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#106 winter 2010  
\$7.00

# birthings



## 'HomeBirth AS HEALER'

+ all our regular features  
birth notices, letters, your stories and pictures  
& updates on our community activities

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the named contributors only and are not necessarily shared by Homebirth Access Sydney, its Committee or the Editors or Editorial Board of *birthings*.

## CONTRIBUTIONS, PHOTOS, CORRESPONDENCE

Please send to Virginia Maddock at [editor@homebirthsydney.org.au](mailto:editor@homebirthsydney.org.au)

Photos and written submissions must be emailed. Prior notice to the Editors of your intention to submit work is not necessary, but can be helpful in planning content.

## DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

Spring 2010 Issue #107 - 1 August 2010  
Summer 2011 Issue #108 - 1 November 2010  
Autumn 2011 Issue #109 - 1 February 2011  
Winter 2011 Issue #110 - 1 May 2011

## BACK ISSUES

Back issues of *birthings* are like hen's teeth! But we will try to accommodate requests. Back issues cost \$4 per issue. Postage is \$3 per single copy. A price for multiple copies can be arranged. The newsletter is very valuable in that they contain many birth stories and information, plus gives an insight into the homebirth movement and HAS activities.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify any change of address to HAS, PO Box 66, Broadway, NSW 2007 or by email to the Memberships Co-ordinator at [member@homebirthsydney.org.au](mailto:member@homebirthsydney.org.au)

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\* Offices marked with an asterisk are listed as official committee members in compliance with the responsibilities of running an incorporated association under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984

## CONTRIBUTING TO *birthings*

The strength of *birthings* is all the thought-provoking, inspiring and challenging writing from members of our community. To ensure that the magazine is balanced, responsive to our audience's interests and needs, and reflects the priorities of HAS, we have developed a set of contribution guidelines.

We also work with an editorial board, selected by the HAS executive, to reflect the range of people in our community. The founding board of members are Maggie Lecky-Thompson, Adrienne Abulhawa, Jo Hunter, Sarah McLean and the current editor, Virginia Maddock. The role of the editorial board is outlined in the guidelines below.

## CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINES

Here are some guidelines for how to write your story, and what happens once you have submitted it for our consideration.

**WHAT TO SUBMIT** Submissions are sought on the theme of the issue as stated on the back cover of the previous issue. Your response to the theme may be in a range of formats: poetry, opinion, artistic, personal or factual.

We also welcome birth stories from members. Your birth story is a special part of your family's journey and the story of homebirth in Sydney. It is also a great gift to share with other parents, especially those preparing for the birth of their own babies.

Other submissions apart from those outlined above are also very welcome, though we may not always be able to publish them, as we often receive more submissions than we have space to print. We will get back to you as soon as possible with a response and discuss the possibilities. If you have an idea for a submission that you would like to discuss before writing fully, please feel free to send us an email with an outline. We love a good idea!

**STYLE** Your submission should be written in your own style. You do not need to be a professional writer or have a poetic style to give a moving and interesting account of your own experience.

Your submitted writing should be all your own work. You must not borrow or copy words written by someone else, unless they are attributed quotes of a reasonable length.

**LENGTH** Please write your story in the amount of words you think you need. As a guideline, most birth stories work best when they are under 1200 words. Submissions on the theme should be under 1700 words.

We may edit for length and style and so may cut your story to ensure it is appropriate for use in *birthings*.



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nature's  
child

## HONOURARY LIFE & FOUNDING MEMBERS

Maggie Lecky-Thompson  
Elaine Odgers Norling

## HONOURARY LIFE MEMBERS

Robyn Dempsey  
Jo Hunter

# birthings

## 'HOMEBIRTH AS HEALER'

#106 winter 2010

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IMAGE:

Monica & Pascal  
Born at home 2010  
Image courtesy of  
studio FIFTY seven  
[www.studioFIFTYseven.net](http://www.studioFIFTYseven.net)



IMAGES:

Images courtesy of  
Virginia Maddock

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## MEMBERSHIP

Homebirth Access Sydney is the only group of its kind in Sydney. It fills an extremely important function in providing a centrally organised group of caring people, gathering information and making it available to everyone who is interested in childbirth alternatives and the myriad related issues.

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS VITAL WORK BY SUBSCRIBING to *birthings*

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Or please send your completed form to:

HAS PO Box 66 BROADWAY NSW 2007

|  |  |
|--|--|
| * NAME   |  |
| * ADDRESS  |  |
|  |  |
| PHONE  |  |
| * EMAIL  |  |
| OCCUPATION   |  |
| VOLUNTEER TO HELP? (e.g. typing, fund-raising, events, emailing, organising) |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| * Please tick ✓  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> new member  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> renewal   |  |
| * Please enclose ✓   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$90 for 3 year membership                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 for 1 year membership (new)                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 for 1 year membership (renew)                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 for 1 year (midwife client membership only)    |  |
| midwife's name: _____  |  |
| * Note: Required entry for our database                                      |  |

For receipt request and enquiries: [member@homebirthsydney.org.au](mailto:member@homebirthsydney.org.au)

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[designerbirthingsmag@gmail.com](mailto:designerbirthingsmag@gmail.com)



[moonunit@people.net.au](mailto:moonunit@people.net.au)

## CONTRIBUTORS

**MONICA RENAUD** is a mother to Louis (6) and Pascal (12 weeks) and married to Grant. She is a breastfeeding activist, artist and photographer, that has been shooting family life, and all the beauty that surrounds her for over 20 years. She and Grant love their lazy weekends with their boys by the sea as much as their adventures into town to the museums or cozy city eateries. You can see and read more at her BLOG via the website: [www.studiofiftyseven.net](http://www.studiofiftyseven.net)

**SANDY BUCKNELL** is a part of the team at [www.peachesandcreamphotography.com.au](http://www.peachesandcreamphotography.com.au) and is a passionate homebirthing, breastfeeding mum of three children Jayson (12), Sian (8), and Ruby (17 months), and is also a sub-editor for *birthings* magazine.

**CATHERINE GREGORY** is mum to Anwen (4), Gwenllian (5 months, born into water at home) and her rescue dog, Pippa. She has a PhD in Neuroscience and is currently taking a year out of her Master of Speech Pathology studies to care for her family.

**ANNA RUMMEY** is a new mama to 12 week old Rosemary, and new(ish) wife to 30 year old Chris. Together they live a simple happy life on the northern beaches with lots of swimming, walks and yummy healthy meals. She has left her job as a graphic designer to raise her bubba, but occasionally still works from home and keeps her fingers busy with other creative pursuits. Having a beautiful empowering birth was the best experience she's ever had, and she hopes that one day this will become the norm in childbirth.

**MELINDA MCNAMARA** is a Melbourne based graphic designer, currently occupied with the enjoyable task of getting to know her new daughter Maggie.

**NINA SMITH** Growing up in Germany, I followed my passion for fashion and did a masters in dressmaking. I met my Australian husband there and in 2001 we moved to Sydney where I started dressmaking from home until 2004 when we had our first child. I now have a successful personal shopping and make-over business [www.ninasmith.com.au](http://www.ninasmith.com.au) and teach fashion design at UTS as a casual teacher. In 2009 we had our second child. My children and husband are very important to me and I always try to give them my best.

**EMMA ISAACS** is CEO of Business Chicks, a national community enriching the lives of women in business - [www.businesschicks.com.au](http://www.businesschicks.com.au)



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new & renewed members  
and thanks you for your support!

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GATWENG KEABILWE  
ELENA DREYLING-DROZDOVA  
NATHALIE POWER  
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my baby growing  
within me."*



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# editorial

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It is such an honour to take over the reigns of Birthings Magazine, after being such an avid reader for 2 years (Gosh, has it been that long already since I was pregnant?), and I hope I can live up to as high a standard as the long line of editors before me. Special thanks to the previous team of Sarah McLean [editor] and Petra Timmerman [designer] who have done such a great job up till now, and a warm welcome to our new designer, Lou MacDonald. I'm sure you will agree that this edition's design looks fantastic!

This issue "Homebirth as healer" demonstrates beautifully how having a baby at home can really help to heal past traumas, whether they be birth related or from other issues. Sandy Bucknell writes about her experiences of finding healing from sexual abuse as a child, with the realisation in birth that a vagina is not a man's plaything but the passage to new life, in "Sexual abuse and birth". Monica Renaud's article "Its only pain.. It wont kill me" shows how the recent homebirth of her son has helped her heal from her first child's birth via caesarean and the subsequent loss of her next baby in utero.

We also have 6 wonderful birth stories, each as awe inspiring as the next, including Regina Power's birth story of Kiran (following on from her article "Waiting for Kiran" in the last issue), which also incorporates a powerful healing message. Each and every story makes me feel so privileged to be allowed a glimpse of such private and raw moments in women's lives, and I honour them all for allowing us to share them with you, hoping it will benefit others who may find themselves in need of some of that healing energy.

Our next issue for Spring will be "Ceremonies & Rituals" so I hope you can contribute your stories on what special things you have done during labour or to welcome your pregnancy or new baby, or honouring your baby's placenta. Feel free also to send us your letters, letting us know what you like and what we can do better, so that we can continue to improve your Birthings Magazine.

## committee member profile

(Birthings editor, Website & E-Newsletter editor, Membership Coordinator, Information Officer)

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**JOINED:** I joined HAS in 2008, signed up by my wife Jacqui Wood, when my son Jetsun was still inside. I decided to get on the committee by taking on the role of Memberships Coordinator soon after his birth. Then as positions came up, I found it increasingly hard to sit on my hands when volunteers were needed. But I love it all and I get more satisfaction from this job than many of my paid jobs in my former life!

**FAMILY:** My partner 'Dan', (who on our 7 year anniversary last month, finally asked me to marry him!), My 16 month old son 'Jetsun' (my smiling assassin), and my beautiful 12 year old Lilac Burmese cat 'Yin Yin'.

**LIFE PRIOR TO BIRTHING:** Between dropping out of school in year 11 and the present, I have studied horticulture, herbal medicine, iridology, nutrition, doula(ism) and reiki. I have been a sponsored skateboarder and gone on tour around Australia (incl. w the Big Day Out) - those days are way behind me now! I have worked as a gardener, bar attendant, nanny, skateboard coach (in Syd and at summercamp in NC, USA), natural therapist, and doula. I have travelled to the US (x3), London, Paris, India (x3), Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and numerous times to Dan's hometown of Wanaka, New Zealand. My business "Natural Beginnings" [www.naturalbeginnings.com.au](http://www.naturalbeginnings.com.au) encompasses my natural therapies and doula work, and keeps me wholesomely satisfied and firmly planted in Sydney.

**LIFE WITH A FAMILY:** Even as a child, I dreamt of what it would be like to have my own and I used to think a lot about how I would bring up my child (ie. differently to how I was raised!) Now that I am a Mum, I feel like my life work is in progress and it is the most important job in the world - gently guiding and contributing to my child's life, and I can never get enough information on attachment and gentle parenting methods. In a few months, Dan and I will be starting our parenthood journey all over again when we start our preconception detox in preparation for #2, who will hopefully be another homebirth in Spring 2011! Maybe then I will feel even more complete....

**WHY HOMEBIRTH?:** I first came to consider homebirth long before I was pregnant, from studying to be a doula in 2006 and attending the HAS information evenings in Bondi Junction, to learn more about natural birth - this is where I met Jacqui and knew she would one day be my homebirth midwife.

People so commonly remark "You're brave" when you say you are having, or have had a homebirth. But having seen the way the hospital system operates (thankfully from the outside as a doula, rather than as a willing participant!), I think there is nothing braver than handing over your power to the medical model of birthing with its time constraints, lack of trust in women's bodies, impersonal policies and unhomey environment - I just couldn't be THAT brave!

Birthing at home is the way nature intended and it gives you the freedom to do it your own way, as well as the opportunity to bond with a lovely midwife to gently help guide your baby earthside. I couldn't imagine having to get into a car during labour then have to face the bright lights and busy atmosphere of checking into hospital, and risk all of their cascade of usually unnecessary interventions!





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Experienced homebirth mum.  
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# secretary's report



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The committee has shrunk a great deal, with most committee members doing several jobs. Nevertheless, normal activities are continuing, such as:

- © selling and sending out merchandise
- © production of Birthings magazine
- © homebirth advocacy
- © admin and compliance with Fair Trading etc
- © providing information to the homebirth public

We still have the following positions to fill: Assistant Coordinator (contact [jolily2009@gmail.com](mailto:jolily2009@gmail.com)), Events Coordinator, and Sponsorship & Fundraising Coordinator (contact [events@homebirthsydney.org.au](mailto:events@homebirthsydney.org.au) for either position).

HAS meetings are now at the Australian Doula College at 422 Marrickville Rd, Marrickville. They are usually held from 10am to 12 noon on the last Tuesday of the month. Please call Greta Werner on 0402 035 069 to check meeting dates if you would like to come along. All welcome!

The Birth Choices Expo was extremely successful. The website got 1000 visits, with 650 unique visitors. It raised \$2000 for HAS through sponsorships and stall fees etc. HAS wishes to thank the Birth Choices Committee which included our outgoing Events Coordinator Helena Mooney, as well as Tara Darlington, Kylie Hennessey and Sacha Walters.

There has been mention of some consumers who weren't happy with their midwife. So we have compiled a list of questions to ask midwives when interviewing them to hopefully enable consumers to find one that suits them better from the start, and cut down on dissatisfaction. We have also made a list of organisations to go to, to lodge a complaint in the event of a breakdown in relationship. These will be in **birthings** magazine and on our website.

Alison Leemen has compiled a huge archive of **birthings** magazines. It was decided that they would go to the Jessie St National Women's Library, so they can be a public resource. You can find the library at: Ultimo Community Centre, 523-525 Harris Street, Ultimo.





