

Having fun draws them in

"I LOVE being involved in the community and seeing other people having fun and enjoying their time at our classes," said Riki Owens-Bennett, who started in February as the new community program co-ordinator at the Blackwood Uniting Church.

Riki has a degree in Environmental Management, however has been involved in organising and creating events for many different clubs and social groups.

"I'm friends with one of the Ministers here so when I heard about the position, I applied

straight away and was lucky enough to get the gig," laughed Riki.

"With our ageing population, the number of mature age residents looking for ways to fill their days is on the increase.

"Although we are keen for younger people to join our program as well. Mums with young children are often looking for a break from the kids and we do offer free creche facilities," added Riki.

One Blackwood resident who loves attending her art class is Helen Henbest.

"It's great meeting new people and making new friends - we're a very noisy lot here and some days I'm so busy talking to everyone I don't even get to dip my paintbrush at all!"

The Community Program has been going for

over 30 years and receives in excess of 300 enrolments each year.

There are many crafts and activities for people to choose from: yoga, smocking, art, garden, mosaics, knitting or scrapbooking - and many more plus a number of new classes planned.

For the men there is the 'Bike Shed' at Belair which repairs and recycles good quality second hand bikes to be donated to disadvantaged families.

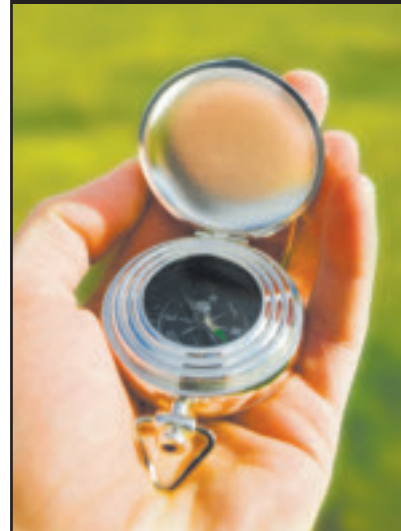
Classes are held on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am-12noon and 1-3pm. Fees can be paid per class or a reduced term fee applies.

❑ **Blackwood Uniting Church is located near the Blackwood roundabout. For more information phone Riki on 8278 7699.**



◆ Art tutor Doug Thomson gives 'pupil' Helen Henbest some tips on painting with acrylics; while new community program co-ordinator Riki Owens-Bennett watches on

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