

# NEWSLETTER

Winter/ Spring 2013

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## A Productive Year for Laugh WA

*by Janni Goss, President of Laugh WA Inc.*

The past year has had many highlights. As well as delivering three Laughter Yoga Facilitator Trainings, the first West Coast Laughter Yoga Conference was held in August 2012, preceded by a five-day Laughter Yoga Teacher Training with Sebastien Gendry, CEO of Laughter Yoga America. Several new Laughter Clubs have been established and the information about these has been updated by our Secretary, Kath, on the brand new LaughWA website, which we commissioned earlier this year. In collaboration with Tony Robinson, we were able to develop a more user friendly and informative site, which we can update ourselves. This website has a joyful aspect and information about Laughter Yoga, and the many groups who can benefit from it. As well as updates on Laughter Clubs, information is available about trainings and includes profiles of the Laughter Yoga practitioners who are available to provide presentations to groups and organisations. You can access all this information at [www.laughwa.org.au](http://www.laughwa.org.au) LaughWA also celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2012 and Perth Laughter Club is now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year!

In January 2013 we were invited to a Health Expo at Craigie, where we had two opportunities to share Laughter Yoga and promote its benefits. We held a training in February, and also supported Kimmy to hold a garage sale at her home to raise funds for her next trip to Rwanda. Kimmy also held other functions to finance her endeavours and these were also supported by members of LaughWA. Another garage sale was held in April to provide further support for Kimmy, as she trained psychologists at a University in Rwanda in Laughter Yoga and Clay Therapy, during her three month commitment there, from April to June 2013.

A training was held in May and the next one will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August at the Loftus Community Centre. I would like to express my thanks to Tania and the Quintilian School for the use of their excellent facilities for several of our trainings, and for a fundraiser for Kimmy in 2012. These trainings are undertaken by members of LaughWA on a voluntary basis and are noted for the wonderful teamwork involved in promoting, taking registrations, setting up on the day, and participating in the training process. We always welcome previously trained facilitators to attend another training, have a wonderful day and contribute to the process, also keeping in touch with other LaughWA members. I would like to thank all the committee members of LaughWA for their many and varied contributions, not only to the trainings, but also for supporting Kimmy's ground-breaking contributions in Rwanda [www.cvcrwanda.org](http://www.cvcrwanda.org) I would also like to express appreciation for the way in which Laughter Yoga practitioners provide back-up for each other, especially during Kimmy's absence, and Dorothy's, to provide continuity for our Laughter Clubs. I particularly wish to thank Kath, who has been integral to all the business of LaughWA, including the Newsletter, the development and updating of the new website, and the registration and organisation of trainings. Each of our committee members contributes in a unique way to all our ventures. Thank you also to Grant, Deb, Kimmy, Dorothy, Penny, and Tania. We said farewell to Kate and Olimpia, who both left Perth to pursue their dreams – we wish them well!

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**WE WHO LAUGH.....LAST!!**

- continued from page 1 from Janni -

The 8<sup>th</sup> Australasian Laughter Yoga Conference will be held in Sydney at The Vibe Hotel in the central CBD on the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2013. Sebastien Gendry will be presenting and also providing a five-day Teacher Training in the week prior to the conference. This conference will be widely publicised to attract participants from the health and corporate sectors to demonstrate to them the value of utilising Laughter Yoga in the workplace. Research done in 2012 in collaboration with the Department of Psychology at Deakin University demonstrated significant benefits for participants,

such as a feeling of enhanced wellbeing, relaxation and morale. Work stress can be simply and cheaply reduced by introducing Laughter Yoga into the workplace. For conference information go to [www.laughteryoga-australia.org](http://www.laughteryoga-australia.org)

LaughWA (Inc) relies on the time, energy, commitment and talents of a diverse committee. We would be delighted to welcome new members, who can share their enthusiasm for promoting the benefits of Laughter Yoga to the West Australian community.