# birth announcements

## GWENLIAN "GWEN" MAE GREGORY



born 19.01.10



Gwenllian "Gwen" Mae Gregory arrived at 4.51pm on her due date of 19th January 2010, in water at home, weighing 4.2kg. Although her birth was just missed by her doting Welsh grandparents, she was welcomed by her mum, dad and big sister Anwen who dressed up especially for the occasion. Gwen's Nanna got to hold her just four days later. Our love and gratitude go to our wonderful midwife Jacqui Wood who made the birth such a relaxed and enjoyable experience. May many more women benefit from your immense knowledge and encouragement.



## MAGGIE GLEN MCNAMARA



born 27.02.10



Chris and Melinda welcome **Maggie Glen McNamara**. Born 27th February 2010. Maggie was born calmly at home into water, swimming into her dad's arms on the eve of the full moon at 6.02pm after six hours of established labour. She weighed 4.02kg and measured 53cm, healthy and hearty. Thank you to our birth team, we just feel so lucky to have had you with us. I know how lucky I am to have had such a beautiful and, yes, enjoyable, pregnancy and birth and I know this is largely due to the trust we shared.

Chris and Anna Rummey welcome **Rosemary Sassy Rummey**. Born 5th March 2010. Rosie Rummey has arrived 12 days early to a very happy and loving mama and papa. After spending the whole summer swimming at the beach enclosed in a pregnant belly, it seems fitting that she was born into water in a calm and intimate homebirth. A huge thanks to our friends and families for all their support, and our midwife Robyn Dempsey for her wisdom, calmness and being an all-round cool lady. Welcome to the world little one, we're so excited to have you on our team.



born 05.03.10



ROSEMARY SASSY RUMMEY

## PASCAL SOLAAR RENAUD

born 29.03.10



Grant, Monica and Louis Renaud welcome **Pascal Solaar Renaud**. Born 29th March 2010 at 11.01am. Our little man was born into water at home with the amazing Betty Vella by our side. I have to thank my beautiful husband Grant, and little angel man Louis aged 6, for their support, trust and confidence in me as a VBAC mumma! Both announced they were happy to have penises after witnessing our magnificent Autumn morning birth. And thank you to Betty, who calmly kept my spirits high as we all together laboured over night and into the morning. An awesome experience for us all. We have grown together as a family by birthing safely and securely at home. Thank you to *birthings* and Sally Dillon, for introducing me to this fascinating world of homebirth.



# may 2010

## cOOrdinator's report

o jo tilly

A good experience of birth is about as good as life gets. Holding my babies for the first time is, I think, an experience that words can never properly express. But being able to think... 'I did that myself!' made me feel that I could conquer Kilimanjaro before lunch - dirty nappies and sleepless nights would be a piece of cake.

However a woman's birth plays out, she will always remember it with an astounding clarity. What people said, what the weather was like, the colour of the walls... Talk to any older woman and she will still be able to tell you all kinds of details about her births. The birth of our children is just the beginning of our journey as a parent, and as with any significant journey, the way it starts will have a big impact on how it continues. Having our babies at home, with our loved ones supporting us and a midwife who we have come to know and trust, is the best start of all. For women who have had bad birth experiences in the past, homebirth can be particularly fulfilling and satisfying.

Why should women not have that great start and have to settle for second best? (And sadly too often for third and fourth best?) Sure the birth of a child is almost always a joyful event, but too often that joy is marred by care that is insensitive at best, and negligent or dangerous at worst. By international standards Australia does have an excellent record of safety in maternity care, but women in our hospitals still have some pretty dreadful experiences. Sometimes women and babies die or suffer ongoing disability, even with the best of maternity care. But at other times it's clearly not the best of care, which makes the outcomes even more tragic.

There is much government policy making still going on about ensuring that midwife led care is safe. And fair enough - it is crucial that care during pregnancy and birth is high quality and does everything possible to ensure the safety of women and their babies. But it's hard to see that the same scrutiny is being applied to the births that happen every day under the management of doctors and obstetricians across the country.

From 1st November this year, Australian women will be able to choose to see a midwife in the community for antenatal and postnatal care. Medicare rebates will also be available for visits to a midwife for antenatal and postnatal care, but not for birth at home. The new arrangements are still a bit unclear, but it is possible that this means that women planning a homebirth may be able to claim Medicare rebates for their antenatal and postnatal care at home.

This could potentially mean we see a substantial reduction in the out-of-pocket cost of care from a private midwife and as a result, homebirth overall. But it does of course require that private homebirth midwives take up Medicare eligibility.

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia has now released a draft proposal on the registration standard for endorsement of eligible midwives under the new national laws. Generally most of the proposal looks good - eligible midwives will be required to have recent experience across the continuum of midwifery care, and continue to participate in Continuing Professional Development. This can only be good for women, especially with some midwives moving into a position of lead carer for the first time.

Medicare eligibility also requires midwives to demonstrate "collaborative arrangements" with doctors. HAS has recently made a submission to the National Health and Medical Research Council about their newly drafted National Guidance for Collaborative Maternity Care.

HAS members continue to report experiences which give us concern about the willingness of some medical practitioners to collaborate with midwives. Many of our members have experienced hostility from doctors and hospital based clinicians about their choice to birth at home, and homebirth midwives are often on the receiving end of similar lack of professional cooperation.

On International Midwives Day, Nicola Roxon announced that the Government had signed the contract to provide the first ever Commonwealth-supported professional indemnity insurance for midwives. Privately practising midwives will be able to purchase their own insurance and be covered from 1 July 2010, and this is the first time since 2002 that midwives have been able to purchase professional indemnity insurance.

There is no doubt that this is an important step forward for Australia's midwives, but the Minister felt the need to make clear in her media release that the scheme will not cover services provided during homebirths. These changes certainly feel like they are moving in the right direction, but at the moment it's really a matter of waiting to see what they mean for homebirth families.

One day all Australian women should be able to choose a safe, affordable birth in their own home. Let's use the memories of our own extraordinary, wonderful births to help keep us inspired to work towards that day.



Carol Flanagan

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# 2010 Guide to choosing a

# Midwife



## Homebirth Access Sydney

provides a list of midwives currently offering homebirth services in the Sydney Area. Midwives are listed when they agree to sign up their clients for a year's membership of HAS.

### *Listing does not imply endorsement by HAS.*

Different midwives have different personalities and practices, and different midwives are right for different women.

Finding the right midwife for you is your responsibility.

When selecting your midwife, we recommend you:

- **INTERVIEW AS MANY MIDWIVES AS YOU CAN**
- **TALK TO AS MANY OF THEIR CLIENTS AS YOU CAN**

**HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT CONSIDER ASKING MIDWIVES YOU ARE CONSIDERING FOR YOUR CARE:**

## QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Are you registered?
- How long have you been practising?
  - Where did you train and where? Do you do continuing education?
  - What about refresher courses and extra skills courses?
- Have you had any long periods away from practice? If so, what did you do to update your skills and knowledge?
- Do you have regular peer review of your midwifery practice?
- Did you work in a hospital setting and then become a homebirth midwife? When?
- Do you combine hospital shift work and a homebirth practice?
- How many births have you attended as primary caregiver?
  - How many of these were at hospital? In a birth centre? At home?
  - How many births per year and per month do you attend?
  - Do you have a specialty area of practice?
  - What is your rate of transfer to hospital? Rate of caesarean section? Rate of assisted delivery?
- Have you ever had to resuscitate a baby?
- Has a baby ever died in your care? What were the circumstances?
  - Are you certified in neonatal resuscitation?
- Do you carry oxygen to the birth?

## PHILOSOPHY & ATTITUDE

- Why did you become a midwife?
- What do you perceive your role to be during my pregnancy, during my labour, and after the baby is born?
  - How does your practice vary for different women?
- What do you expect regarding self-care during pregnancy?
- What is your view on nutrition and weight gain during pregnancy?

## COLLABORATION / TEAM

- Will you provide all my midwifery care or will others be involved?
- What are your back-up arrangements if you are not available to provide my care? Is there a second midwife?
  - If you work alone, what happens if two women go into labour at the same time? What is your back-up system? If you work with other midwives, when can I meet them?
  - Are there any collaboration requirements with doctors, obstetricians or others? Do you have any collaboration agreements? If so, with whom?
- Please explain how these will work, how the team collaborates and how much each element will cost?
  - How does collaboration affect my care and specifically continuity of care? When will I meet these people?
- Who will you bring with you to the birth?

- What is your experience working with doulas? Do you prefer a woman to have a doula at birth? Do you have any doulas with whom you regularly work?
- What will happen if I need to see a specialist during my pregnancy and labour?
- What will happen if my baby needs to see a specialist?
- In what circumstances would you recommend my baby see a pediatrician or doctor?

## PRACTICAL MATTERS

### Legal, contractual, financial

- What do you charge for your services and what does that cover? Is it a lump sum or segmented for different phases of care? Will there be a written contract?
- When do you expect payment? Is there flexibility?
- What rebates are available?
- What happens if we discontinue our relationship during my pregnancy? For example, if I don't want you to be my midwife anymore, if there is a medical situation that recommends against my having a homebirth, or if you are unwilling or unable to continue my care? Will you refer me? How will finances work?



# 2010 Guide to choosing a Midwife continued...

## PRACTICAL MATTERS continued...

- Please explain the current situation regarding professional indemnity insurance and how it affects my care or our relationship?

### Timing

- What happens if two clients are in labour at the same time? How many clients do you have due around the same time as me? Will you take on more?
- Do you combine hospital shift work and a homebirth practice? What if you're working when I am in labour?
- Are you likely to be away when my baby is due?

### SPECIFIC ISSUES ...during pregnancy

- Where will the prenatal appointments be? What do they include? How long will they take? How many antenatal visits do you recommend, and why?
- How and when can I contact you if I need help or advice during the prenatal and postpartum periods? How available are you for issues that may come up between visits?
- In what circumstances would you transfer me to obstetrical care during pregnancy? What is your rate of prenatal transfer?

- What is your attitude to due dates and how would you feel about me going over 40 weeks? 42 weeks? What would your advice be?
- How do you feel about natural induction methods? Can you offer any of these services?
- What would you do in the case that I was having twins? Had a breech baby?
- What prenatal tests do you require? What do you recommend? Do you have an obstetrician to whom you refer?
- Do you provide education as I prepare for the birth? Do you have a lending library of books/DVDs?

### ... during labour and birth

- In what circumstances do you recommend transfer to hospital? How often do your clients transfer and for what reasons? Do you stay with your clients who transfer? In what capacity?
- Do I need a backup booking with the hospital? Which one? What is involved in this? If it's a private hospital, do I need private health insurance?

- What equipment do you provide (eg birth pool)? What must I provide? How and how regularly will you monitor the baby during labour? Do you support me labouring in water? Birthing in water?
- What do you do in the event of a long labour? A "stalled" labour? Do you stay? Go away and come back? In what circumstances?
- When will you come to me after I begin labour? Have you ever missed a birth?
- How often do you perform an episiotomy?
- What is your attitude towards premature rupture of membranes (PROM)?
- How long do you wait to cut the cord after the baby is born?
- Do you support lotus birth?
- What do you do if there is a post partum hemorrhage?

### ... during the postnatal period

- What is the schedule of post-natal visits? Where will they be? What do they include? How long will they take?
- Will you help me with breastfeeding? If so, for how many weeks?
- How do I get my baby's birth certificate?

Guide To Choosing A Midwife can be downloaded from our website on our Find A Midwife page! [www.homebirthsydney.org.au](http://www.homebirthsydney.org.au)

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## WHERE TO GO IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN ABOUT YOUR MIDWIFE

For money matters:  
Dept of Fair Trading  
13 32 20

For matters of conduct:  
Health Care Complaints Commission  
1800 043 159

[www.hccc.nsw.gov.au/Complaints/How-To-Make-a-Complaint/Default/default.aspx](http://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au/Complaints/How-To-Make-a-Complaint/Default/default.aspx)

Nurses & Midwives Board NSW  
(02) 9219 0222 [mail@nmb.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@nmb.nsw.gov.au)

Whichever association they are a member of,  
eg: Australian College of Midwives (NSW Branch)  
02 9281 9522 [admin@nswmidwives.com.au](mailto:admin@nswmidwives.com.au)

Australian Private Midwives Association  
[info@privatemidwives.net.au](mailto:info@privatemidwives.net.au)

Australian Society of Independent Midwives  
(02) 9888 7829 [midwife@ozemail.com.au](mailto:midwife@ozemail.com.au)

This information is also available on our website on the Find A Midwife page!  
[www.homebirthsydney.org.au](http://www.homebirthsydney.org.au)

# sexual abuse & birth

© sandy bucknell

As a young girl I was regularly interfered with by a trusted family friend. I thought it was normal and what happened to all little girls, right up until I was 18. I also thought my parents knew it was happening and that it was OK. This led me to have a very negative view of men and myself, and also to a lot of years of self-abuse in the form of unwanted sex, even though my mind was screaming "No!" I could not find my voice. I did face my abuser in court alongside five other girls he had interfered with including two of my sisters, and I had some counselling. I guess on reflection of my self-abuse, I saw my vagina as a place for men to take pleasure, for me to be loved meant you had to have sex, and I just accepted that. It wasn't until at twenty-two years old, when I had my first child, that the healing started for me, and it was my homebirths that completed that healing.

My son, now 11 yrs, was a hospital birth in NZ with an independent midwife. I had planned a homebirth but at the last minute an interfering haematologist told me at 39 weeks that I could die giving birth. He then caused trouble for my midwife saying that he would see her deregistered if she let me birth at home, so the plan changed.

