

PROVINCE OF ROSALIE RENDU



NEWSLETTER



Incorporated
works



The Daughters of Charity
of St Vincent de Paul Services

GREETINGS

Sister Ellen Flynn

Greetings to you all and welcome to the fourth edition of our quarterly Newsletter. To this edition I welcome with warmth and joy a new member of our family who will, from now onwards, make a regular appearance here. On April 1st, 2021, Marillac Neurological Care Centre (MNCC) became an independently registered charity and a subsidiary of Daughters of Charity Services in Great Britain. Congratulations and welcome to everyone concerned with MNCC! Please do take a moment to access the MNCC website and find out about their mission. Their piece in this Newsletter gives you a taster!

A big welcome also to The Passage; a project founded by the Daughters of Charity 40 years ago this year which has long since been an independent charity but remains closely affiliated to us. We are delighted that The Passage has joined us for this edition.

A few weeks ago we celebrated Easter and entered what I think of as the 'Season of Hope'. Everybody needs hope. The importance of hope lies in the fact that it sustains us in times of difficulty. One of the worst things we can do when life becomes tough is to lose hope. If, on the other hand, we hold fast to hope, we can endure anything. For Christians the root and basis for hope is that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead therefore overcoming the worst of darkness, loss and any form of hardship. For others the foundation of hope is placed perhaps in another faith or in another set of deeply held convictions. We will all experience times when hope wavers – and then we rely on each other to regain strength and fortify our spirit. Only when we have hope



hope can we give hope. As Vincentians we are essentially bringers of hope to those we seek to support. The pages of this newsletter are pregnant with hope. It shines up from the pages in words and images. Hope is strengthened by our commitment to solutions born of hope. But this is only half the story. Hope is actually born into mutuality and relationship, the true foundation of the Vincentian spirit. Whoever we are in our Vincentian Family each of us can ask, 'am I a person whose hope shines in my countenance? Am I able to give and receive hope? In dark days can I continue to hope?'

For myself, my hope is strengthened and inspired by the indomitable spirit of hope in those I accompany and relate to in every aspect of my life. My hope is inspired as I read these pages, not by the work or the service but by reaching out of one to the other in a two-way encounter of belief that love is what really matters. Today I send joyful, glorious and hope-filled thanks to all whom I have had the privilege to walk alongside. I hope that the readers of this newsletter can say the same.

May God fill our hearts with renewed hope during this 'Season of Hope'.



OUT THERE

The pandemic has put a huge strain on young families with a loved one in prison. In January, Out There announced a full timetable of activities for children impacted by imprisonment, which ran until the end of the February half-term. Sessions included family mindfulness, yoga, creative arts classes, peer support, and even a virtual zoo session run by Chester Zoo. Out There also delivered sessions on journaling and thinking about good qualities in ourselves and others. Many friendships have been fostered out of these classes.

Additionally, young families enjoyed online cooking sessions that support them with home life and home-schooling. Classes have included learning to make simple and easy lunches, shortbread baking and cooking for family celebrations including Chinese New Year and Pancake Day.



Many of these families are facing increased financial pressure due to the ceasing of visits to prisons, increased costs of communication and having to send money to family members not working. Out There have been able to support families with utility payments, white goods for the home - for example, washing machines - and support to get children and families online. By February, Out There had already provided telephone and online support to 138 people impacted by imprisonment across Greater Manchester this year.

OUT THERE CONTINUED ...

During Children's Mental Health Week, which took place from 1-7 February, Out There, alongside St Vincent's Family Project and Daughters of Charity Services, published a blog which put a spotlight on children's mental health after seeing a surge of requests for support. The aim of the week is to raise vital funds to help young people get the emotional support they need. The charities praised parents, carers and teachers for being observant to changes in young people's emotions and behaviours.

You can read the blog on the Daughters of Charity Services website:
<https://bit.ly/3dmLlfe>

Out There have worked hard since the start of the pandemic to transform their services from face-to-face to online in order to continue supporting those who needed them. An artist, Paula Whyllie, created a colourful sketch (below) to illustrate the work carried out by the project over the past 12 months.





ST MARY'S HOUSE OF WELCOME

As we start to move out of the pandemic emergency, we are focused on making some Welcome Steps to engage with our community, while maintaining COVID safe activities. The Welcome Relief meals program continues and we have maintained meals support and emergency relief to our community as well as our homeless community remaining in temporary accommodation. This work will continue until 30 June 2021 with the support of the Victorian Parliamentary kitchen. We will focus to ensure that we support our service users with access to flu vaccination with our local council partners on site during May and identifying COVID vaccinations when we have more detail to hand.

