

ISSUE 2 {2021}

# networking

BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO COMMUNITIES

## TOGETHER



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**networking**

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*networking* contains a variety of news and stories from across Churches of Christ in Queensland. Articles and photos can be submitted to [communications@cofcqld.com.au](mailto:communications@cofcqld.com.au). The submission deadline for the next edition of *networking* is 20 September 2021.



# CEO update



One of the most rewarding aspects of my role is listening to stories told by our team on the frontline and hearing how they are working together to bring hope and meaning to communities.

So far this year, I have enjoyed travelling the state and hearing stories and meeting people in person. Perhaps it is even more special after not being able to do so in 2020.

Throughout May, the Build the Movement regional events took place, bringing together members from our churches and organisation to hear how we are bringing Christ's love through all that we do. I presented a local perspective for each region on the impact we are having in their community. Thank you to everyone who attended and shared their stories

(pictured below and on opposite page with representatives from each gathering). I am eagerly planning another tour of our services for later this year and I look forward to seeing representatives from our churches and services at our Annual General Meeting on 4 November. Board Chair Ken Ewald, Council Chair Kevan Denny and I will provide a detailed overview of the organisation and movement for the 2020-21 period at the meeting.

## **BRAND REFRESH**

At Churches of Christ, we have a long and proud history of care – almost 90 years in fact, which is something to really celebrate.

We are so proud of our history and the movement that birthed this amazing organisation. It all started with groups of people with diverse backgrounds and skills seeing a need in the community, and working together to make a difference. That still describes who we are today.



We have enjoyed rapid and substantial growth over the years. One of the consequences of having the privilege to serve multiple communities in many different ways, is that we quite literally turn up differently in some of the places we operate, from signage to brochures to how we describe ourselves. So, while we consistently deliver outstanding care to the people we serve, we sometimes look and sound quite different while we're doing it. In the interest of addressing that challenge - as well as in the spirit of our value of continual innovation - we've undertaken a brand refresh project. We used insights that you shared in the CANVASS staff survey to help inform where we've landed. We also undertook a consultation process, reaching out to representatives from across the organisation in every region, and in every type of service. We've taken on board all of the feedback, and have incorporated that into this next evolution of our brand.

We recently shared a first glimpse of the new branding to our people. From here we will roll out the new branding in stages, including a new website next year.

**LEADING THE WAY**

We have held a couple of great leadership events at our Kenmore campus recently, including an ACOM event focused on leadership and resilience and the Launchpad event for our new ministering people. In October, we also look forward to once again taking part in the Global Leadership Summit, with an event being hosted at Kenmore as well as regional events.

We are committed to developing our people and building the Kingdom of God, and through these initiatives, we are building our ministering people to be the best possible leaders to guide their communities.

**TOGETHER**

Our reach as an organisation and movement extends across all ages, regions and circumstances. Yet,

we all work together to respond to the needs of individuals, families and communities. One of the finest examples of how we work together is our Strategic Action Leadership Teams (SALTs) across Queensland. In this edition of *Networking*, you can read about how one of the newest SALTs located in Mackay has brought together churches and services to promote an important cause in their community. There are many stories about how our dedicated teams are working together with our clients to offer hope and foster wellbeing. I hope you enjoy this edition of *Networking*. God bless.

Gary Edwards  
Chief Executive Officer ■





■ Members of our Board with representatives from Arana Hills Church of Christ.

## Board and Council update

Our Conference Council and Board continue to strategically guide our organisation, ensuring we are on the right path to deliver our strategic plan according to our values and Churches of Christ Way. Kevan Denny, Council Chair and Conference Council President, stepped up to the role earlier this year, taking over from Geoff Charles. “It has been about six months since I started as Council Chair. I thank God for the privilege of serving with my fellow Council members and representing our movement in various forums. Thank you all for your support and encouragement,” Kevan said. Central to his role is growing our faith communities. “A key priority for me is to amplify the great stories, challenges and needs of our churches and church leaders, building disciples, and promoting and facilitating friendships amongst our affiliated churches.” Kevan has been travelling the state and meeting with churches and reporting back to Council. Geoff Runge has been appointed Deputy Chair of Council. He will join Kevan in representing Churches of

“ I am greatly inspired each time I am out and about meeting church leaders and staff.