My family has a history of a form of haemophilia, but I had never had any problems and to this day do not have a firm diagnosis. After much disappointment and lots of talking, I accepted that it wasn't going to be a homebirth this time and when the time came, off I went to hospital - 5 cm dilated and ready to bring my baby into the world. On arrival at hospital my contractions just eased off and eventually stopped, then after several hours the obstetrician came in with the ultimatum, to either let the team take over or my midwife break my waters! I chose what I thought to be the lesser of the two evils and let my midwife break my waters. This was the most violating feeling of my son's birth and I just shut down. I felt my baby drop onto my cervix and the pain was suddenly so intense that I just couldn't cope. My midwife had also caught my labia with the delightful instrument they use to break the membranes, which added to the feeling of violation and also made me lose trust and faith in her. Had we been at home, she would never have been put in a position where this would have occurred. In the birth pool I started feeling very lost and alone, until I discovered the gas...worst mistake ever!

I now had an escape and boy did I embrace it! For hours and hours I just sucked on that gas and hid in my birth pool. It wasn't until my midwife had to call in her replacement due to tiredness that things started to change. I began to lose it and I thought they were saying that I was faking it and wasn't even in labour or pregnant, all thanks to that above-mentioned gas! To cut a long story short, I did end up off the gas and out of the pool to give birth to my adorable 9pd 4oz chubby little man Jayson. WOW, it was love at first sight and I couldn't believe this perfect little person had just come out between my legs!

Whilst my first birth story isn't one of major intervention or trauma, it was not the birth I knew I could have and it made me determined to birth at home with my next. I had no heavy bleeding and no problems, other than a second degree tear which I chose not to have stitched, and used herbs to assist healing.

Three years later and pregnant again, I found a midwife who was happy to assist me to birth my baby at home. She was Dutch and had just the kind of attitude towards birth that I needed, and given that I had no problems with bleeding with my first, the blood disorder was not an issue for her at all. Her only condition was active management of third stage. This had been done at my son's birth also, so I had no problem with that.

New Years day 2002 at 41 weeks, I awoke at 4.30am with the first contraction. Jayson who was nearly four at the time, stayed with his dad in the bedroom and came in and out of the lounge where I was labouring. He was quite comfortable with the whole thing, as I had put a lot of time into getting him prepared for the birth noises etc that would be going on. I had a girlfriend there as a support and she was just wonderful. I could feel her sharing my pain and riding each surge with me. This really helped and it felt like I wasn't doing it alone. I still lost it at transition and wanted to go to hospital, but by 12.23pm I had in my arms a healthy 8pd 13oz baby girl, Miss Sian. No drugs, no interference and no violation. This was it. This was the birth I wanted and I felt so empowered and vindicated!! I could birth at home and I sure didn't die!

2008 and after a marriage breakdown and a new life with a new partner now in Australia, I found

continued...



myself pregnant once again. A whole new set of challenges arose. You have to pay for a homebirth here? What kind of maternity system is this? Where do I find a homebirth midwife? No way am I going to a hospital to bring my baby into the world; not after experiencing both and knowing which I preferred! I was in Melbourne at the time and found a lovely midwife with years of experience. Relief! I can have my birth at home the way I choose.

We then decide to move to Sydney, 33 weeks pregnant and no midwife...I try the St George hospital homebirth programme which was already fully booked, but they put me on the waiting list in case some poor woman is kicked off the programme at the last minute. Not exactly the way I want to get in, but hey, I'm 33 weeks pregnant and need someone to be there with me while I give birth to my baby. I then find HAS and Jacqui Wood, a fellow kiwi who knows the system I am used to. The bond is instant and I know who is going to be there with me. 4<sup>th</sup> January 2009, 42 weeks pregnant and along came Miss Ruby, 9pd exactly and surrounded by family, she made her way into the world in a birth pool in the bedroom.

My son 10yrs at the time even scooped poop with his bare hands while Sian giggled in the hall. No active management this time either and I think the blood loss was the least of all births. Also, Ruby had her cord so tightly wrapped around her neck that Jacqui had to lift it over her shoulder to enable her body to be born. She struggled to get breath for quite some time and I am so glad she got all the wonderful blood from the placenta to keep her going until her breathing settled.

My older children have seen babies come into the world naturally and I hope this empowers them to seek the births for their children that they want, whether that is at home, a birth centre or hospital. For me, birthing at home makes me feel in control at a time when you have no control over what is happening to your body. I choose where I am and who is allowed around me. This enabled me to focus on my body and to feel free and safe to let go and give birth knowing NO ONE was going to touch me without consent or pressure me into interventions I did not want nor need.

Birth is powerful, birth is private, and birth is OURS!! By developing a trusting and close relationship with a midwife, we can overcome our fears and help us face any potential trauma due to past experiences such as sexual abuse. Another effect I have found after having vaginal births is that sex for me completely changed...it became better, more pleasurable and even empowering. My vagina is not just for a man to take pleasure in, my vagina is mine and I choose who touches it. It is the passage of life for my children, a journey which prepares them for the moment they take their first breath. The negative views I had regarding my body are no longer there, how can you have a negative view of something after it has done such an amazing thing like bringing new life into the world. I don't know what the future holds, I don't plan on having anymore children but I will fight to keep homebirth alive for my future grandchildren and all the other potentially homebirthed babies. Take back the power of birth - it is a family event and it belongs to us!!

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# "It's only pain... it won't kill me!"

© monica renaud

*Heal: To be repaired and restored naturally, to repair or rectify something that causes discord and animosity, to get rid of a wrong, evil, or painful affliction.*

After the likely twelve hour labour and homebirth of our nine pound 3" born son, Pascal Solaar Renaud, there is not much left to heal [apart from a few itchy stitches and unsightly violet stretch marks]. So did our homebirth heal more?

Our firstborn, Louis Harper, arrived via C-section due to failure to dilate and foetal distress. But after only being allowed three hours to labour for the hospital's policy on infection, (my hind waters had been trickling for the prior four days), I now know why I didn't progress! As a herbal hippie that lives chemical free, organically and without a GP for the family, I was sure my body would simply kick into gear and do what it was made for. So here is where my anger lays, with myself. How could I be so naive? Why did we go to hospital so soon? Why didn't I beg them to leave me alone to work on labour quietly? Why did I allow the maintenance man into the room to change light globes? Why did I have my mum there? Millions of questions race around my head, still to this day. My confidence waned and I became an obsessive mother, in hindsight, just to make everything feel right, to mask my disappointment in myself, to pretend all would be well. After all, I "have a perfect son and should be grateful", right? Well of course, but there still remained a hidden abyss that needed to be explored and conquered.

I couldn't wait to call Betty Vella, a homebirth midwife, to book her in once we were rewarded with those 2 little lines for our planned second pregnancy. This wasn't without research. By now it had been 5 years since our Louis was born. I had been attending homebirth picnics with my friend Sally, read & researched and thankfully discovered the book 'Ten Moons' by Jane Hardwicke



MONICA & LOUIS, BORN BY CAESAREAN 2003

Collings and 'The Spiritual Journey Of Pregnancy'. My husband Grant and I finally agreed - homebirth was what we wanted... Well, what I wanted, but he dutifully supported my decision anyway.

Sadly though, by our 19 week scan (which I only agreed to because of some mild spotting which I had also had with Louis' pregnancy), we shockingly discovered our bubba had died. He was all curled over on the screen and lifeless. He was tiny but fully formed, and I still cry for him as I write today. We were sent home to mourn our loss and told to get to hospital after the weekend had passed for a D&C. There was no way I could bare to have him sucked from me, and with the full support of Grant, we decided to bring him Earthside alone. That Saturday night, once my boys were in bed, I stretched out onto our fluffy lounge room floor rug in front of the TV and did some yoga and meditation.

I told the baby it was OK for him to come, that Mummy would be OK and that I wanted to give birth to him rather than have him taken from me. I awoke at 5am the next morn with mild period pains and knew he was coming. We laboured at home alone for as long as we could, although the vast amounts of blood did frighten us, so we called an ambulance. Our baby was born in the local hospital 12 hours later. We carried him home in a tiny, hand painted box, held tight under my husband's arm. It was 9pm and the hospital halls were dark, quiet and empty, just as we were. We named our 2" born, Maceo Nesta Renaud.

Still, my faith in my body had partly returned! My vagina had awoken. I felt ecstatic apart from our enormous loss, and I could finally touch my caesarean scar. I now knew I could labour and birth again and I often wonder if this was Maceo's purpose: to help heal me, teach me, allow me to feel like a real woman again, without the labels like 'failure to dilate' and without the c-section scar.

There is something that happens when you lose a baby, as I know many other women would agree. Although I do wonder why in 2010, the subject remains seldom discussed. I had only recently to then, read an article about miscarriage by Kelly Wendorf from Kindred Magazine.

continued...



She had lost a baby like us and spoke openly of holding the baby, examining him with the family and letting him float away freely along the Seine River in Paris, where they had all been on holiday. This story helped me immensely and allowed me to openly express myself more. I became less technical, less practical I suppose.

I was now even more spiritually aware, more equipped with the new knowledge of my body.

I understood there would always be the unknown capacities of life and the mysteries around death. I didn't have to know everything. There was sometimes no answer and nothing to google and that this was OK.

It took us all a while to recover. Our precious son Louis adds Maceo to most of his drawings and always includes the baby in conversations of birth order.

We had a little ceremony on the first anniversary since Maceo's birth, down on the beach where his ashes were scattered. He is still part of our lives. And thankfully so was Betty Vella. We called her as soon as we knew of our third bubba that was growing inside me.

A text book pregnancy, even though I had given up on these by now. I was well and we were all excited, but I was nervous too. Would we lose this baby as well? Could I really birth a full term baby? Would the labour be harder? What really are the risks of 'uterine rupture'? Betty, my husband Grant, Louis & I, all worked through each of the casual, monthly visits as we sipped tea, to learn that all would be well. We would have this baby as we wanted and we were capable. As a family, we had learnt so much together and so I was able to look forward to having a new baby, at home, safe and sound, into water and within record time, free of hospital policies, rules & regulations, and most importantly, free of stress and fear.

Although I would have liked to labour for less time, 12 hours was what I knew was likely. I was happy with that and I had also been given the number 5 and then 12 from a meditation session with our unborn child. Not once during labour were we frightened, nor did we discuss the hospital. I did ask over and over how much longer could this go on, but Betty simply, calmly and reassuringly would say 'It would just take as long as it needed to'. I repeated my new found mantra, 'It's only pain, it won't kill me, it's only pain, it won't kill me...' Grant lovingly cradled my full belly with piping hot towels as I leant back into his strong chest for support.

We swirled our hips in circles together and breathed through each surge, hour after hour and into the next morning. Louis was asleep. I had had time to dim the lights, light some candles, burn essential oils and set up an amazingly perfect place to endure such welcome pain in.



MONICA & PASCAL, BORN AT HOME 2010

Then there came the lull. It was time for a sleep but also time to check my dilation for the first time. I was only 4 cms. Bugger me!

I was sure I would be ready for the pool and to soon push. Rather than let disappointment set in, we decided to get to work, make a plan, and get the baby to re-position for better downward pressure. Unfortunately I knew this meant laying on my left side for a few contractions. Would it work? It has to! I have to keep the baby happy. "Oh my God! Shit! Far out!" First contraction was hell. I couldn't sway my hips and move. Then the second... Whammo!

My membranes ruptured. What a relief, it worked! Power to me again! Back on my feet and time to get moving.

So time meant nothing. The sun was slowly appearing and finally I heard Grant and Betty whisper the words I had been longing for: "She's right now to get into the pool!" I didn't believe it at first and as I couldn't speak, I had to wait for Betty to come to tell me that yes, they were just reheating the water for me and I could hop on in. What an amazing relief. I was here for a few hours before those all mighty animalistic, grunty contractions began. I hopped out onto the toilet for a few as well, to really get them moving our bubba down. Then hopped back in the pool for the birth. I remember yelling "Ooooouuuccchhhhh!", repeatedly. Louis was quick to remind me I also swore, "You said the F word REALLY loudly Mum..." and then he was here!

Little Pascal, pushed out way too soon by his eager Mumma, came bouncing into the world with an almighty scream, bright and shiny and into my arms. I was on my knees, so Betty had to pass him to me as I legged over the cord and turned to be seated with much relief (as you can see by my picture). What an adventure, a journey and an amazing end to our planned pregnancies & births. I swore on the birth-day, I would never do that again, although I have already forgotten about the pain and would if need be birth again, armed with the knowledge and wisdom gained from all three births.

© monica renaud

# "Kiran's birth"

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE...

My son's long awaited birthday had arrived - my pregnancy had lasted 42 weeks and 5 days! I was ready to meet my little baby and we were very excited.

After waiting so long to be in labour, I welcomed each wave and even had a smile on my face at times. I was only concerned that my support people would not arrive in time for the birth. I was so happy to hear our friend Tamara come into the house. Her role was to look after our two year, four month old daughter, Maia. My friend Cassandra came in shortly after with her healing spirit and energy, ready to give me support and video the birth. But where was dear Kyle who had camped out around home over the holidays, only venturing short distances and always with her camera and technical equipment ready to photograph the birth? When David had called her earlier, she said something about taking a few hours to get a rental car and I was yelling to David, "Tell her to come now, the show is definitely on and I am in established labour!" Little did I know that her car had died and she had to walk to the car rental place with all her stuff and drive from the other side of the city, which on a good day could take her about 40 minutes. I could feel myself waiting and when I heard her enter the house I said out loud, "Thank GOD Kyle is here!" and I felt myself let go and the labour progressed.

