. *Weekend* organisers and our generous sponsors believe we can contribute to a better understanding of, and deeper compassion for, millions of people who have unwittingly become refugees, particularly those who have sought — and are seeking — refuge in Australia.

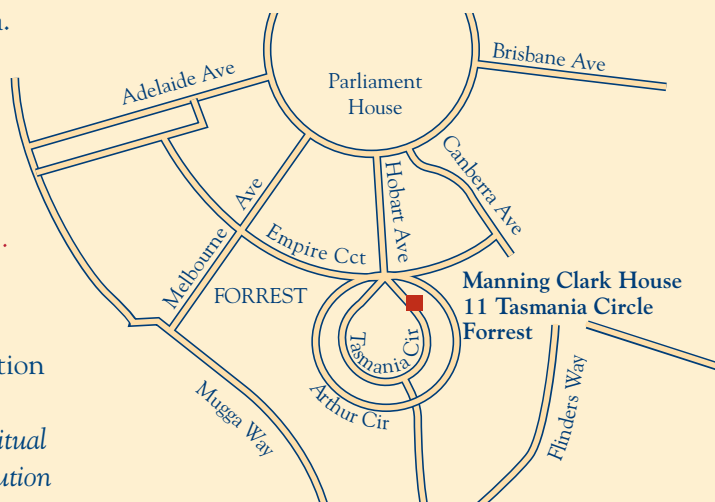
Underpinning our preparation for the event are the following two significant universal statements:

“Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution”. (Article 14 (1) of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

For the purposes of the Refugee Convention a refugee is defined as: “A person who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution

because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution.” (UN High Commissioner on Refugees, Paraphrase of definition provision of Article 1 of the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted in 1951, UNHCR)

The event will be held under a large marquee in the MCH gardens. Food and drink will be available. Stalls selling relevant books and other merchandise will also feature. Free tours of the historic, heritage-listed house will be conducted.



Saturday 31 March – Sunday 1 April 2007

Entry \$20 per day and \$10 MCH members. Payment at gate each day.

11 Tasmania Circle, Forrester ACT 2603. Enquiries 6295 9433

A FAIR GO FOR REFUGEES?

saturday, march 31

- 9.00am** An overview of the refugee story, touching on the international situation and Australia's place, role and responsibilities.
Sebastian Clark, *MCH President*
Julian Burnside QC, *barrister and refugee advocate*
- 9.40am** **Ethics and Morality: what makes a civil society?** Does social justice stop at a country's borders? Responsibilities at government, public institution, academic and individual levels.
Dr Ben Wellings, *National Europe Centre, ANU*
Professor Frank Brennan SJ, *Institute of Legal Studies, Australian Catholic University, and Notre Dame University*
Dr Raimond Gaita, *Foundation Professor of Philosophy, Australian Catholic University*
- 11.30am** **The refugee 'system'**
The causes and world-wide patterns of refugee migration, Australia's role and humanitarian program
Geoff McPherson, *Canberra Refugee Support Inc, Canberra of the Year, 2004; Peter Hughes, Deputy Secretary, DIMA; Prof William Maley, Director, Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy, ANU; Regional Representative of UNHCR*
- 12.30pm** Lunch
- 1.30pm** **The legal dimensions. Laws, courts, tribunals and advocates: rule of law or loaded dice?**
John Highfield, *journalist, broadcaster & media spokesman, Rural Australians for Refugees*
Ronald Merkel QC, *barrister & former judge of Federal Court*
David Manne, *Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre*
Marion Le OAM, *immigration agent and advocate*
- 2.30pm** **The human impact**
Mental and physical health problems among detained adult and child asylum seekers and refugees before, during and after detention.
Senator Andrew Bartlett, *Australian Democrats*
Dr Aamer Sultan, *medical doctor, asylum seeker, former Villawood detainee and author*
Dr Louise Newman, *NSW Institute of Psychiatry*
Dr Mary Crock, *University of Sydney Law School and author*
- 4.00pm** **Moral wellsprings: religion, value systems and social action**
Sr Jane Keogh, *Brigidine Order*
Phil Griffiths, *founder ACT Refugee Action Committee*
Senator Kerry Nettle, *Australian Greens*
Ahmed Youssef, *Canberra Islamic Centre*
- 5.00pm** **DYMPHNA CLARK LECTURE**
Deb Whitmont, *ABC TV; Dr Eva Sallis, writer, Visiting Research Fellow, University of Adelaide, co-founder and President of Australians Against Racism Inc.*

sunday, april 1

- 9.00am** **Media and writing: agenda-setting and searching for the truth.**
The role of the news reporter, the investigative journalist and the freelance writer. Demonising language.
David Marr, *journalist and author*
Tony Kevin, *writer, activist, former diplomat*
Deb Whitmont, *journalist, ABC TV*
- 10.00am** **Stark Realities: my story.**
Refugees talk about their own experiences.
Ngareta Rossell, *refugee advocate*
Riz Wakil, *young Afghan refugee, and refugee rights activist*
Aguil de'Chut Deng, *Sudanese refugee and peace activist*
Mahmoud Baqiri, *young Afghan refugee*
- 11.30am** **Community: what can I do to contribute and make my voice heard?**
Ron Fraser, *refugee activist*
Pamela Curr, *refugee advocate, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Melbourne*
Brett Solomon, *executive director, GetUp!*
Phil Glendenning, *Director, Edmund Rice Centre*
- 12.30pm** Lunch
- 1.30pm** **Telling the truth about the refugee experience**
David Corlett, *author Following Them Home: The Fate of the Returned Asylum Seekers*
Tom Zubrycki, *documentary film maker*
Arnold Zable, *writer; Ann-Mari Jordens, writer and historian*
Jacquie Everitt, *lawyer and refugee advocate, a lawyer for family of Shayan Badraie*
- 2.30pm** **Working towards a better, more humane and caring future. Responsibilities: global, national, local. A call for action.**
Julian Burnside QC
Anne Coombs, *co-founder, Rural Australians for Refugees*
Dr Carmen Lawrence MP, *Australian Labor Party; Mara Moustafine, national director, Amnesty International Australia*
Frederika Steen, *refugee advocate, Romero Centre, Brisbane*

ASSOCIATED ART EXHIBITION: An exhibition of art work by noted Australian artist Kate Durham will be held at the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre in the North Building in Civic Square (above the Canberra Museum and Art Gallery), from 30 March to 15 April. The stunning art work relates to the sinking of the SIEV-X and other refugee experiences. The exhibition is assisted by the ACT Government under the ACT Multicultural Grants Program and by funds raised from community organisations and individuals.

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