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***The 11th Annual General Meeting of Laugh WA Inc. is to be held at Loftus Community Centre, after the Perth Laughter Club meeting on Wednesday 21st August, 2013 at 8 p.m. Nominations are requested for all committee positions.***

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**World Laughter Day in Kings Park 2013 was enjoyed by a large group of people, it was a lovely sunny day and we shared laughter with many families and friends. World Laughter Day is held by all Laughter Clubs around the World on the first Sunday in May each year.**



## BENEFITS OF LAUGHTER

- Reduces stress and tension
- Provides aerobic exercise and increases oxygen supply to the brain
- Releases endorphins which help us feel good
- Burns calories and stabilises blood sugar
- Strengthens the immune system
- Lowers blood pressure and produces a feeling of relaxation and wellbeing
- Enhances relationships, wellbeing and productivity in the workplace
- Laughter contributes to our resilience - the ability to bounce back from stress and much more!!

# More news from Janni

## **Weekend Retreat**

On Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2013, I had the pleasure of presenting at a Weekend Retreat for Aboriginal women at the Hyatt Hotel for which the theme was "Live Longer". The day started with a Welcome to Country and then I shared many strategies for investing in your own health in 'Wellbeing 101', culminating in a lively session of Laughter Yoga, which was enthusiastically received. I was touched, when during Appreciation Laughter, when we usually greet each other with a thumbs up sign, the participants greeted each other with spontaneous hugs, which included me. I received very good feedback later and am delighted that one of the participants will be joining us at the next Laughter Yoga Facilitator Training on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August. So then we will have two Aboriginal facilitators to spread the good word about the healing effects of Laughter in their community, which changes the physiology of stress into wellbeing.

## **A Taxing Time at the ATO**

At the very beginning of the financial year on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, it seemed like a good idea to share the benefits of Laughter Yoga with two teams and several directors from the Australian Taxation Office. This is possibly a stressful time of year, so the participants were keen to learn strategies for stress reduction and for taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing in the workplace. To start, smiling lessons started a chuckle effect, and participants were encouraged to share smiles to create a more positive frame of mind. We moved through the Laughter Prescription to learn more ways to increase our Laughter Quotient (LQ) and finally the group was introduced to Laughter Yoga. There was great participation as the fake laughter became genuine and inner playfulness found its expression. Laughter is one of the most accessible, cost-effective strategies for stress reduction, boosting the immune system and contributing to health and wellbeing. Later, positive feedback was received – "Certainly the area had an increased buzz for the rest of the day and rather than requiring energy to smile and laugh, we seemed to harvest greater energy from our combined smiles and laughs." I hope the benefits are ongoing!

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## *news from Kimmy*

A big thank you to Helen and Luke for taking the people with disabilities Laughter Yoga sessions at PCYC Hilton while I was in Rwanda. How wonderful it was to come back and see all the familiar faces laughing, playing around and generally loving life.

Helen and I continue to laugh as a team each Wednesday sharing the lead alternatively which means we are swapping the hands-free microphone in between exercises, which is a giggle in itself! The microphone has become a necessity as we can easily be facilitating 50 to 60 people a session. All of them greatly guffawing.

We are very excited about getting the video of our sessions and interviews, that Olimpia filmed, for some TV programs like 60 minutes, Compass, Sunday and Four Corners. We are currently waiting for the permission of all the stars of the show, so that we can begin to promote laughter yoga for this part of our community

A big surprise comes to our group this week as Olimpia is visiting the West and coming to join us for some fun and frivolity. I know one girl named Deb who shed a tear of happiness as she secretly guessed the surprise last week. She even did a 360 in her wheelchair!

Now that our Dorothy is back she is also going to come on Wednesdays, which is certainly going to put the frills in the frivolity as she does her highland fling. How blessed we are with our laughter family. Life, love and laughter to you all.....Kimmy.

**The Vision of Laugh WA**

**That all West Australians know and experience the benefits of laughter**



## 7 Happiness Exercises *from Deb Forde*

Just as you can't separate the juice from the orange, you can't separate laughter from happiness. The regular practice of any of the following simple exercises will help you create a sense of greater happiness in your life.

1. Write down three positive occurrences that happened during the day, every night for one week. Then for each occurrence write down an answer to the question of why the good thing happened.
2. Relate and share good news with others
3. Express gratitude, appreciation and forgiveness
4. Challenge each negative thought as it arises, then question it to judge if the likelihood or probability of the forecast disaster is actually existent and if so, to what extent. Over 96% of everything that humans worry about never comes to pass.
5. Enhance the positive traits rather than rue and mull on the negative thoughts.
6. Make optimistic attributions to real life situations as a preference to pessimistic conclusions.
7. Smile and laugh every day. Fake it if you have to and if so put some passion into your faking!!