The Mission and Governance committee met with the senior management team to focus on service delivery, working with our clients to engage them in the types of services important to them and plan practical steps to reopening within the remaining physical space and capacity restrictions required by our public health authorities. It is wonderful to see our art and craft groups and fishing trip outings recommence. This is a watershed time to review and reset our service portfolio, be ready to respond to new and emerging needs and continue to be a place of connection, practical support and hope.

NDIS psychosocial disability program

We now have 60 clients in the NDIS program. Kirsty Plieter joined the team as Program Manager in January 2021. She was appointed internally from her role as Senior Support worker and brings a strong background in NDIS and international community development in third world countries.

In February 2021, we went through our external audit to assess our program's compliance with the Standards. The audit was conducted remotely. The auditors noted a good level of participation from top management, workers and participants. The audit team recommended St Mary House of Welcome (SMHOW) for recertification. The audit team acknowledges the efforts made by the organisation in improving its processes and documentation to meet requirements of this standard. This is a credit to our wonderful NDIS team. Here are some statements from the participants made to the auditors during their interviews:

"If you have any query about the information the worker explains everything";

"They are all very good people to talk to";

"Very thorough in explaining information";

"There is not one part of the Service Agreement that they haven't explained";

"They are ready to assist with anything you ask for"

ST MARY'S HOUSE OF WELCOME CONTINUED ...

Audit Findings

- All participants interviewed were very positive of the level of service received at SMHOW;
- Strong evidence of governance and involvement of the board in NDIS service planning; and
- Workers interviewed showed a high level of person-centeredness and dedication to supporting participants achieve their goals.

The NDIS team recently supported a couple who are long-term service users as they coped with a critical injury and the loss of their daughter. While the couple were disconnected from any medical planning, the team were able to work closely with them to identify ways they could reunite with family members who they had not had communication with for many years. This newly-developed family support brought joy to the couple in what was a very difficult period for them. Our values were very much core to our work.

60th anniversary celebrations

In May 2020, our 60th anniversary was quietly celebrated in the height of lockdown with staff and a few clients sharing a coffee and cake with Sr Debra. We are now planning a slightly bigger and more formal celebration with staff, clients, volunteers and supporters in May 2021, along with a short video production of our work and a dedication of our service for the next season. The fundraising team, led by Kristine Robertson, is working to have all of our fundraising events back and running as COVID-19 friendly as possible! All of our events consider social distancing, hand hygiene and

any and all guidelines recommended by the Department of Health.

During March, SMHOW was proud to host our very first movie night for a very special opening night of the film *Nomadland*! Over 70 loyal supporters enjoyed the opportunity to meet together and watch this wonderful film about a woman in her sixties who, after losing everything in the Great Recession, embarks on a journey through the American West, living as a van-dwelling modern-day sleeping rough nomad. There was a raffle and opportunities to purchase merchandise before delicious snacks and a great movie. Feedback has been excellent and everyone seemed to enjoy the opportunity to socialise, support our clients and enjoy a great film very close to the work and reality of those we serve.

Our charity fundraising bike ride **WHEELS FOR MEALS** was back and better than ever in March. A group of 25+ riders cycled along the Great Ocean Road from Point Fairy to Sorrento. This loyal group of supporters raise funds to support our meals program and emergency relief support.

We have also introduced a wonderful event, our first ever **MOVIN' FOR MEALS!** A community fitness and fundraising challenge to help fight homelessness. St Mary's is challenging all Australians to walk, run, cycle or just move a chosen number of kilometres throughout the month of April to raise funds for those in our community who need it most. This event is great for individuals, teams, schools and or workplaces. Interested in participating?



ST VINCENT'S FAMILY PROJECT

The year started with many uncertainties for young families. And with children remaining home from school, St Vincent's Family Project (SVFP) recognised that positive parenting was never more needed. The charity created a 'Family Space' programme to support young families in Westminster online. Sessions offer a variety of virtual classes, including a Positive Parenting Course, Baby Massage, Toddler Learning group and Zoom coffee mornings. SVFP has also been encouraging families to stay active during this period to help boost positive energy. To keep the whole family fit, the project holds live weekly fitness classes every Wednesday for parents on Zoom. They have also incorporated a small exercise routine in their Toddlers' Learning Zone group on a Monday for the children to enjoy.