I look back at my birth experience and I see flashes of me on my hands and knees in the birth pool, just surrendering to each wave. It was intense and I would meet it, go into it and relax with it, allowing it to work through me. Before I had been chatty in between the waves, but now I was just quiet in between. At one point, I remember one surge being very intense and uncomfortable, but I decided to play with it and use a little mantra that I had heard on Ian Gawler's relaxation CDs "Softening, Loosening, Relaxing, Releasing, Simply Letting Go." And to my surprise, the discomfort diminished and was almost gone. I was playing with the discomfort

and it was working...laugh. Other times, I just needed to accept the power of a surge and go with it. My back in this labour was far more uncomfortable and I must have been at transition when I had a thought surface that I just wanted it to stop. I quickly got back on track and went with it. I started to feel an urge to push and asked Betty if it was OK to push. She gently kept reminding me to just listen to what my body was telling me to do. I started pushing and soon I felt a pop as my waters broke. Then, my husband lovingly put his hands on my hips and we swayed together as I pushed our baby down with each subsequent wave.

The baby was coming on view, but I was afraid to push and that is when Betty did something magical. She put her forehead against mine and held my face with her hands. I felt my jaw relax, I felt my butt relax and my lower half just let go as she encouraged me to keep following my body and that it was OK to push. We kept working together in that way and soon my baby's head came through my vagina! Hooray! I was almost there. The next contraction came and went and no baby. Another contraction and Betty told me that on the next contraction, she was just going to assist our baby's shoulders out.



My fear surfaced and I started to worry about the baby getting stuck. So the next wave came up and she told me to PUSH and I let out an almighty "OM....." "OM....." and "OM....." At first she tried to assist the top shoulder and then the bottom and there our baby boy came through and out into his father's hands. He then passed him underneath the water through my legs to me at precisely 9.30am, after exactly two and a half hours of established labour. I saw him floating there



© regina power





before me as I reached down and gently pulled him up, careful not to pull him out of the water too fast, and I brought him to me. By that time our two year old had come into the room with Tamara and had seen her brother born. After a few minutes, we looked down to see that YES, my gut feeling through the pregnancy was confirmed, we had a lovely, little boy. Our son Kiran was finally with us!

This is the birth that made me feel whole. I don't know how to say it otherwise or put into words how pieces of myself seemed to finally come together as if to say, "YES, I am healed and I am whole." Gone was the trauma of my own birth and the feelings of inadequacy that came up in the second and third stages of my previous birth experience with our daughter, where my perineum would not stretch and our daughter's heartbeat stayed at 80 beats per minute, requiring

me to have an episiotomy. This was the first our midwife had to perform in her ten years of homebirth experience. The placenta that did a dirty dummy came out inverted and stayed half in and half out of my vagina for what seemed to be an eternity, and within the week, a prolapsed uterus. All of that simply washed away as I held my son.

This birth was so different. Although, I have to say that my first birth experience was amazing and positive, the problems that surfaced during the second and third stages took away from the high that I came to feel after Kiran's birth. He just came out and I only had a small tear that didn't require a stitch, thanks to all the perineal massage, the 'epino', those calmbirth® lessons and PSH sessions with the lovely Peter Jackson. My placenta just easily fell out and it was as large as a dinner plate and red and healthy. My uterus did prolapse slightly, but not as much as the first birth and I know that it will come back up, as it did following my daughter's birth.



So after eating stale cake that had been baked nearly a week before, and seeing our lovely friends and midwife off, we were so thankful for the beauty that Kiran's birth brought to us. It is no wonder his name means "Source of Light". As his little light gave me a glimpse into the power I had within myself, the beauty of how Mother Nature moves through us, and how incredibly designed women are to birth their babies if we just trust, let go and let the force move through us.

© regina power



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# Milla's birth story

## "I loved our birth!"

© Emma Isaacs

When I fell pregnant I'd never heard a positive birth experience. Not one. I'd heard all about forceps, and pain, and emergencies, and pain, and stitches, and pain, and lots of interventions and generally a lot of drama.

The birth of our bub was the greatest experience of my life. Definitely my biggest achievement. Hands down the most exhilarating and spiritual thing I've ever gone through and the closest I've ever felt to my husband Rowan.

It'd been somewhat of a journey to get to our birth. After experiencing a miscarriage for our first pregnancy, we were even more grateful for the gift of new life. Our baby would be the first grandchild on both sides and you can imagine how much our families were bursting with excitement.

When we'd found out we were pregnant, we knew very little about childbirth. I thought you just went to the hospital and had a big needle in your back and someone kind of helped pull the baby out. This naivety and ignorance got me thinking that surely there must be a better way.

I started on a journey of intense research, delving into historical accounts of childbirth, and learning how the medical model has evolved. I watched every birth DVD I could get my hands on, attended many courses, and read over 30 books on the subject.

During my study I found out about a course called Calmbirth. At only 16 weeks (and with no belly in sight) Row and I found ourselves among a room full of heavily pregnant ladies and their partners. I remember the first thing the facilitator asked at the start of the course was "Why are you here?" When it got to my turn I was sure of my answer. "I want to be surrounded by positive people who view birth in a positive way. I don't want to hear any more horror stories and I don't want to be frightened any more".

Driving back from the course, I turned to Row and said, "Hey, I think we can have a natural birth." He agreed so our thinking turned toward having our baby in a birth centre. We wanted to be away from the temptation of drugs and be able to have as beautiful a birth as possible.

We went and did a tour of the hospital and I was disappointed. Although the midwife who ran the tour was lovely, when we got to the birthing centre, I still knew I was in a hospital. It had fluorescent lights and it was cold and you can tell they had done their best to simulate a home environment with a double bed and bath but it still had that hospital smell and feel. Don't get me wrong - the midwife was very accommodating and told all the expecting couples that they were welcome to bring in their own music and anything else they may need, but it just didn't feel right to me.



So, without letting Row in on my thinking (I wanted to really research my idea first), I started learning about homebirths. I loved what I found! It made so much sense to me. Birth is a private, intimate experience and it made sense to me that I could birth in a place that I felt safe and comfortable. I could choose whom I wanted at the birth and I could control the environment. I'd have no strangers walking in to the room, I'd have no unnecessary interventions, and I'd be able to call the shots.

On the Saturday night we were seven days overdue, and although I wasn't at all frustrated (I never got to that 'get it out of me' stage - I loved the privilege of being pregnant) I was ready to get the birth on. So Row and I lit a candle and talked to the baby, letting it know that we were ready. Saturday night and all of Sunday passed with no action and I went to bed on the Sunday evening at midnight, now eight days past our due date. Two hours later I woke with a sensation in my lower back. I thought 'this could be it, but try and get some sleep' and about ten minutes later I felt the same feeling.

It was 2am and Row was still sleeping. I decided not to wake him but I couldn't sleep, so every time a contraction came on I'd just get up and walk about. By about 5am I couldn't keep my excitement in, and





Row (finally sensing that I wasn't in bed) sat up and I told him 'we're on!' He got up and we just set about our day very normally. We ate breakfast (although I could only stomach two mouthfuls of muesli) and had a shower together.

We watched our wedding DVD and I got on the computer and googled lower back pain in labour. I made banana muffins, sent flowers to a girlfriend for her birthday, and put a load of washing on. By early afternoon we'd called our doula Bernadette and then Akal, our midwife, arrived soon after.



Then we just let it unfold. I surrendered to my body and after 23 hours of labour, I birthed a 4.1kg baby girl in the water. Row caught her and passed her through to me. She was nine days past her due date but no one forced me to have an induction. I required no drugs during the labour and I had no interventions (apart from Akal checking dilation at one point so we'd know where we were at - 8cms!)

The whole experience defies words, and the emotions were overwhelming. What was more overwhelming was the instant bond we shared with Milla. She didn't cry - she just cleared her throat gently and looked straight into my eyes. She knew exactly who I was and exactly who Row was. We didn't have to share those precious moments with anyone wanting to clean her up and no one was hurrying us to weigh and measure her. That time (that you can never get back) was for us, perfect.

Her entry into the world was intimate and caring. We had our music playing gently and candles flickering by the birthing pool. We slept in our own bed as a family that night and did all we could to make Milla's first couple of days as quiet and gentle as we could. No fluorescent lights. No other crying babies. No one telling us what to do.

Birthing this way, for me, was how I try and live in all of my life.

**My rules. My intuition. My power.**



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Emma Isaacs is CEO of Business Chicks, a national community enriching the lives of women in business - [www.businesschicks.com.au](http://www.businesschicks.com.au)



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- Birth Stories  
Katrina O'Brien, 2005
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- The NappyBag Book, resource  
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professional labour assistant  
Paulina Perez & Cheryl Snedaker, 2000
- Labour of Love, tales from the world  
of midwives Edited by Amanda Tattam &  
Cate Kennedy 2005
- The Magic of Sex  
Dr. Miriam Stoppard 1991

## MAGAZINES & NEWSLETTERS

various back issues of:

- Communique, Australian Society of  
Independent Midwives
- Nurture, quarterly journal of natural  
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- Midwifery Matters
- Birthing Beautifully WA
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## DVD review

© virginia maddock

"A Breech In The System" is an inspiring film, following the journey of one woman's fight to have a natural vaginal breech birth within the hospital system.

Karin Ecker moves to Byron Bay from Sweden when she is 6 months pregnant and is soon challenged to do things differently in her pregnancy than what is considered the norm in her home country. Fortunately she connects with a good pregnancy support group and embraces the healing energy of Byron.



When she discovers in late pregnancy that her baby is in the breech position and is told she cannot have a natural birth, she tries many methods to turn her baby, to no avail. But instead of doing what she is told, to have a caesarean section at 38 weeks (as so many women do), she gathers all the support she can, including homebirth midwife Sue Cookson, and successfully births her baby naturally in hospital.

The film very poignantly shows that if a woman is well supported, well informed, and assertive of her wishes, she can achieve a natural breech birth, even in the hospital system. There are some wonderful quotes, including "breech is a variation of normal, not abnormal", and "caesarians are statistically more risky to the mother and baby than vaginal breech births" - something obstetricians should take note of!

Watching the baby slowly emerge feet first is very moving and I couldn't help but get all teary. It was also really beautiful to see the baby's face so closely in it's first moments.

This film has the power to impact and challenge any woman who is told that she cannot have a natural birth, not only for breech births, but for any variation from normal. Hopefully it may even inspire some to trust that it can be done safely enough to birth at home!

[www.abreechinthetystem.com](http://www.abreechinthetystem.com)



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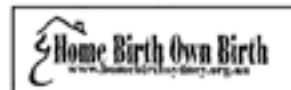
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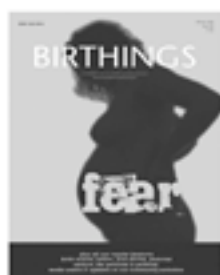
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# "the homebirth story of Gwenllian Mae Gregory"



© catherine gregory

After a week or so of "false" labour contractions, I was getting used to the idea that my second baby was going to be a late one and was kindly waiting for my Mum to arrive from Wales to help out at the birth... however that wasn't the case!

I woke up at 5am on the morning baby was due with what I thought was just a usual urge to go to the toilet, but as I got out of bed there was a distinctive "pop" sound followed by a small release of amniotic fluid. ....my waters had broken! Already this birth was going to be different to my 4 year old daughter Anwen's birth. With her, my waters broke only moments before she was born, after much arguing with hospital staff to allow me to be unstrapped from monitors and allowed off the bed to go to the toilet. How I was looking forward to a homebirth this time!

When no contractions accompanied my broken waters, I began to worry... just how long did I have to wait before I would have to be admitted to hospital? I decided to try to speed things up and took my dog for a brisk walk around the park. I had a few sporadic contractions that made me stop and practice my hypnobirthing breathing techniques. They were enough for me to ring my Mum and break the news to her that I didn't think she'd get here on time and to tell my wonderful independent midwife Jacqui Wood not to come for our planned morning appointment, as she'd probably be needed a bit later on.

A couple of hours later, Jacqui called me back to check how I was doing. Things had pretty much stopped again even though Anwen kept asking if I could have the baby now please! I asked Jacqui what I could do to help speed things up and she told me there was no need for that, I should go back to bed and grab some rest. Wise advice from her at that moment, as throughout my pregnancy!

I went back to bed and dozed for a while until I woke again at midday with a now familiar "urge" and a real gush of amniotic fluid. I began pacing the house, stopping with each contraction, breathing deep "balloon" breaths while my husband Andy rubbed my back. The feeling this time was all in my back, something Jacqui had warned me about as baby had been posterior at the last check up. The timings of the contractions were still not regular and although I thought it best not to get into the birth pool until labour was really established, I couldn't stand the feeling of losing amniotic fluid with every contraction, and decided to get in.



The warm water felt wonderful. I was able to fully relax and the contractions started to come more regularly. Andy and I discussed when we should call Jacqui as we knew she had an hour's drive to get to us. Although I was still calm enough to talk to Jacqui on the phone and couldn't quite decide if it was time or not, she decided to come anyway, as Andy admitted he was a bit nervous about being on his own for the birth.

When Jacqui arrived I was so much in the birthing "zone" that I didn't even notice she was there for a while. She unobtrusively checked the baby's heartbeat and applied pressure to points on my back with each contraction. Soon after Jacqui said the baby was almost ready to be born as she could see baby descending past my sacrum. Anwen came in and asked if she could get dressed into her princess ballerina costume, reappearing moments later fully dressed up with bright blue eye makeup announcing that she could see the baby's head, only to be told no, that was poor Mum's haemorrhoids!

Luckily she didn't have to wait too much longer. My breathing changed and Jacqui told me to go with the urge of pushing if it felt right. Oh did it feel right! My primal moans were the only



sound in the house. There was no yelling at me, no counting out the push, no making me push lying down against gravity, just the occasional gentle encouragement and advice to relax and wait as I stretched to gently ease baby's head out. Baby waited with eyes just peeping, checking out the world for three contractions before being born into water and floated with a gentle push from Jacqui into my waiting arms. The second stage had taken just ten minutes.