Read more at [www.laughteryogaamerica.com](http://www.laughteryogaamerica.com)



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## News from Deb Forde

Hi everyone,

The Heathridge Laughter Club is up and running again.

Run by Deb and assisted by Kath and we are meeting once a month.

We've had two successful meetings so far this year. Our next meetings are on 19th August and 16th September and then we are hoping to have fortnightly sessions after the winter months.

Keep Smiling.....

## News from Anne Hill

I have just returned from a conference in Hawaii where I did a laughter presentation. All went really well, with great feedback and several opportunities coming from the ladies who attended. Since coming back I have held session at Ronald McDonald House for 14 of the staff and volunteers, it was very well received and we are exploring different avenues to use laughter yoga to benefit the employees, the families staying and patients.

I have also landed two conference gigs in September, both approximately 650 people attending and I am really looking forward to sharing Laughter Yoga with them.

(Anne is the 'Director of Awesomeness' at McDonald's Ellenbrook, Beechboro and Northam Stores)





# News from Dorothy Scott

## Laughter Yoga Experience in Edinburgh, Scotland

Have just returned from a wonderful ten week holiday in the UK (6 weeks in my hometown, Edinburgh, two weeks travelling through the Highlands of Scotland and getting as far John O'Groats which is reputed to be the top of mainland Scotland, and the last ten days were spent travelling through England as far south as Surrey, sightseeing and visiting family and friends.

One of the highlights of my stay in Edinburgh was discovering and attending Laughter Yoga classes run by Laughter Facilitator and Laughter Yoga Leader, Jo Bluett. Classes are on Thursday mornings, in what was previously an old church converted into a Community Centre named after Eric Liddle, Scottish Christian Olympic Runner in the 40's (film Chariots of Fire was based on his story).

I was greeted in the familiar friendly Laughter Yoga style and everyone was interested to know that I now live in Australia and interested to learn about Laughter Yoga in Australia – all amazed that I still had my Scottish accent, which had become more prominent the longer I was in Edinburgh – YEH!!!

Jo Bluett started off the class with a short history of how Madan Kataria, together with his wife, who is a Yoga instructor, had started Laughter Yoga – I just wanted to cry at this point as I suddenly felt homesick for all my Laughter friends in Perth!!! However that soon passed as we got into the HO, HO HA HA, HA clapping mantra followed by Very Good Very Good Yeh and then into familiar Dr Kataria exercises, before finishing off with ten minutes laughter meditation and then Jo talked us through a lovely yoga relaxation meditation.

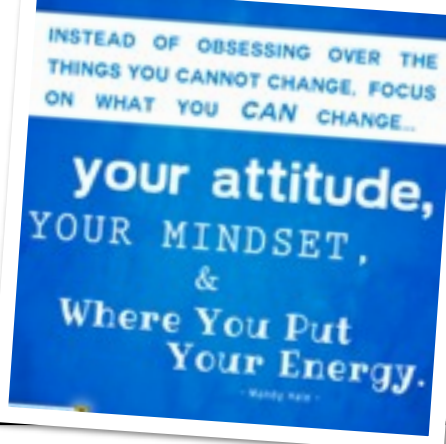
In summary Jo Bluett has been running Laughter Yoga in Edinburgh for the last eighteen months and plans to run Laughter Yoga Facilitator Training courses in the near future. She also runs a monthly two hour Laughter Yoga Workshops in a lovely Fitness Centre in the heart of Edinburgh. I attended the July workshop, along with fourteen others, and had a great time. She is a wonderful presenter and got into laughter yoga during a period in her life when she was suffering from M.E. but on discovering Laughter Yoga her life has turned around and it is so obvious from her teaching skills that she is passionate about sharing Laughter Yoga with others.

There are four kinds of bone in any group.....

- Wishbone - likes the idea but wants someone else to do the work
- Jaw Bone - talks a lot but does little else
- Knuckle Bone - knocks everything anyone else does
- Back Bone - Gets behind the wheel

Don't carry your wishbone where your Backbone ought to be!)

