



Sultan's Feast

**Sunday, 19 August,
at 12.30pm.**

Join us for our exciting series of gourmet lunches, featuring leading food columnist John Newton in conversation with Efendy owner and award-winning chef Somer Sivrioglu.

Tickets are \$75 and including a 6 course sumptuous feast and a glass of wine or mineral water.
(Includes \$40 tax deductible donation)

We have 8 seats left!

If you'd like to join us, please contact Susan on 9555-1213 or email basfevents@gmail.com very soon!

**Go Back to
Where You Came
From**

Public Screening

Thursday, 30 August
from 7:30pm. Cat and

A Sri Lankan Family Story

At a time when so many refugees are arriving on our shores from Sri Lanka, there is one grateful family already living safely here in Sydney, thanks in part to the financial support of Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation.

Carlos*, an experienced Sinhalese chef working in Colombo, had been imputed as a Tamil Tiger sympathizer. He and his Tamil wife, Maria*, received threats against their lives and they strongly believed that the Government could not guarantee their safety. So when an employer in Australia offered to bring them to this country on a 457 Temporary Employment Visa, and assured them this would lead to permanent residence here, they believed this could be the answer to their fears.

Their son was born the year after they arrived in Australia, and they continued to believe their future was secure. That belief was rudely shattered two years later when Carlos' employer returned his passport with the news that the 457 visa would not be extended.

This was the beginning of a very difficult period during which their claims for a Protection Visa were - after a wait of two years - rejected, and they endured a further two and a half years waiting for a Ministerial Intervention decision.

Carlos had work rights, but employers were reluctant to give him full-time work with Bridging Visas only granted for 3 months at a time. They eked out a living on wages from part-time work when he could find it. Support from BASF made it possible for them to obtain the medical services they needed, particularly for their son, and to provide them with food and other essentials when needed.

Finally, two years ago they were given permanent residence and now Carlos has obtained work as a chef, Maria has finished an advanced course in English and is hoping to begin child care training; and their son is doing extremely well at the local primary school.

Because of fears for her safety if she travelled there, Maria was not able to return to Sri Lanka to see her mother before she died, but at least her mother knew that Maria and her family were safe here in Australia. They look forward to the day when they can become proud - and useful - Australian citizens.

Fiddle Hotel, 456
Darling Street,
Balmain.

Amnesty Balmain and Balmain for Refugees invite you to a public screening of the final episode in series two of SBS's *Go Back to Where You Came From*.

There will be speakers from 7.45pm, the screening at 8.30pm, and discussion to follow until 10:00pm. Episodes 1 and 2 of the series will be screened on 28 and 29 August.

Donations collected on the night go to BASF. We hope you can take part in this special community event.

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With thanks to our supporters:

Virginia Walker
Honorary Chairperson
BASF

*Not their real names.

Who Have You Helped us to Help?

Many thanks to those kind and generous people who contributed funds to allow us to continue helping people like Carlos and Maria during the financial year 2011-2012. With your help we are currently supporting 243 asylum seekers, including 42 children, mainly from Aceh, Bangladesh, China, Iraq, and, North Korea, but many other countries as well.

Congratulations Frances Milne AM

We were all delighted to find our Management Committee Member, Frances Milne, listed with the other recipients of AMs - Members of the Order of Australia - in recognition of her work with ethnic communities, asylum seekers and refugees. The award should have included the adjective "tireless".

Frances has been a familiar figure at Villawood Immigration Detention Centre and on refugee advocacy committees as well as speaking on asylum seeker and refugee issues on TV and radio interviews. She was instrumental in the establishment of Balmain for Refugees Group of the Balmain Uniting Church and the establishment of BASF.

Frances has spent more than a decade organising pro bono legal assistance and assisting the lawyers in preparation of cases; attending court cases at all levels; and making frequent representations to the Minister on behalf of asylum seekers who would be in extreme danger should they be returned to their countries of origin. The award also recognised her previous work on the Ethnic Communities Council and other organizations.

Balmain for Refugees Forum held 20 June

Over 120 people braved chill winds and low temperatures to attend a Forum for Refugees at Balmain Town Hall on the evening of 20 June. John Menadue, AO, a former Secretary of the Immigration Department, discussed regional solutions to asylum seeker issues, while Lucy Morgan, Policy Officer from the Refugee Council of Australia, provided the audience with statistics and insights into outlooks for refugee arrivals in Australia. Ali Al Jenabi was also present to answer questions about *The People Smuggler*, Robin de Crespigny's recently published and highly acclaimed book about Ali Al Jenabi's travails trying to



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bring his family to Australia.

The meeting was chaired by Rochelle Porteous, Mayor of Leichhardt and the Forum was organised by Balmain for Refugees, with proceeds of \$668 going to Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation. A very generous donation of \$5,000 was also given to BASF by a person who, having attended the evening was anxious to help in our work.

We are very grateful to Leichhardt Council who made the use of the Balmain Town Hall possible.

Wine Tasting at Allens in Sydney on 15 June

BASF held a wine tasting evening on 15 June, which was hosted by our friends at Allens law firm and sponsored by Cogito wines. MC for the evening was our long time and very talented supporter John Newton. Almost 90 people enjoyed a great evening sampling 14 wines from around the world and raising close to \$5,000 to continue our work. Thanks to all who attended and to our wonderful volunteers on the night. Particular thanks also, of course, to Allens for providing the venue with the beautiful view for all those attending.

Upcoming BASF Art Auction

BASF intends to hold an art auction later this year. Some art works will be donated for auction by asylum seekers, but our hope is that artists working in our community who are not asylum seekers will also donate art works. To donate an art work, contact Virginia Walker on (02) 9712 7784 or 0418 261 160 or by email at asylumseekersfoundation@bigpond.com.

BASF Donation Form

Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation: PO Box 829, Five Dock NSW 2046. ABN 78 722 539 923

Tel: 0418 261 160 or email asylumseekersfoundation@bigpond.com and we'll call you.

Donations of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible

Payment options:

Credit card: details by email (or phone 0418 261 160)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Visa or MasterCard card No: _____

Name on
card _____

Expiry date: ____/____ 3 digit security code __ __ __

Direct deposit: UnitingCare NSW/Act Bridge for Asylum Seekers Fndt
BSB: 634 634. Account no: 100028813.

To ensure that you receive a tax-deductible receipt, please email your name and address, the date of the deposit and the amount deposited to asylumseekersfoundation@bigpond.com.