I remember that Anwen was the first to say "It's a girl!" Her dream of a baby sister had come true. Gwenllian (named after my great grandmother) Mae had arrived safe and sound in the tranquillity of home just after 4pm, weighing 4.2kg.



She was held lovingly until her cord stopped pulsing and was cut by her already doting father. Anwen got to hold her wrapped in a warm towel, while I birthed the placenta. When Andy asked me if there was anything he could do for me, my answer was immediate.... a cup of tea! So there I laid in the birth pool, warm in the knowledge that I had let my body do what it instinctively knew to do, in familiar, calm surroundings, surrounded by the people I loved and a big mug of tea...bliss.

People often talk about the body being able to "forget" what it was like to give birth so you are willing to go through it again. I enjoyed my homebirth experience so much that I honestly wanted to go and shout to everyone that they should all give it a try! It has been eye opening seeing people's reactions when I tell them that Gwen was born at home. Most people think I am so brave and wonderful and I try to explain to them that it was not brave at all, just natural and far easier that way. It really was the best moment of my life, made possible by the support of my wonderful family and an amazing midwife. May the government see sense and realise that all women should be entitled to choose this wonderful way of birthing if that is what they want. Homebirthing should be promoted, not witch hunted!

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# the birth of 'Maggie Glen'

© melinda mc namara



"Strong is good!" repeated my husband Chris throughout the homebirth of Maggie Glen. As first time parents we had prepared thoroughly for the labour. We had a caring, experienced birth team whom we had gotten to know and love over six months of home visits, regular acupuncture, pre-natal yoga, extensive reading, birth skills classes and lots of support from encouraging family and friends. These words, "Strong is good", were indicative of the state of mind all this preparation had brought us to. There was nothing to be afraid of. The stronger the sensations, the sooner the baby would be here. My body was made to give birth naturally.

At 4.00am on Saturday 27th February, I woke to my waters breaking. At last baby is coming! We tried to go back to sleep, but by 4.30am I was having contractions that required me up and about. Chris tried to time them, but neither he nor I could really tell when they were starting or ending, so soon gave up. What did it matter anyway – this was happening today! Chris called our birth team as the sun was coming up, to say we were on for today.

At 11.00am Ailsa, our student midwife, stopped by. She heated up the wheat bag and stayed with me through some contractions, encouraging us to go for a walk as we had planned – I was beginning to wonder if I could manage a walk after all. Chris and I went to the park, walking to the top of the hill and back, the contractions coming on a bit stronger and more regular. I had to stop a few times and hold on to Chris through the waves. Although the sensations were strong, they were manageable. We welcomed each one with a sense of excitement. I took a lot of strength from Chris.

Back at home we found ourselves upstairs again - me on the fitball, Chris on a chair in front of me knee to knee, and we'd lean into each other through each surge. As they came on stronger, I let go a flood of tears at each one, which was a huge welcome release.

About 12.00pm, midwife Kelly was there, feeling my belly for contractions. She seemed pleased with my progress and suggested it might be time to fill the pool. I was elated, optimistically thinking this must mean I was pretty close to the end of first stage.

At some point I started using the TENS machine. Chris had given me a big shock when he first put it on (with the setting on high!), bringing on a giggling fit for both of us. The TENS was really helpful. I used it more and more as things progressed and I remember not wanting to take it off to get in the water.

I made my way downstairs. Our midwife Jan was there, and our doula Lili. How wonderful to see them! I went straight to give Jan a big hug and held on to her through a contraction. I felt a bearing down sensation with each surge from about this point on.

As soon as I got in the water I relaxed into a blissful meditation, almost sleeping between contractions as the warm water soothed me. It seemed like only a few moments for me, but it must have been an hour or so as Jan was concerned that everything had slowed down so dramatically as I relaxed. She checked my dilation – 5cm. I was disappointed. I was sure I had been more open before I got in the water. Jan suggested that as I was giving myself such a good rest, why not go up to bed with Chris for a while. We lay down in bed. Chris slept and I was able to sleep/relax through a number of contractions until I woke suddenly with an uncontrollable urge to push!

Jan came up and saw I was ready to have the baby. She asked if it was okay for her to push aside a cervical lip to save an hour and a half and I agreed straight away.







I was feeling really wild and couldn't imagine things taking that much longer. Jan asked where I wanted to have the baby and I felt I could have it right there on the bed, but decided to stick with our plan and said "The pool, the pool!". I made it downstairs, stopping for a few pushes on the toilet. Chris was afraid I'd have it right there as he thought he could see the head crowning.

Back in the pool things slowed down again! Jan changed my position from kneeling forward to face up, supporting me under both arms as I planted my feet into the pool wall. "Why do you keep stopping?" Jan asked me and I realised I was afraid. I concentrated on pushing past the point where I thought it might hurt/tear. Kelly and Jan chanted "Pant, pant, pant, grunt!" as the head came down, and soon the head was out - what a relief! A few more pushes and Kelly guided the baby out into Chris's hands and he placed her on my chest as she reached up toward me. "My baby" I cried. "It's Maggie!" he announced, "Oh it's Maggie!" I was suddenly aware of being too noisy for the baby and tried to calm down as she took her first breath. How beautiful she was. Jan said the cord was short and held her head to keep her from swallowing water.

Soon we came out of the pool and now I just wanted to get comfortable and feed my baby. I was oblivious to the midwives concern about my bleeding. I felt fine and everything seemed perfect. For what seemed like an unbearably long time, I was being stitched up and my legs were shaking. Chris had Maggie and Mum was next to me, talking to me and soothing me.



Jan explained I had a labial graze and a vaginal tear but the perineum was intact. She couldn't be sure there wasn't another tear as I was still bleeding, so we decided to go to hospital. I still felt fine and quite calm, but everyone else was worried. In no time the ambulance was there and everyone scrambled to get a hospital bag ready as I hadn't packed one, despite Chris nagging me to do so! In hospital a doctor checked me under the bright neon lights, complimenting Jan on her suturing and all was fine. I had a shower and we all headed home. We stayed up talking over the day. That first night Maggie slept on my chest and then in the crook of my arm. I still felt she was part of me.

Maggie was born, ten days past her due date, on the eve of the full moon, the morning after we finally gave in and ate the birthday cake I had made her the week before. After six hours of established labour, she was born at 6.02pm, she weighed 4.02kg and measured 53cm, healthy and hearty!



© melinda mc namara

## ACUPUNCTURE CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE

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針灸

### Gabriele Rummel

Annandale Medical Practice 6 Maquarie St 9560 7928/2545

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www.gabrielerrummel.com.au

Mobile 0429 988 838

# "Rosie Rummey's birth"



© Anna Rummey

This story starts on Monday night, the first day of March, the first day of autumn. I was 37 weeks and 5 days pregnant.

We had an antenatal appointment with our midwife Robyn in the afternoon. We both felt very honoured to have her as our midwife and over the course of my pregnancy had grown to trust her completely. We left the appointment with the usual thumbs up.

That night I noticed that with each Braxton Hicks contraction, I was also experiencing some mild cramping. I've had them throughout my whole pregnancy so they weren't a shock to me, but the fact they were accompanied with a slight pain was news. I woke the next morning and found myself leaking what seemed like water. I called to let Robyn know and she told me it was possible that my water bag had been broken around the top, but to go about my week as normal – which I did. The pain and discomfort grew slowly and steadily over the next few days. I was unable to get a good night's sleep all week.

On Friday Chris woke early to report a great night's sleep only to be greeted by my tired eyes. We went for a walk to our favourite park and I felt better immediately. At this point my cramps were making me bend over on the side of the footpath, but in between I was fine to walk along and laugh and play with the dogs running through the park. It was a beautiful morning and for the first time in a while it felt good to walk around.

On the way home we stopped by our favourite café. We called Robyn and she suggested I might find a nice bath relaxing. But our flat doesn't have a bath! So we popped around to a friend's house that was kind enough to let me use her bathroom for an hour or two.

The bath was a beautiful relief, providing me with a rest in between cramps. I was still calling them cramps at this stage as I wasn't sure if it was real labour. Shortly afterwards, on the way home in the car, it stepped up a level and I thought to myself – well this one must be a contraction!

Around 1pm I went to the toilet and saw my bloody show. I called out to Chris who came in to see me sitting there with a huge smile on my face and bloody knickers around my ankles. He let out a raucous laugh and we gave each other a big hug. Labour had officially begun!

We rang Robyn again and she suggested that we get the pool ready. Just like the bath, the pool was such a relief. I was able to bob around and giggle with my husband until I felt another rush coming. I focused on keeping all my limbs as loose as possible to keep my energy in my uterus, which is where it was needed most. I also focussed on Ina May's advice to keep my face and jaw really soft, so every time I exhaled I made my mouth soft and round and imagined my cervix mimicking this. Any noises I kept to low moans, so they sounded more like pleasure than pain. I let go of my body and let it do what it needed to birth my baby. I surrendered.



The next few hours I spent working through my rushes. I alternated my time in and out of the pool as I didn't want to get too comfortable in the water. At about 5pm the intensity grew and I needed Robyn there. It was as if my body wouldn't continue without the safety of her presence. She arrived just before 6pm to see me red faced in the water and straight away knew it was too hot – baby wouldn't like it. I climbed out again.

Chris ducked out for half an hour to get some food and coffee, whilst Robyn stayed with me and rubbed my back as the sensations through my belly grew stronger. When he returned things had grown more intense. He came over to me straight away and we heard and I felt a huge POP! My waters had broken, just in time to share with my husband.

The next thing I remember was Robyn telling me "The next one is going to be a whizz banger!" and indeed it was. I held on tightly to my husband as we looked into each other's eyes. I moaned loudly and asked to get back into the pool but was told to do three more contractions where I was first. The power and pain running through my body was so intense that I couldn't do anything except concentrate on getting through each surge.

I heaved myself back into the pool and within a few minutes felt the biggest rush yet. Yes, it was pain. But it was more than that. It was power and life running through every part of my body. I felt my pelvis, hips and back open and turn inside out. It was at that point I decided I'd rather not continue. I started sobbing like a frightened little girl. I turned to Robyn and apologised and said I didn't want to do this any more. I couldn't do this any more. I apologised to my husband for not being able to go on. I wailed and wailed and wailed.

Because I didn't want to be examined at any point I had no idea I was fully dilated. I had no idea that I was in transition. I had no idea how long this feeling would last for. Robyn reassured me that I could go on. She asked if I felt like pushing. I said yes, and asked if I was dilated. She smiled and said "Yes, you're at the pushing part."

Well then! This gave me the confidence to go on. My contractions were getting shorter now but with each one I would kneel down and roar from the bottom of my stomach as I pushed that little person through my body. Robyn instructed me to find the point of my pain, and push past it. With the next rush I put my face in the water, held my breath and pushed with every last morsel of energy I had. I could feel her moving down and with couple more pushes out popped Rosie's head, very quickly followed by the rest of her. Robyn scooped her out of the water as I manoeuvred myself around the cord to sit up. A teeny tiny crying person was placed on my chest. I cried tears of joy and tears of relief. It was over, she was healthy, we had done it. Chris came over and held us. She had settled and was looking around alertly. We both instinctually knew that my belly housed a little girl, and when I checked we were right. Our little Rosemary was born at 7.55pm on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2010.

The placenta came out and soon after I managed to scramble out of the pool and onto the sofa. I was fed some muesli and yoghurt, had a few stitches and nursed my child.

By midnight we were all tucked into bed together to dream our first night as a family.

Bliss...



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# the homebirths of

## 'Rocco & Bono'

© nina smith



Rocco 2004



Bono 2009

For me, when thinking of giving birth, I can not associate the thought of birthing and going to hospital. I could not contemplate giving my power and body away to someone else. I didn't want to be stressed and pushed about due dates and "possibly other events"..... So when I fell pregnant with my first child in March 2004, I decided to have a homebirth. After meeting my midwife Akal (an experienced, independent midwife), we knew that she was the right person for us. My first pregnancy went well. I had my monthly check ups with her, one blood test and a twenty-week ultrasound.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> December (Friday), two days past Akal's estimated due date, at about 6pm I went to the bathroom and noticed fresh blood. I called her and she assured me that it was normal and that I should go on with my night and to call her if I have a question. At about 8pm the bleeding was a little stronger and I went to see her. She checked if everything was fine and told me that I was not dilated yet, however my cervix was getting ready and that I would probably go into labour that weekend. She advised me to go home to bed and try to sleep as much as possible.

When I arrived home I had a shower and tried to lie down. I had one strong contraction and had to get up to lean on the bathroom vanity. I had another contraction and had to go to the toilet. I then moved into the living room to relax on the sofa, but as soon as I laid down I felt something wet and warm. My water broke. I moved back into the bathroom and tried to cool down as I felt very hot and my husband was timing the contractions, but we couldn't work it out. They were very strong, not very long apart but short. I was breathing deeply and low and managed really well. My husband was on the phone to her explaining my contractions as I felt the urge to push. Akal was on her way. In a short break, my husband put a drop sheet, blanket and some towels on the living room floor.

Still in the bathroom facing my husband's chest, hanging onto his neck I started to worry a little, as I didn't think I had been in labour that long to be at the stage of having to push. My husband spoke to me with a calm voice until Akal arrived. She came into the bathroom and checked on me and I just said: "I just have to push." She said: "Go with your body and don't hold back. You are doing really well!" That gave me the green light.

We then went into the living room and Akal put a mirror behind me so we could see what was going on. At that stage I knew that I wouldn't be far away from giving birth. Most of the time I had my eyes closed, facing my husband and visualising a baby's head being pushed down from the inside of my body. Holding onto my husband made me feel secure. I started kneeling as my legs became a little weak. Then Akal asked me to wait with the contraction and to push after it without the urge, and all of the sudden a tight feeling was gone..... the baby was out. That was a very strange feeling. A little bit like doing the biggest pooh and then my tummy felt very empty and flat. I turned around and was holding my son Rocco. I couldn't believe that I had just given birth to this little baby boy. We waited for the cord to stop pulsating and my husband cut the cord. The placenta came out shortly after and we wrapped it up to put it in the freezer to dispose of at a later date.