A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks



If you see someone without a smile - give them one of yours





# News from Peter Schupp

Hello Laughter Clubbers ☺

The Indian Ocean Laughter Club run by me, Peter Schupp, has had a great response to the evolution of the new venue at the Meeting Room of the Karrinyup Community Hall, Davenport St, Karrinyup every Tuesday night at 7pm. Coming in from the cold we have holed up in a cute room with some AC! The laughter reverberates and we all feel great by the end of a session. We have had people from as far as Roleystone and Forrestfield come along which makes us feel important! They come back so they are obviously very happy with the results.

The biggest news to come from me was to give the Cirque Du Soliel cast and crew a Laughter Yoga session to break up their tough schedule. It was great and I hope my Laughter Peeps in all other cities are sounded out to give and receive such a special experience. We saw the show on the night after and I saw a clown doing a zipper laugh to another clown as they were all clowning around on stage! A real highlight for me ☺

I had the great honour of having 'WA Today' write up an article on what I am doing with Laughter Yoga. It is a great thrill to have media interest in what we are doing. The opportunity to give out information on the depth of benefit is the big bonus. That only comes with them digging around the surface of the amazing Laughter Yoga system that we all have such great pleasure in facilitating. Dr Madan Kataria himself sent me a letter thanking me for my work with Laughter Yoga after he was made aware of the article.

If things get any better I might explode with laughter ☺

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## Facilitator Training

**We look forward to welcoming our next group of Laughter Yoga facilitators to Laugh WA. Our next workshop is on 3rd August, 2013 at Loftus Community Centre, Leederville.**

**Regular training workshops are held to promote more Laughter leaders to provide presentations for clubs and schools, as well as corporate and**

**private events. Through Laughter Yoga we build healthier minds, bodies and communities.**

**Contact Kath for enquiries 9341 5153 or email [kathmckeown@bigpond.com](mailto:kathmckeown@bigpond.com)**



## *More news from Kimmy..... my latest trip to Rwanda*

.....Hooley Dooley! I'm home again after 3 months in Rwanda and just getting used to the cold Winter months Brrrr....

There is now the first Laughter Yoga Club in Rwanda, in fact there are two -one in the capital city of Kigali and the other at The National University of Butare, which is kinda like Bunbury is to Perth. In Kigali the "Laughers" gather on a Friday afternoon at Intwara Primary School in the ghetto with Banamungu Idi, founder of CVC, and in Butare the Psychology students I taught run it at the Uni and surrounding schools. The Tootsie Ta Ta, Laughter Shake and The Kookaburra are the absolute favourites!

One of the most touching moments for me during a LY session with the children was when a little 5 yr old girl asked me "My Mummy cries almost every morning, do you think Laughter Yoga would help her smile and laugh again?" - I could hardly answer I was so choked up and I said "Of course, with a beautiful daughter like you laughing beside her she can begin to find her happiness again". She reached up with a hug for me. Many of the other children began to ask me similar questions - "Will it help my Dad stop feeling sick?", "Will it help my grandma feel happy again?" I thought with all these questions about health and happiness the best thing to do would be to share my story of healing with Laughter Yoga and to let them know that with a positive outlook ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!!!! The other incredibly touching moment was to see Antoine, featured in my book "Clay Therapy Healing Rwanda", laughing AND leading the children through the Ants in Your Pants exercise. When I first met Antoine in 2011 he was so heavy with grief from witnessing the machete killings of his wife and unborn child he could hardly lift his head to gain eye contact and talk to me. Here he was throwing his head back and jumping around and laughing so much I hardly recognised him as the same person. Being an LY facilitator has gifted me so many blessed and gracious moments where my heart has been opened and overflowing with love, miracles and the greatest respect for the magic of laughter.

The 16th June was Africa Childrens Day which is in commemoration of the massacre at Soweto University in 1976 and on this day Banamungu Idi and LY facilitators from

Butare University got together and held a LY day with sessions and talks about life and laughter with around 1000 people attending!! Laughter Yoga is infiltrating the country at a great rate!!!