”

Christ in Queensland at the national level with the Council of Churches of Christ in Australia. In May, the Board was set to tour our seniors living services in Melbourne. But, unfortunately, the COVID-19 outbreak in the city prevented this from going ahead. But the Queensland members instead were able to take the opportunity to visit services across the Brisbane region, including not just our Seniors Living, but Children, Youth and Families, Housing Services and our churches. The tour to Melbourne has now been rescheduled for February 2022. Like Kevan and Gary Edwards, Ken regularly visits our churches and services, listening to stories and finding out how relationships between our

places can be forged and flourished. “My priority is to continue to visit and listen to affiliated churches and management, doing everything I can with God’s grace, to bridge the gap between church and the larger community services arm of our movement. I am greatly inspired each time I am out and about meeting church leaders and staff,” Ken said. This year, Ken has been involved with Elders at Whitehill Church of Christ in Raceview. He has also been involved with the residents of our Bribie Island Aged Care Service. In addition, he attended the induction of Evan Trenbin at Bundaberg Church of Christ and met with Bill Ott and Jamie Smith from Camp Hill Church of Christ about a possible church plant. Some critical decisions of the Board in recent meetings include moving forward with production of a second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, the transfer of management of Gidgee Inn, mandatory Covid vaccinations for staff working in or visiting Residential Aged Care services, and the handover of management of the popular Kenmore Campus café and community centre to Kenmore Church of Christ. ■



■ The God's Country Trail Ride takes place in the picturesque Scenic Rim.

## God's Country Trail Ride

Our churches each have their unique ways of reaching out to their communities.

In 1973, Rosevale Church of Christ, southwest of Brisbane, organised its first annual Trail Ride for local horse-riding enthusiasts before also adding trail bikes to the event. Today, almost 50 years later, the event continues to be well supported by the local community, providing fun and Christian fellowship for all attending while raising money for worthwhile charities.

Over the years, the event has taken different formats, including separate horse and bike events and at one stage welcoming 350 horse riders and 500 bike riders. However, for the past six years, the event has catered for bike riders only, with the last event, over the 2021 Anzac Day long weekend, welcoming 650 riders. The entry fee meant the bike riders could ride as much, or as little as they like.

Rosevale Church of Christ's Lyndell Christensen said a local church family generously opened their property for the event.

"We had difficulty accessing suitable property to hold the event, with many property owners not keen to allow that many riders on their land. However, one of our church families has a large property with tracks throughout that was just the ticket," Lyndell said.

The property had a flat grassy area for car parking and a place for food stalls, and a slashed, fenced off area for children and beginners to ride.

"The other tracks are rated on their suitability for the riders' standard, and they can choose where they ride."

At the day-long event, attendees can buy food or bring their own, with local friends of the church and members of neighbouring churches and past members volunteering to make the day a success.

Over the years, revenue from the cover charge has raised money for local aged care homes, Queensland Ambulance Service, Special School Projects, and Vanuatu cyclone relief.

"The Trail Ride is just another form of outreach the church is involved in, and we are thankful to our Lord for providing us with a wonderful district in which to

hold these Trail Rides," Lyndell said. Regional Engagement Partner Justine Cadena attended and witnessed the outreach of Jesus through the event. "While we are all wrestling with how best to represent Jesus to a society suffering from spiritual apathy, scepticism and past hurt, Rosevale Church of Christ has re-launched a time-tested method of drawing young families and youth to a place of adventure and the opportunity for relationship and spiritual conversation," Justine said. "In this pocket of mountainous beauty, the challenge for the rider who has to climb mountains, navigate steep descents, cross creeks and minimise harm isn't unlike our very own life journey.

"Folk from Rosevale Church of Christ leverage the unique environment in which they are located to gently point the hundreds of trail-bike aficionados to an infallible GPS and everlasting strength and power ... Jesus.

Journeying with Him is certainly the most exciting ride I've ever been on." ■

# Global Leadership Summit 2021 – host a GLS Local event

**E**ach year we take part in and partner with the Global Leadership Summit (GLS), which inspires and equips world-class leadership that ignites transformation.

The two-day GLS brings together 400,000 participants for the world's largest leadership event.

In 2021, it has launched a new and exciting initiative that allows local churches to host their summit.

With as few as 10 people, churches can shape their own GLS, suited to the people and dynamic at their venue and across multiple sessions, times or dates in the six weeks from 8 October to 21 November 2021.

This year, the stellar line-up of exceptional speakers, include: Craig Croeschel, Founder and Senior Pastor, Life Church; Shola Richards, Founder

and CEO, Go Together Global; Prof. Francesca Gino, Harvard Business School; and Jerry Lorenzo, Founder and Fashion Designer, Fear of God.

The unique group of world-class leaders will share their distinct perspectives to inspire and equip attendees with practical skills to apply right away in their personal and professional lives.

The GLS understands that when leaders get better, whole communities get better too. The GLS Local events are the perfect opportunity to empower your circle of influence at your church and in your community.

If you want to host a GLS Local event at your church, some basic requirements include:

- A minimum group of 10 people, with each person registering through the website.