**The birth of Rocco took 1.5 hours from the first contraction to the last! An amazing experience!!!!**

Four years later in December 2008, we decided to have another child. I conceived straight away and contacted my midwife to book her in for our second birth. It was a pleasure to meet her again as you become very close to such a wonderful and experienced woman! Once again I had a twenty week ultrasound, blood test and monthly check ups. We now had to plan for Rocco as well in the event of another fast birth. We included Rocco as much as we could in the preparations and he was very excited.

In the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> September, three days after Akal's estimated due date, I felt very tight around my tummy and I started bleeding. I called her to inform her. We went for a little walk but I had to turn around. I couldn't stand the smell outside and I had some Braxton Hicks contractions. I had a rest at home and then started preparing our bed for the birth. The tightening around my tummy came more frequently and I called my friend to come over to look after Rocco. I then went in the bathroom to cool down. We called Akal to tell her to come over to give ourselves more time than last time. I had irregular contractions..... so not really what you would expect. I could easily breathe through the contractions and rock my hips whilst leaning



forward onto the bathroom vanity. My friend arrived and as I was explaining everything to her, I had this urge to push. I ran into the bathroom to get some space and as I looked in the mirror and saw a red face I knew that I was in the second stage.

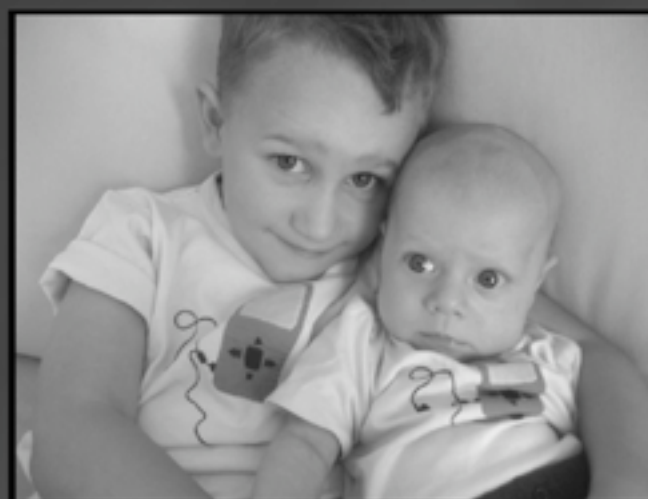
I went on the bed facing the bed head and leant on it. This time I felt like doing things differently to my first birth. I tried to visualise the baby's head but I only saw zig zag lines, so I decided to use my voice. With every contraction I said: "OUT, GET OUT". I was concerned a little as I realized that Akal hadn't arrived but I told myself that if I had to, I would give birth without help. My husband was very calm and reassured me that she was on her way. Rocco was in the living room, happily playing with my friend.

After approximately 5 pushes, Akal arrived and couldn't believe that I was that far. After about another 5 pushes, she said: "Oh, he's still in his sack!" He then came out with his hand over one eye..... maybe that is why I couldn't visualise his head???



She put Bono, our second boy, in my arms and I cried. I was so fulfilled with love and happiness. I felt so amazing. Rocco came in to say hello to his little brother and went off to play again..... as if nothing had happened..... just like an every day event!

We cut the cord and waited for the placenta to come out. Bono had his first feed and it was easier than with Rocco. We then realized that Bono's arrival took only 45 minutes!!!!



I felt so blessed to be so strong and be able to trust my body and the baby to do the job. It is an amazing, empowering event and I believe every birth should be as supported and powerful as my two births were.

© nina smith

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### Pregnancy - The Inner Journey

is a three day workshop for women - pregnant, planning to be pregnant, midwives and doulas. Using ritual and art to compliment information sharing we delve into understanding our fears and why we think and act the way we do. We explore the inner journey of pregnancy and come to know ourselves more fully through this process, preparing for birth and mothering from our most in-tune and empowered centre. We look deeply at the sexuality and spirituality of pregnancy, birth and mothering, learning meditation, tools for labour and beautiful rituals to perform to honour pregnancy, birth and mothering. We invoke the ancient Birth Goddesses as our foremothers did, for their guidance, nurturance, protection and support. We do what women have been doing together longer than we haven't - sit together in support of each other sharing our innate wisdom focussing on the beauty and strength of Mother. Each woman receives a copy of *Ten Moons*.

Contact me [jane.collings@bigpond.com](mailto:jane.collings@bigpond.com) if you would like to receive my seasonal newsletter.  
To book for a workshop or for further information email me or phone 0408 035 808.

### 2010 workshops

Pregnancy - The Inner Journey Workshop  
July 13, 14, 15, 2010  
Oyster Cove, Hobart, Tasmania

Moonsong  
July 16, 17, 2010  
Oyster Cove, Hobart, Tasmania

Pregnancy The Inner Journey Workshop  
Nov 17, 18, 19 2010  
Southern Highlands NSW

Moonsong  
Nov 20, 21 2010  
Southern Highlands NSW

Pregnancy The Inner Journey Workshop  
Nov 24, 25, 26 2010  
TBA Melbourne Vic

Moonsong  
Nov 27, 28 2010  
TBA Melbourne Vic

### 2011 workshops

POSSIBLE Pregnancy - The Inner Journey Workshop  
April 6, 7, 8, 2011  
Southern Highlands, NSW

POSSIBLE Moonsong Workshop  
April 9, 10, 2011  
Southern Highlands, NSW

Pregnancy The Inner Journey Workshop  
April 27, 28, 29 2011  
TBA Nthn NSW

Moonsong  
April 30, May 1, 2011  
TBA Nthn NSW

Pregnancy The Inner Journey Workshop  
May 11, 12, 13 2011  
TBA Hobart, Tas

Moonsong  
May 14, 15 2011  
TBA Hobart, Tas

Moonsong  
Oct 1, 2 2011  
Southern Highlands NSW

Pregnancy The Inner Journey Workshop  
Oct 5, 6, 7 2011  
Southern Highlands NSW

Pregnancy The Inner Journey Workshop  
Nov 9, 10, 11 2011  
TBA Qld

Moonsong  
Nov 12, 13 2011  
TBA Qld

Pregnancy The Inner Journey Workshop  
Nov 23, 24, 25 2011  
TBA Hobart, Tas

Moonsong  
Nov 26, 27 2011  
TBA Hobart, Tas







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# media watch

**MARCH 10**

**MIDWIVES WANT TO MEET ROXON TO AVOID  
HOMEBIRTH BAN**

This article discussed the birth of Abi Whitehair and her entry to the world, in a Dee Why lounge room which cost taxpayers nothing - a saving midwives fear will be lost if women are denied the right to have midwives help them give birth at home under federal government legislation. They are calling for another urgent meeting with the Health Minister, Nicola Roxon, before the new rules come into effect in July. Justine Caines said that many women who had undergone traumatic births, with extensive intervention, were eager to avoid a repeat performance but were often left with little choice. Up to 70 per cent of home births were by women who had previously delivered by caesarean and there was a growing band who would deliver at home alone if home births were outlawed.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/midwives-want-to-meet-roxon-to-avoid-homebirth-ban-20100309-pvul.html>

**APRIL 10**

**OPINION DIVIDED ON A SPECIAL DELIVERY  
THE AUSTRALIAN**

This article discusses the growing popularity of homebirths, as is confusion about new regulations. It provided a good overview from all quarters about the current feeling surrounding the new legislation and how it will effect women, midwives and doctors. The general consensus was that it is not clear yet how this legislation will impact the consumer.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/opinions-divided-on-a-special-delivery/story-e6fro8v6-1225851782903>

**MAY 5**

**INSURANCE DEAL SECURED FOR MIDWIVES  
ABC NEWS**

The Federal Government has struck a deal with a private insurance company to provide indemnity cover for midwives. Midwives will now be able to prescribe medicines covered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and order procedures covered by the Medicare Benefits Schedule. Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon says indemnity insurance will be available to privately practising midwives through Medical Insurance Group Australia.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/05/05/2891335.htm>

**MAY 6**

**GREAT DAY SHOWS NEED FOR MIDWIVES  
THE OBSERVER**

Report on the previous day's International Midwives Day celebration that aimed at raising awareness of the importance of midwifery in the community. Midwives at Gladstone Hospital celebrated the day with a morning tea depicting the theme 'The world needs midwifery more than ever'.

<http://www.gladstoneobserver.com.au/story/2010/05/06/special-day-shows-need-international-midwives-day/>





# HAS in the community

## BIRTH CHOICES EXPO

*Supporting you and your baby, naturally.*



### **BIRTH CHOICES EXPO FRIDAY 5TH MARCH LEICHHARDT, TOWN HALL**

This year's first Birth Choices Expo attracted a record number of visitors, exhibitors and sponsors. Amongst the vibrant atmosphere, one male observer noted how the room was full of kind, warm, strong women – and of course he was right!

Jo Tilly welcomed everyone, followed by an inspiring song by Mem Davis. Peter Jackson from Calmbirth and Renee Adair from the Australian Doula College gave fabulous speeches about "Creating a Calm Birth Environment" and "Support at Birth". Renee's example of a woman in labour certainly got everyone's attention and hopefully inspired them all to hire a doula.

The night finished with a bang with the drumming, singing and dancing of Hands, Heart & Feet - the perfect end to an evening all about the joys of birth and parenthood.

A huge thank you goes to our fantastic Gold & Silver Sponsors: Sydney Pregnancy Centre and The Australian Doula College, plus our wonderful Bronze sponsors: Birth Partner, Bulb Osteopathy, Health Equals Vitality, In-Born, itti bitti nappy co, Natural Transition, Transition into Parenting and Yoga in Daily Life.

The Expo continues to grow and we are currently planning the next ones in the Inner West and beyond. You can keep up to date with what's happening by becoming a fan on Facebook and visiting our web-site [www.BirthChoicesExpo.com.au](http://www.BirthChoicesExpo.com.au)

If you'd like to exhibit, sponsor or lend a hand on the night, please contact: [Helena@birthchoicesexpo.com.au](mailto:Helena@birthchoicesexpo.com.au)

### **HAS ANNUAL PICNIC SUNDAY 14TH MARCH, JUBILEE PARK, GLEBE**

It was a perfect sunny autumn day for the annual HAS picnic, and the local council just happened to be throwing the rate-payers a free BBQ at the same time and place. So despite it being hard to locate us amongst the many other picnickers there (sorry we forgot to bring a banner), we were treated to some lovely live jazz music as well as a very scary and life-like T Rex dinosaur for the kids, complete with blinking eyes, sharp teeth and loud roar. We look forward to next year and hope that more of you can join us.



# Pre-Natal Services

## CITY & EASTERN SUBURBS

### MISCARRIAGE & STILLBIRTH SUPPORT GROUPS

Though one in four women suffer miscarriage, most are left feeling alone with their loss. The natural grieving process is seriously hindered by lack of appropriate support. We are attempting to remedy this by providing an opportunity for women who have suffered a loss of pregnancy to engage in an intimate support group. This group is facilitated by psychotherapist and social worker, Genevieve David, and supported by obstetric acupuncturist and doula, Naomi Abeshouse, who hold a safe and nurturing space for women to come to understand and share their loss. This not-for-profit programme will be run in two hour sessions over eight weeks. We will be holding a free introductory evening very soon, so please contact us for details.

Medicare rebates available with GP referral.

Genevieve David

M. 0408 213 030

E. genevivedavid@redtent.com.au

Naomi Abeshouse

M. 0413 890 881

E. naomi@redtent.com.au

www.redtent.com.au

### REBECCA GOULDHURST

Doula, Naturopath, Counselor, Pregnancy Masseuse & Hypnobirthing I am a passionate doula practicing from a naturopathic and counseling background. I have been in practice for 14 years. Being a doula allows me to support parents-to-be with my wisdom and experience of the birth process and the know-how to create the birth that you want. Birth is a magical time and that I am honoured to be part of. I have experience both at home and in hospitals and have different packages to suit all. All enquiries welcome.

Rebecca Gouldhurst P. 9386 4243 M. 0415 304 369

E. counsellor@doula.net.au www.rebeccagouldhurst.net.au

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Rebecca Mar Young - Acupuncture & Chinese herbs

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Naomi M. 0413 890 881 E. Naomi@redtent.com.au

Rebecca M. 0404 457 911 61 E. Rebecca@redtent.com.au

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Erika Elliott - Motherbirth - Birth the way nature intended

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## NORTH SHORE / NORTHERN BEACHES

### ALL ABOUT BIRTH® - calmbirth®

calmbirth® is a two day preparation for birth course that is suitable for those planning a homebirth, water birth, active and natural birth. calmbirth® affirms that birth is a normal physiological process, and you will learn skills to use during pregnancy, birth and beyond.

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For enquiries of dates and available times and bookings phone 9544 6441

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Special note: Julie's calmbirth® course is very reasonably priced!

Julie Clarke

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I have a very personal interest in natural preconception preparation, pregnancy, postnatal and children's health. With some help from herbs and nutrition, my partner and I prepared our bodies health naturally for a conscious conception, and I enjoyed a trouble-free pregnancy, and gave birth to a healthy full term baby who continues to have perfect health. You too can benefit from my experience in natural health care. I can assist you with:

- ① preconception health and natural fertility
  - ② preparing for a healthier baby
  - ③ overcoming health conditions, including during pregnancy
  - ④ preparing your body and mind for a better birth
  - ⑤ birth support for mum and dad, &/ or siblings
  - ⑥ treating your children's health naturally
  - ⑦ chemical-free homemade herbal skin products
- Natural Pregnancy, Birth and Postnatal Kits also available which make great gifts for the expectant or new Mum!