Staff have missed running their regular Friday sessions this past year where they held either

www.svfp.org.uk

a nutrition or baking class for parents. However, in January the project started an online weekly 'Recipe Challenge' for families, where a recipe is selected and families are tasked to make the dish. There are even prizes for the winners! Unlike their previous parent-only food-based sessions, these sessions involve the children and it has proved a popular success. One thing the project has been concerned about during the pandemic is that isolation has reduced the interaction and range of stimulus for children. But the Recipe Challenge has given many children a new activity to develop tactile skills, an understanding of food and new words. It's also a fun way to help build healthy family bonds during an intense period.

SVFP's arts and drama therapists, including students, have continued to provide support virtually as well as going back into schools from March. The project hopes to resume face-to-face work towards the end of April with outdoor activities and meeting with family 'bubbles'.



HUTT ST CENTRE

Hutt St Centre opens the doors to its newly refurbished facilities

After much anticipation, we're delighted to share that we officially opened the doors to our newly refurbished Hutt St Centre on Sunday 28 February 2021. The refreshed facilities are designed to better meet the changing needs of people at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Adelaide.

Features of the refurbishment include:

- A private retreat where families can find comfort and safety
- Medical treatment rooms for clients to connect with specialist health services
- A creative hub encouraging clients to focus on their wellbeing and build confidence
- And an all-weather courtyard for outdoor dining, group activities and social connection.

We've also refreshed our essential amenities, including a bright and spacious dining area, modern bathrooms, secure lockers, and a fully-equipped laundry.

The refurbishment was officially opened by His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, Governor of South Australia, as Hutt St Centre's new Patron. Archbishop Patrick O'Regan blessed the facilities and Major Sumner AM offered a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony.

In our long history of serving the community, this refurbishment marks a significant milestone for Hutt St Centre and a vital step towards our vision of an end to homelessness.



Vincentian Care Plus
We make your HOME CARE difference



VINCENTIAN CARE PLUS

The team at Vincentian Care Plus (VCP) have worked tirelessly over recent months to ensure that the pandemic and lockdown does not interrupt the continuity of care for those we support in their own homes across Westminster. The lack of interaction for many of the people we support has heightened the need for VCP to provide a welcoming, friendly and dignified service, and the carers have responded as they always have, with an exemplary and proactive approach to their work in keeping with our shared Vincentian Values.

The telephone befriending service has continued to operate, providing an opportunity for those receiving support from

VCP to receive a regular call from one of the Daughters of Charity, which has helped in tackling isolation at such a challenging time. Whilst still small at present, there is hope that this spring the service can be extended to allow for further befriending relationships to be developed.

There has been a particular focus on supporting some of the most marginalised people in the community, with VCP providing support to several residents of a hostel for people experiencing homelessness and who have multiple support needs. Working closely with the hostel staff, social services, and the local authority, carers from VCP have helped provide a stable, secure and welcoming environment as the people we support seek to engage with a range of services to help reduce the risk of returning to the streets.



St Catherine's
Aged Care Services



St Catherine's Aged Care Services Staff

ST CATHERINE'S AGED CARE SERVICES

St Patrick's Day Celebrations

On Wednesday the 17th of March 2021, Saint Catherine's celebrated Saint Patrick's Day where so many of our staff, residents and families joined us for this special occasion.

So many residents in Saint Catherine's have Irish heritage and it was wonderful to see such celebrations on the day.

Green was most certainly the most popular choice of colour that we adorned. Please enjoy a selection of photographs that commemorated this event.