Accompanying me to Rwanda were 3 other counsellors and a massage therapist and between us we taught 356 Psychology students Clay Therapy, Laughter Yoga and head and shoulder massage!! I had 75 students attend the Laughter Facilitators Certified workshop WOOHOO!!! They were amazing, creating their own exercises straight out of their traditional dancing and childrens games, they embraced it with a passion and of course I'm crying tears of joy AGAIN ha ha!! Steve Dean, Sophia College counselor, filmed it all so I'm endeavouring to find someone to edit it for us all to watch and enjoy. VERY GOOD YAY!

Penny's church group knitted some gorgeous Father Xmas's which I gave to 4 beautiful babies whose mother's were overwhelmed with gratitude and I'm very sorry Penny but no photos as silly me forgot to charge the camera on the day. The 2 older babies eyes lit up and out went their little hands for their new treasure :) - I'm not quite sure who gave me the beautiful patchwork quilt with all the colourful animals on it, does anyone know? I presented it to Intwara Primary on our LY day and the children were incredulous as they gazed upon all the bright colours and the many animals from different countries, it is hanging in the principal's office for everyone to share. Janni Goss gave me copies of her wonderful book "Lionel Lion Laughs At Last" and I gave the school 6 books at the LY day which excited the children so much that one of the teachers, Chantelle, had to read it right there and then!!! The rest of the books I gave to individual children in villages I visited and families CVC have helped in the last couple of years. There's no doubt that Laugh W.A members have spread laughter, wellbeing and rainbows all over the "Land of a Thousand Hills" thank you so much for being in mine and the Rwandese peoples lives, we are very fortunate to be a part of the Laughter Yoga community.

Love to you all.....Kimmy

**WE WHO LAUGH.....LAST!!**



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# LAUGHTER CLUB LOCATIONS

AUGUST 2013

**PERTH LAUGHTER CLUB:** Loftus Community Centre (Cnr. Loftus and Vincent Streets, Leederville)  
Meets every second Wednesday 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. - Enquiries: Grant 0412 170 665 or email -  
[grant@laughwa.org.au](mailto:grant@laughwa.org.au) (next meeting 7th August)

**COTTESLOE LAUGHTER CLUB:** Cancer Wellness Centre, Railway St. Cottesloe - Enquiries: Cancer  
Wellness 9384 3544, will be recommencing later in 2013

**INDIAN OCEAN LAUGHTER CLUB:** Karrinyup Community Hall, Davenport Street,  
Karrinyup (Summer months at Jim Clarko Reserve, Trigg. At the end of Karrinyup Road) at 7 p.m  
every Tuesday. All ages welcome. Enquiries ring Peter on 0408 944 815

**HEATHRIDGE LAUGHTER CLUB:** Heathridge Leisure Centre, Sale Terrace, Heathridge  
Meets monthly in the winter months and fortnightly from October. Monday 10.30 to 11.30 a.m.  
Enquiries to Deb email: [debffordejoy@yahoo.com](mailto:debffordejoy@yahoo.com) (next meeting 19<sup>th</sup> August)

**YOKINE LAUGHTER CLUB:** Jewish Care, 61 Woodrow Ave, Yokine – Meets fortnightly for seniors.  
Limited numbers . Call Sarah on 9275 6743

**HILTON LAUGHTER CLUB:** PCYC, 32a Paget Street, Hilton. This is a class for a mix of people with  
disabilities but everyone welcome. Wednesdays from 10 – 11 a.m. Enquiries to Kimmy on 0428 831 722

**FREMANTLE LAUGHTER CLUB** free community event meets at South Beach near the kiosk at 6.30  
p.m. during the summer months. Enquiries to Kimmy on 0428 831 722

**NEDLANDS LAUGHTER CLUB** Seniors Affinity Club meets second Wednesday each month at 97  
Waratah Avenue, Dalkeith from 10.30 to 11.30 a.m. Enquiries to Patricia on 9386 6170

**BUSSELTON LAUGHTER CLUB:** Salvation Army Hall, 94 Kent Street, Busselton. Enquiries: Helen  
on 0437 286 618

**BUNBURY LAUGHTER CLUB:** Bunbury Library Activity Room, Parkfield Street, Bunbury. All  
welcome. Meets Saturday mornings 10 – 11 a.m. Enquiries: Lindi Judge on 9797 2374  
isit our web site [www.laughwa.org.au](http://www.laughwa.org.au)

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