Virginia Maddock - Herbalist, Nutritionist & Doula

P. 9501 0863 M. 0415 683 074

5 Balfour Ave, Caringbah

E. [virginia@naturalbeginnings.com.au](mailto:virginia@naturalbeginnings.com.au)

www.naturalbeginnings.com.au

### TRANSITION INTO PARENTHOOD

#### Childbirth and Parenting Preparation

Wonderful, comprehensive courses on natural active birth, including waterbirth and practicalities of baby care. Participants receive professionally presented, well organized course notes. Very suitable for homebirth, birth centre and delivery suite.

See Julie's website for more details, birth stories, pictures and information:

[www.julieclarke.com.au](http://www.julieclarke.com.au)

Julie has a great sense of humour and a very gentle approach, and is supportive and flexible in her teaching approach.

Good variety of courses to choose from: 8 week course 1 night per week,

or 2 Saturdays condensed, or 1 Sunday super condensed.

Reasonably priced and discounts available.

Julie Clarke [julie@julieclarke.com.au](mailto:julie@julieclarke.com.au)

P. 9544 6441 M. 0401 265 530

9 Withybrook Pl, Sylvania (20 mins south of airport)

## SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

### PREGNANCY WORKSHOPS

Midwife Jane Hardwicke Collings gives regular workshops -

"Pregnancy The Inner Journey" - in the Southern Highlands and in other places by arrangement, as well as

"The School of Shamanic Midwifery" a women's mysteries school for doulas and midwives.

Jane Hardwicke Collings

P. 4888 2002 M. 0408 035 808

E. [janecollings@bigpond.com](mailto:janecollings@bigpond.com)

[www.moonsong.com.au](http://www.moonsong.com.au)

[www.placentalremedy.com](http://www.placentalremedy.com)



## HORNSBY / HILLS DISTRICT / NORTH SHORE / NORTHERN BEACHES

### JACQUI JAMES

I am passionate about supporting & encouraging families during pregnancy, labour, birth and in the early "daze". I work with both parents and assist in creating a nurturing environment for the baby to be born. The birth of a baby is a sacred experience and I feel honoured to be a part of it. I also facilitate mother/family blessing ceremonies.

I trained in 2003 at Birth Central, completing post natal doula in 2005. References available.

M. 0418 445 653

E. jacqui@people.net.au

### BIRTHING SPIRIT- HEATHER CRAWFORD

Acupuncturist, Doula, calmbirth®. Heather practices from a lovely clinic overlooking Manly Beach and provides specialist acupuncture services for the whole family through pre-conception, pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period. She has post-graduate training in obstetrics, gynaecology an acupuncturist and midwife and is now training to become a midwife herself.

Home and hospital visits can be arranged for those who can't travel.

For appointments P. 9977 7888

or other enquiries M. 0423 171 191

15 South Steyne, Manly

E. heather@birthingspirit.com.au

www.birthingspirit.com.au

## SOUTHERN SUBURBS

### NATURAL BEGINNINGS

Holistic healing and Doula service. As a homebirth mum, I have the experience and trust in natural birth to be your ideal birth support, whether you choose to birth at home, in hospital or birth centre. As a natural therapist, I have the resources to assist you with reiki massage, herbs and flower essences in case the journey of labour becomes difficult.

As an ex-nanny, I can help look after older siblings so that Mum can focus on birthing. Dad can focus on Mum, and older sister or brother can still feel important and included in the process, without fear. My birth package includes 2 prenatal visits, birth support incl. herbs/flower essences & reiki massage, follow-up visit to debrief, and your birth story in a beautifully presented book with photos for you to keep. Natural Pregnancy, Birth and Post-Natal Kits also available which make great gifts for the expectant or new Mum!

Virginia Maddock

Herbalist, Nutritionist & Doula

P. 9501 0863 M. 0415 683 074

5 Balfour Ave, Caringbah

E. virginia@naturalbeginnings.com.au

www.naturalbeginnings.com.au

## EASTERN SUBURBS/CITY/INNER WEST

### AUSTRALIAN DOULA COLLEGE & THE CENTRE FOR SPIRITUAL BIRTH & DEVELOPMENT

The Australian Doula Collage is an integrated health care centre providing education, support and continuity of care for women during pregnancy, childbirth and beyond. Through our network of qualified and experienced educators, doulas and practitioners, we provide the support of a trainee doula for only \$165; qualified doulas range from \$600-\$1500. We look forward to being of service to you in this amazing time of your life. Please visit the website for our full range of services.

422 Marrickville Road, Marrickville NSW 2204

P. 9569 8020 or 1300 139 507

E. moreinfo@australiandoulacollage.com.au

www.australiandoulacollage.com.au

## SYDNEY (HAS)

### SUTHERLAND SHIRE & ST GEORGE HOMEBIRTH GROUP

10.30.am weekly on Mondays

Contact Virginia Maddock

M. 0415 683 074

E. maddvirg@yahoo.com.au

### MOTHERS & MIDWIVES OF THE SOUTH (SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS)

We meet every month in the Illawarra area

For more details contact

Jane Collings

Jaia

P. 4888 2002

or M. 0431 709 978

M. 0408 035 808

E. jaia\_shanti@yahoo.com.au

Everyone welcome.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### BLUE MOUNTAINS HOMEBIRTH SUPPORT GROUP

Gatherings fortnightly on a Thursday in am

Contact Natalie Dash

P. 4757 2080

E. nataliedash@optusnet.com.au

### ILLAWARRA HOMEBIRTH SUPPORT

Karen Sanders (02) 4225 3727

### CLARENCE VALLEY BIRTH SUPPORT

Contact Laena Jongen-Mortier

P. 6649 4271

### BIRTH CENTRAL (FAR SOUTH COAST)

Contact Cindy

P. 6494 0131

www.birthcentral.org.au

### FAR NORTH COAST NSW

Contact Jillian Delalieu

P. 6689 1641

### MID NORTH COAST HOMEBIRTH SUPPORT RESOURCE & REFERRAL

Contact Berry Engel-Jones

W. 6652 8111 H 6655 0707

## INTERSTATE & NATIONAL

### HOMEBIRTH AUSTRALIA

Jo Hunter (02) 4751 9840

homebirth.austalia@bigpond.com

### QUEENSLAND

(07) 3839 5883

E. info@homebirth.org.au

### DARWIN HOMEBIRTH GROUP

(09)8985 5871

E. darwin.homebirth@octa4.net.au

### HOMEBIRTH IN THE HILLS

-DANDENONG RANGES

Melinda Whyman (03) 9754 1347

E. mwhyman@bigpond.net.au

### HOMEBIRTH ON THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA

Kim (03) 5987 0657



# Birthing Services: MIDWIVES

## AKAL KHALSA

Akal Khalsa has been offering her individualised midwifery care to women in Sydney since 1979. She will provide experienced, comprehensive and individualised care throughout your pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period. With Akal as your midwife, you will be assured of professional care and full and accurate information throughout this vital time. She is available by phone 24 hours, 7 days a week. Akal has over 30 years experience as a midwife and childbirth educator, and will help you and your partner prepare emotionally, mentally and physically, so you can approach the birth of your baby with joy and confidence. She has many years experience with water births, lotus births and vaginal after caesarean births.

**Akal Khalsa Sydney**  
P. 9660 2127 M. 0411 267 016  
E. akal@ourmidwife.com.au  
www.ourmidwife.com.au

## BIRTH WITH GENTLE CHOICES

Offering continuity of midwifery care during pregnancy, birth and postnatally. Birth is a natural and empowering experience that is a part of a normal life journey rather than a medical event. Providing support for women and their families, and encouragement to believe in herself and her ability to birth instinctively.

**Betty Vella Gynea**  
P. 9540 4992  
E. bpvella@optushome.com.au

## ESSENTIAL BIRTH CONSULTING

Offering midwifery services during preconception, pregnancy, birth and postnatal. Homebirth, hospital birth support, childbirth education, birth debriefing and consulting services are available. I practice in and around Sydney, as far as Blue Mountains, Wollongong and Camden. Essential Birth Consulting recognizes you as being the most important person in the birthing experience, and homebirth assists you to have the healthiest birth possible. Essential Birth Consulting homebirth choice focuses on your needs for confidence, choice and convenience in birth, with all visits provided in your home. Waterbirth and VBAC are supported. Journal subscriptions are available as well as access to a library.

**Melissa Maimann**  
MBA RM RN BN Grad Dip Midwifery  
Sydney, Central Coast, Southern Highlands, Blue Mountains and Illawarra  
M. 0400 418 448  
E. melissa@essentialbirthconsulting.com.au  
www.essentialbirthconsulting.com.au

## HAZEL KEEDLE

I have attended homebirths as a midwife and have been a practising midwife for over 30 years. I have attended the homebirth midwives retreats in 2008 and also an active birth workshop. I have qualifications in massage, aromatherapy and infant massage. I have recently obtained Cert IV Breast-feeding Education (Counselling) with the Australian Breast-feeding Association and Childbirth Education training. I am passionate about keeping birth natural and providing continued care from pregnancy through to birth and during the newborn time. I have a keen interest in women achieving vaginal births after a caesarean (VBAC) in part due to my own personal experience of VBAC. I am a local mountains mum with a family including five children.

**Hazel Keedle**  
Blue Mountains and surrounding areas  
P. 4787 8430 M. 0408 661 503  
E. hazelkeedle@gmail.com

## HOME BIRTH: A NATURAL CHOICE

I take a holistic approach to pregnancy and birth, as well as to general health. I am a nutritionist and herbalist as well as a midwife, so my service can include these tools in your care, as well as providing postnatal care for women who have birthed in hospital but return home soon afterwards. I practice in the southern highlands area.

**Victoria Kleeberg**  
Southern Highlands to Sydney; Wollongong to Nowra  
P. 4864 5744 M. 0404 489 484  
E. kleeberg@bigpond.net.au

## INDEPENDENT MIDWIFE JACQUEL WOOD

Pregnancy and birth is a normal, healthy life experience. As natural as it is to conceive your baby in a loving, safe and intimate environment, labouring and birthing at home, in your own relaxed setting, gives you the freedom to follow your body's instinctive knowledge of birthing naturally, without restrictions. As a midwife, I have immense passion for my career and gain great professional and personal satisfaction from it. I offer a holistic approach to midwifery care, providing care throughout your pregnancy, labour and birth of your baby. All care is provided in your home.

**Jacqui Wood**  
Blue Mountains, West Sydney incl. North - West & South - West suburbs  
M. 0430 109 400  
jacqui@independentmidwife.com.au  
www.independentmidwife.com.au

## MIDWIFE

Jane is a shamanic midwife and a priestess of the Goddess. Her midwifery practice reflects these world views and is based on her facilitating women to take responsibility for their life journeys and the self-realisation opportunities of pregnancy, birth and mothering. Author of Ten Moons, The Spiritual Journey of Pregnancy, Preparation for Natural Birth. Jane facilitates 3 day women-only workshops called Pregnancy, the Inner Journey and also teaches the spiritual practice of menstruation and the wisdom of the cycles.

**Jane Handwicks Collings**  
Southern Highlands, but will travel  
M. 0408 035 808  
E. janecollings@bigpond.com  
www.moonsong.com.au

## JO HUNTER: HOMEBIRTH MIDWIFE

I believe that women should be placed at the centre of their own experience, supported to empower themselves with knowledge and skills, given time and encouragement from their midwife, as well as being surrounded by those they love and people who believe and trust in their ability to birth. It is the midwives role to have patience and trust in the innate ability of women and babies, and to be comfortable and confident to support this process in any setting the woman chooses. Pregnancy, birth and postnatal care up to 6 weeks is provided in your home. I live in the Blue Mountains and service local families, Inner West and Western Sydney.

**Jo Hunter**  
Blue Mountains, Inner West & Western Sydney  
P. 4751 9840  
E. midwifejo@bigpond.com

## NEW BEGINNINGS MIDWIFERY PRACTICE

New Beginnings Midwifery Practice offers a personalised approach to pregnancy, birth and beyond. Receive comprehensive prenatal care with your own midwife. New beginnings can assist you with homebirth, hospital birth or birth centre birth. Extensive postnatal visits; access to information, resources and a large lending library. Care and support available 24 hours a day.

**Robyn Dampsey North Ryde**  
P. 9888 7829  
E. midwiferyrobyn@optusnet.com.au  
www.homebirthmidwives.com.au

## ONE TO ONE MIDWIFERY CARE

If your expectations are of having a natural birth, less intervention, shared decision making and continuity of care with your own midwife in a safe environment, then this service is for you! Women can choose to have their babies at home or in a natural birthing centre. A tailor-made pregnancy plan is offered together with medical liaison if required or requested.

**Jan Robinson Sydney**  
M. 0418 117 560  
E. midwife@ozemail.com.au  
www.midwiferyeducation.com.au

## PREGNANCY, BIRTH & BEYOND

Looking for special care during your pregnancy, birth and as new parents? Receive personalised, professional care by an experienced midwife.

Pregnancy Birth & Beyond supports women and their families birthing at home, birth centre or hospital. Midwifery care helps you avoid unnecessary interventions and to be recognised as the most important member of the birth team. Pregnancy, Birth & Beyond aims to assist families to achieve an empowering birth experience. For full details, please visit our website.

**Jane Palmer Dundas Valley**  
P. 9873 1750  
E. janell@pregnancy.com.au  
www.pregnancy.com.au

## SONJA MACGREGOR

A holistic midwife who empowers and trusts a woman to birth her own baby in the comfort of her own home, surrounded by love. I provide a full antenatal, labour, birth and postnatal service in collaboration with the woman. Appointments are attended in the woman's home, with the inclusion of family and support people if the woman desires.