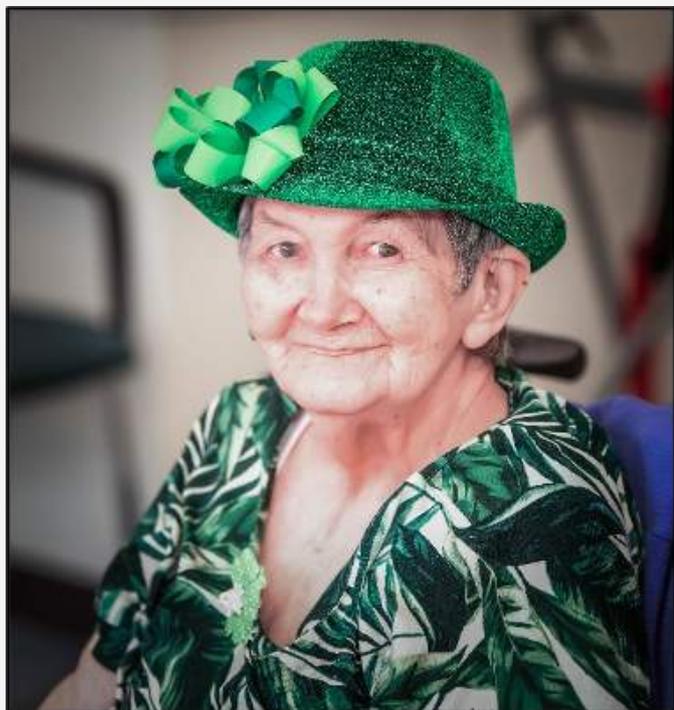


Sr Denise and Josie



Sr Lan and Cora

ST CATHERINE'S AGED CARE SERVICES
CONTINUED ...



June



Sr Josie



Administrative Staff



Charlie



THE LOUISE PROJECT

March marked one year since the pandemic forced many charities to change how they usually operate. While The Louise Project made huge adjustments to move some of their support services online, they also made the decision not to close their doors and, instead, continue to offer crisis support to the community with measures in place to keep everyone safe.

It has been a difficult time for everyone with ongoing restrictions enforced, but even more so for those who live alone, speak little English and have health problems. Therefore many people have come to the door of the project to seek help. The Louise Project's Senior Interpreter, Pamela Covaci, was supported by the project for many years and is now a highly valued employee. She reflects on a time during the pandemic when the team responded in true Vincentian spirit:

www.thelouiseproject.org.uk



"A young woman who has a young child had been told that she had to vacate her flat in three weeks as the Landlord was selling the house and wanted her out. Totally against the law, particularly at this time of COVID! Needless to say, she was panic-stricken. Again, much time was spent contacting various people who might be able to help and after some time, and a couple of visits again the situation was resolved. The young woman visited us again to tell us that she has a new flat. 'I was worried and afraid, and you helped to carry my burden,' the woman said."

Tackling food poverty in Govanhill and beyond has also been at the forefront of The Louise Project's agenda. The inability to obtain adequate and healthy foods can lead to poor health, so staff at the project have been delivering fresh fruit and vegetables to local families in need each week, which are kindly donated by Locavore, a local and sustainable food enterprise.

SETON VILLA

The week commencing Monday 22 February 2021 was a Red-Letter week for Seton Villa! On Monday 22nd we received advice from the Department of Health that masks were no longer required to be worn by staff or visitors within Residential Disability Care Centres. This was great news for our Group Home staff and came just in time for our very special 'Ribbon-cutting' ceremonies at both Jenny's Place and Rosalie's Place that took place on Tuesday 23 February 2021.



Left to right: Residents Melissa, Carmel and Susie



Left to Right: Cllr Jerome Laxale, Shauna Jarrett – Board member, Gareth Ward MP, Sr Therese Haywood – DOC, Marco Colli – Board Chair, Victor Dominello MP, John Cassimatis – Board member, Judi Higgin – Board member

Residents and staff were joined by the Hon Gareth Ward MP, Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disabilities, the Hon Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Customer Service and Member for Ryde, and Councillor Jerome Laxale, Mayor of Ryde City. Carmel and Susie prepared speeches for the occasion and it was a fabulous morning, with dignitaries being proudly shown through the new houses by residents and enjoying morning tea with other guests on the back porch.



Left to Right: Victor Dominello MP, Gareth Ward MP, Peter Gardiner CEO, Resident Susie, Cllr Jerome Laxale, Marco Colli – Board Chair

SETON VILLA CONTINUED ...

On Thursday 25 February 2021 we finally received formal advice from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Commission that our Registration as a NDIS Provider has been renewed for a further three years. Significantly, our Registration Groups have been expanded to include Support Coordination, allowing us to bill the NDIA for supporting people with disability to access appropriate supports of their choosing in accordance with their funded NDIS Plan.

Lastly, we have signed and exchanged contracts with Academy Construction and Development for construction of our third new property at 91 Bridge Road, Ryde. This will become a new Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) home with five bedrooms in a two plus three configuration, similar in design to Rosalie's Place. Construction will begin in April and we are scheduled to receive this new home, to be known as Leia's Place (of Star Wars fame) from Academy at the end of September 2021.