**Sonja MacGregor**  
I service all areas of Sydney, the Blue Mountains, Southern Highlands, Illawarra, Central Coast & Newcastle.  
M. 0419 149 019  
E. sonjamac@bigpond.com  
www.birthathome.com.au

## ST GEORGE HOSPITAL HOMEBIRTH SERVICE

This public health service is available to women in the St George and Sutherland Shire area. Continuity of care is provided by two midwives throughout pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

**For further information:**  
Call the midwives at the Birth Centre on 9113 3103

## THE ELLA MAY CENTRE

The Ella May Centre provides an alternative to the medical management of Fertility, Pregnancy, Birth and Beyond by providing Midwifery and Naturopathic care to prospective and expecting families. Your midwife will provide you with individualized care throughout the preconception, pregnancy, birth and postnatal periods and is on call 24 hours a day. The Ella May Centre supports you to birth in the way and place of your choosing. For full details of services please visit our website or book a free information appointment.

**Melanie Jackson**  
Western Suburbs & Blue Mountains  
M. 0425 280 882  
E. mkjackson@live.com.au  
www.ellamaycentre.com



# Homebirth Access Sydney (Inc)

- To create an awareness in the community of planned attended homebirth as an accessible and attainable alternative, and to be actively involved in maintaining homebirth as a choice and improvement of conditions for homebirthers. In the interest of furthering the cause of homebirth, our public relations policy will be one of assertive, non-aggressive approach.
- To provide an information and referral service by way of newsletters, pamphlets, telephone contacts, a permanent mailbox, a reference library and regular public meetings.
- To provide support to HAS members by holding regular public meetings and maintaining and publicising a list of contact phone numbers and addresses.
- To represent HAS members on or to any regulatory or advisory body, Local, State or Federal, which is formulating policy or implementing decisions which affect homebirth.
- To work with other homebirth groups and other groups concerned with birthing to further the aims of HAS.
- To be involved in public gatherings that are relevant to and consistent with HAS' aim regarding homebirth.

## MAGAZINE ADVERTISING RATES

|                       | Single (1 Issue) | Annual (4 Issues) |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Service Pages         |                  |                   |
| Doula Listing         | n/a              | \$25              |
| Colour Advertisements |                  |                   |
| Business Card Display | \$20             | \$70              |
| Quarter Page Display  | \$30             | \$110             |
| Half Page Display     | \$40             | \$150             |
| Full Page Display     | \$65             | \$250             |

### ALSO AVAILABLE: ONLINE ADVERTISING

For details, please email [advertising@homebirthsydney.org.au](mailto:advertising@homebirthsydney.org.au)

**HAS ABN 75 947 458 113**

## HAS Policy Statement

- Homebirth Access Sydney is an organization which was established in 1973 to provide information and support to those interested in homebirth. Our members include parents, birth attendants, educators and midwives.
- HAS recognises that Australian families have the right to have their baby in any setting - be it their home, a clinic, a birth centre or a hospital.
- The members of HAS believe that home is a safe place to give birth and that there will always be an element of risk in birth whatever the choice of birth place.
- Families who choose homebirth are taking a shared responsibility in the births of their babies. They are opting for a birth outside of an institution and it's model of mass health care which is restrictive and frequently denies individuals requirements.
- The midwives who attend homebirths are specialists, educated to provide total care throughout pregnancy, labour and the post-natal period. They consult with other health practitioners when appropriate.
- Midwives are accountable to their clients and their peers (through quality assurance and standards review) as well as the Dept. of Health, the Nurses Registration Board, the Australian College of Midwives and the various courts.
- With the widespread misconceptions about the safety of homebirth, a homebirth midwife's professional status is in jeopardy whenever anything goes wrong. However skilled she may be, deregistration and loss of career is a constant insecurity in the face of social hostility to her chosen profession.
- Birth is an intense, emotional, life changing experience. In the event of conflict or unresolved issues, HAS encourages mediation and conciliation between all parties whatever the birth place and whoever the birth attendants.

YOU ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

## Homebirth Access Sydney (HAS) Committee Meetings

10.00AM- 12.00 NOON

LAST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

AUSTRALIAN DOULA COLLEGE,

422 MARRICKVILLE ROAD, MARRICKVILLE

BRING A PLATE OR SOMETHING TO NIBBLE

CHILDREN WELCOME

Next meetings:

27 JULY, 31 AUGUST, 28 SEPT

## HAS MISSION STATEMENT

Homebirth Access Sydney is a visible organisation with integrity to support mothers' and families' rights to informed and empowered home birth.

# calendar

winter/early spring  
2010



## JULY

Weekly Wednesdays

Inner West

Homebirth Support Group

Time: from 10.00am

Location: Maundrell Park, Petersham  
(cnr. Stanmore Road & Hepetoun Street)  
Contact: e. [gwermer@circleinteriors.com](mailto:gwermer@circleinteriors.com)  
with your mobile no. if you want  
a text reminder.

Bring a snack if you like.

Weekly Thursdays

Sutherland Shire / St George

Homebirth Support Group

Time: from 10.30am

Winter Location: Virginia's House @  
5 Balfour Avenue, Caringbah (North)  
Contact: Virginia p. 9501 0863  
e. [maddvirg@yahoo.com.au](mailto:maddvirg@yahoo.com.au)

Come and escape the cold and enjoy a hot cuppa  
and some fresh baked delights  
while the kids run amok!

Thursday 1st

Blue Mountains Homebirth Support Group

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Mid Mountains Community Centre  
3 New Street, Lawson  
Cost: \$2.00 - \$5.00

Contact: Alicia p. 4759 2336

or Sara e. [dave-sara@bigpond.com](mailto:dave-sara@bigpond.com)

Bring a healthy snack to share if you get a chance,  
if not come anyway.

School Holidays is a casual catch up (played by ear).  
All welcome.

Monday 12th

Illawarra Birth Choices Group

Topic: VBAC

Guest Speaker: Independent Midwife  
Rachele Meredith to lead discussion.

Time: 10.30am - 12.30pm

Location: Russell Vale Community Hall  
(cnr. Keerong Avenue & Channon Street),  
Russell Vale

Contact: Sonia p. 0424 051 246

or find out more at: [www.illawarra.birthchoices.info](http://www.illawarra.birthchoices.info)

## AUGUST

Sunday 1st

Submissions due for

Spring Edition of birthings magazine

Topic: "Ceremonies & Rituals"

Weekly Wednesdays

Inner West

Homebirth Support Group

Time: from 10.00am

Location: Maundrell Park, Petersham  
(cnr. Stanmore Road & Hepetoun Street)  
Contact: e. [gwermer@circleinteriors.com](mailto:gwermer@circleinteriors.com)  
with your mobile no. if you want a text reminder.  
Bring a snack if you like.

Weekly Thursdays

Sutherland Shire / St George

Homebirth Support Group

Time: from 10.30am

Winter Location: Virginia's House @  
5 Balfour Avenue, Caringbah (North)  
Contact: Virginia p. 9501 0863  
e. [maddvirg@yahoo.com.au](mailto:maddvirg@yahoo.com.au)

Come and escape the cold and enjoy a  
hot cuppa and some fresh baked delights  
while the kids run amok!

Thursday 12th

Blue Mountains Homebirth Support Group

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Mid Mountains Community Centre  
3 New Street, Lawson  
Cost: \$2.00 - \$5.00

Contact: Alicia p. 4759 2336

or Sara e. [dave-sara@bigpond.com](mailto:dave-sara@bigpond.com)

Bring a healthy snack to share if you get a chance,  
if not come anyway.

School Holidays is a casual catch up (played by ear).  
All welcome.

Thursday 22nd

Pregnancy & Parenting Network meeting

Theme: Returning to paid employment

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Jane Palmer's house,  
27 Hart Street, Dundas Valley

Contact: Jane (independent midwife)  
p. 9873 1750 or e. [jane@pregnancy.com.au](mailto:jane@pregnancy.com.au)

Please bring a plate of food to share.  
All Welcome.

Thursday 29th

Blue Mountains Homebirth Support Group

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Mid Mountains Community Centre  
3 New Street, Lawson

Cost: \$2.00 - \$5.00

Contact: Alicia p. 4759 2336

or Sara e. [dave-sara@bigpond.com](mailto:dave-sara@bigpond.com)

Bring a healthy snack to share if you get a chance,  
if not come anyway.

School Holidays is a casual catch up (played by ear).  
All welcome.

Tuesday 27th

HAS Committee meeting

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Australian Doula College  
422 Marrickville Road, Marrickville

Contact: Virginia p. 0415 683 074

e. [info@homebirthsydney.org.au](mailto:info@homebirthsydney.org.au)

All welcome including kids.



# calendar continued... winter/early spring 2010

## AUGUST continued...

Monday 12th

Illawarra Birth Choices Group

Topic: Belly Dancing & Birth Stories

Guest Speaker: Lisa Duck.

Time: 10.30am - 12.30pm

Location: Russell Vale Community Hall  
(cnr. Keerong Avenue & Channon Street),  
Russell Vale

Contact: Sonia p. 0424 051 246

or find out more at: [www.illawarra.birthchoices.info](http://www.illawarra.birthchoices.info)

Thursday 19th

Pregnancy & Parenting Network meeting

Theme: Pregnancy & parenting for older mothers

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Jane Palmer's house,  
27 Hart Street, Dundas Valley

Contact: Jane (independent midwife)

p. 9873 1750 or e. [jane@pregnancy.com.au](mailto:jane@pregnancy.com.au)

Please bring a plate of food to share.

All Welcome.

Thursday 26th

Blue Mountains Homebirth Support Group

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Mid Mountains Community Centre  
3 New Street, Lawson

Cost: \$2.00 - \$5.00

Contact: Alicia p. 4759 2336

or Sera e. [dave-sara@bigpond.com](mailto:dave-sara@bigpond.com)

Bring a healthy snack to share if you get a chance,  
if not come anyway.

School Holidays is a casual catch up (played by ear).

All welcome.

Tuesday 27th

HAS Committee meeting

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Australian Doula College  
422 Marrickville Road, Marrickville

Contact: Virginia p. 0415 683 074

e. [info@homebirthsydney.org.au](mailto:info@homebirthsydney.org.au)

All welcome including kids.

## SEPTEMBER

Weekly Wednesdays

Inner West

Homebirth Support Group

Time: from 10.00am

Location: Maundrell Park, Petersham  
(cnr. Stanmore Road & Hopetoun Street)

Contact: e. [gwerner@circleinteriors.com](mailto:gwerner@circleinteriors.com)

with your mobile no. if you want a text reminder.

Bring a snack if you like.

Weekly Thursdays

Sutherland Shire / St George

Homebirth Support Group

Time: from 10.30am

Winter Location: Virginia's House @  
5 Balfour Avenue, Caringbah (North)

Contact: Virginia p. 9501 0863

e. [maddvirg@yahoo.com.au](mailto:maddvirg@yahoo.com.au)

Come and escape the cold and enjoy a hot cuppa  
and some fresh baked delights  
while the kids run amok!

Thursday 9th

Blue Mountains Homebirth Support Group

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Mid Mountains Community Centre  
3 New Street, Lawson

Cost: \$2.00 - \$5.00

Contact: Alicia p. 4759 2336

or Sera e. [dave-sara@bigpond.com](mailto:dave-sara@bigpond.com)

Bring a healthy snack to share if you get a chance,  
if not come anyway.

School Holidays is a casual catch up (played by ear).

All welcome.

Monday 13th

Illawarra Birth Choices Group

Topic: Brain development & interpersonal neurobiology

Guest Speaker: Penelope Sands

Time: 10.30am - 12.30pm

Location: Russell Vale Community Hall  
(cnr. Keerong Avenue & Channon Street),  
Russell Vale

Contact: Sonia p. 0424 051 246

or find out more at: [www.illawarra.birthchoices.info](http://www.illawarra.birthchoices.info)

Thursday 16th

Pregnancy & Parenting Network meeting

Theme: Introducing solids, nutrition,  
food additives & food intolerances

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Jane Palmer's house,  
27 Hart Street, Dundas Valley

Contact: Jane (independent midwife)

p. 9873 1750 or e. [jane@pregnancy.com.au](mailto:jane@pregnancy.com.au)

Please bring a plate of food to share.

All Welcome.

Thursday 23rd

Blue Mountains Homebirth Support Group

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Mid Mountains Community Centre  
3 New Street, Lawson

Cost: \$2.00 - \$5.00

Contact: Alicia p. 4759 2336

or Sera e. [dave-sara@bigpond.com](mailto:dave-sara@bigpond.com)

Bring a healthy snack to share if you get a chance,  
if not come anyway.

School Holidays is a casual catch up (played by ear).

All welcome.

Tuesday 28th

HAS Committee meeting

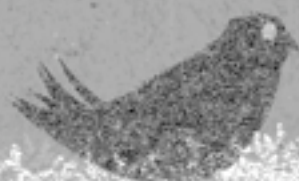
Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Location: Australian Doula College  
422 Marrickville Road, Marrickville

Contact: Virginia p. 0415 683 074

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All welcome including kids.



the topic for next issue is  
**'ceremonies & rituals'**

SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOME ON YOUR SPECIAL AND INTIMATE WAYS TO CELEBRATE OR HONOUR  
YOUR PREGNANCIES, BIRTHS, PLACENTAS AND BABIES  
E.G. BLESSINGWAYS, BABYMOONS, CHRISTENINGS, NAMING DAYS, PLACENTA BURIALS ETC.



AS ALWAYS, WE WELCOME YOUR BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS,  
BIRTH STORIES, LETTERS & BOOK REVIEWS

**Reminder** Please ensure we have your current email address so you can receive your membership expiry reminder as well as all the important homebirth updates in our e-newsletter.

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**birthings** is your magazine. Please contribute!  
Submissions due by 1st August 2010 for spring issue  
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