91 Bridge Road, Ryde



ST JOSEPH'S

Lots of fun activities have taken place in the houses of St Joseph's this quarter, starting in January where the people at the project celebrated Burns Night by designing their own tartans, baking Scottish chocolate fudge, creating art and writing poems.

In early February, everyone braved winter wonderland by venturing into their back gardens to build impressive snowmen. They then showed off their kitchen skills again by flipping pancakes on pancake day and baking date and walnut loaves. The endless stream of foodie photos on Facebook were enough to make anyone's tummy rumble!



After all the winter fun, everyone was ready to put away their hats and gloves and welcome the arrival of Spring with some bright arts and crafts sessions. The people supported by the project took part in a 'best decorated plant pot week' as well as a flower drawing competition and everyone had a wonderful time. Well done to all who took part!



the marillac
neurological
care centre



THE MARILLAC NEUROLOGICAL CARE CENTRE

December at the Marillac is usually a magical time: meetings stop, trees go up, reindeer appear (literally reindeer appear in the hall!) and our activities team works wonders to ensure that everyone has a festive time culminating with our end of year Carol Service. Last year things were different. There were no reindeer or Carol Service. The activities team worked very creatively to organise as many shows whilst keeping people safe. We managed to get some families up on Christmas Day for window visits but, like the rest of the country, we were on lockdown.

In the New Year, work picked up in an effort to get across the Independence line and join Daughters of Charity Services fully by April. We were lucky that we had the experience and guidance of the Daughters and Daughters of Charity Services to guide us in the right direction. Sheree Rowland was invaluable and certainly a driving force for us. Prior to January, we had been supported by a Board of Advisors and we managed to add to them and recruit some experienced and skilled people from our local community. These have all become Trustees in our new service, and their skills and experience will be essential in guiding us through the first year.

We have, at the same time as working towards our Independence, been running

THE MARILLAC NEUROLOGICAL CENTRE CONTINUED ...

our service. The clinical teams have been challenged with a service running at maximum occupancy and a waiting list to fill any vacant beds. They have responded magnificently, and not only managed to provide high quality care and treatment, but the fact they have managed to do this during a pandemic to the magnitude of COVID is amazing. The support team managed to ensure that we were never short of PPE and have managed to keep our resident's safe.

In January, we managed to organise a vaccination programme that ensured we had 47 residents and 136 staff vaccinated over a period of Sunday's. We also managed to include Seton and Donworth House.

In March we got the go ahead to be Independent. Our Board of Advisors became Trustees, our legalities were signed and on the 1st April 2021, we managed to join Daughters of Charity Services and became Marillac Neurological Care Centre as an Independent Charity.





THE PASSAGE

No Night Out: preventing rough sleeping as restrictions ease

The latest official figures show a fall in rough sleeping in England, with a 27% reduction in Westminster, a result of the excellent Everyone In initiative of which The Passage was proud to be a part, working alongside other agencies to protect extremely vulnerable people during the pandemic.

It shows what can be achieved when there is a genuine partnership approach, matched with real political will. Although this is promising news, it is only a starting point; if 2020 was the health pandemic, 2021 could well be the economic pandemic.

There will be significant challenges as we come out of lockdown, with the risk of many more people coming to the streets through job loss. It is vital that we build on the lessons learned during the last 12 months and ensure that the number of people sleeping rough continues to fall.

To keep up the momentum, we have launched a new rapid response service called No Night Out. The service provides clients with immediate access to safe, temporary accommodation combined with tailored specialist support – because we know that even one night on the streets can have a devastating effect and make recovery and resettlement much more difficult. We

THE PASSAGE CONTINUED ...

are already strengthening our relationship with existing hostels and building relationships with new ones to ensure that there is adequate provision.

Our priority has always been to ensure our services remain safe and open throughout the pandemic. As we navigate the way forward into a new normality, our new service offers robust solutions to further prevent street homelessness.

With the rollout of the Covid-19 vaccination programme there is finally some light at the end of the tunnel, and for the first time, there is genuine hope for the lifting of restrictions. As we come out of lockdown, it is important that we do not begin to neglect those individuals who will still need our support.

You can find out more about No Night Out and our next steps towards preventing homelessness by visiting www.passage.org.uk.