- An event held anywhere between 8 October and 21 November 2021.
- A large screen/projector to show speakers.
- The sufficient bandwidth to stream or download large video files.

You can create the event you want – including several days or sessions and other event features, including catering and other entertainment – it is up to you and your local community.

For more information, go to [globalleadership.org.au/gls2021/](http://globalleadership.org.au/gls2021/) and keep an eye out for GLS events taking place near you. ■



**THE GLOBAL  
LEADERSHIP SUMMIT**



**YOU**  
HAVE INFLUENCE



# Build the Movement focuses on resilience

In June, 68 Ministering Persons and students participated in a special event brought to them by Churches of Christ, the Kenmore Church and the Australian College of Ministry (ACOM).

Ministers in today's world face many challenges. Attendees learnt how they can face these tests and be truly great leaders from some of the best in the business, including Dr Keith Farmer, Craig Farmer and Murray Bingham.

Director Church and Community Engagement, Tim McMenamin, said that participants learnt about resilience invocation and thriving as Ministering Persons.

"Dr Keith Farmer is a legend of our Movement. A Doctor of Psychology, he was the first principal of ACOM following the merge of the Kenmore College of Churches of Christ and the New South Wales Churches of Christ College. This merger created the first truly national approach to theological and practical preparation for ministry and leadership," Tim said.

"Keith has a significant focus on information and leadership, and character and competence."

The participants, including ACOM students, had the privilege of leaning into and gleaning from "one of the nation's great leaders who has turned mentoring and ministry supervision into the focus nationally for the context of ministry in Australia," he said. The event was a part of Churches of Christ's 'Build the Movement' initiative.

"Build the Movement means developing with great intentionality the character and competence of our people and leaders. We do this by offering events, gatherings and opportunities to learn, create community and have meaningful dialogue around key issues and personal growth," Tim said.

Tim said they hope to run similar events in the future, including masterclasses, seminars and workshops.

"The bottom line is, Build the Movement is about investing in our people to be the best they can be – both in their life and in their role."

Keep an eye out for more Build the Movement events. ■



■ Members of the Executive and Governance teams, with Dr Keith Farmer and Craig Farmer.

# Conversation starter

**A** project in Mackay between Mackay Church of Christ, the local Children, Youth and Families service and the Beaconsfield Men's Shed, is raising awareness for domestic and family violence prevention and promoting conversation about the issue in our communities.

Domestic and family violence continues to be an issue across Australia. On average, one woman a week is killed by someone in her family or who she had an intimate relationship with, and one in four children are exposed to family violence ([impactforwomen.org.au](http://impactforwomen.org.au)). Ben Pearson, Regional Engagement Partner and convenor of the new Mackay Strategic Action Leadership Team (SALT), said that Mackay and other areas in North Queensland are not immune to domestic and family violence. Because of this, the SALT decided to embrace an initiative to start the conversation about it in the community.

They decided to install the first 'Red Bench' in Mackay.

An initiative of the Red Rose Foundation, the Red Bench Project aims to build a permanent reminder that domestic violence occurs within all of our communities. A Red Bench in a public location seeks to raise public awareness and provide an opportunity for this critical issue to remain visible.

Cindy Kember and Linda Smith from Children, Youth and Families, first approached the SALT about the idea and working together to make it happen.

"When Cindy and Linda approached

the SALT, we thought it was a great idea and Paul Hicks, Pastor at Mackay Church of Christ, discussed it with the local Men's Shed to see if they could help make an appropriate bench," Ben said.

"We don't have a solution for domestic and family violence, but the red bench brings awareness in the community about the problem and gets people talking.

"We come across domestic and family violence regularly in our communities through our churches and services, and we wanted to raise awareness in the community and start the conversation."

"A pew was donated to the church and Men's Shed members loved the idea of using this pew as the Red Bench and the connection it then holds between Children, Youth and Families and the Church of Christ as they work together on this community issue.

The Men's Shed repurposed the pew, painting it a vibrant shade of red. It is quite a unique red bench." Ben said he instantly liked the idea of the Red Bench and what it stands for.

Ben said they would like to install other red benches across the region to raise awareness in other communities.

"We were the first to install a bench in Mackay, but mere weeks before we unveiled it, we found another organisation in town was also planning on installing one." The bench, which sits outside the local Church of Christ, was officially unveiled on 18 May 2021.

Team members, including: Mike



Folland, Director, Children, Youth and Families; Linda Smith; Cindy Kember; Paul Hicks; as well as Churches of Christ foster carers; Men's Shed members; and church community members attended the opening and ribbon cutting (pictured above).

Cindy, Service Manager of the local Children, Youth and Families service said that the bench symbolises 'changing the ending' when it comes to domestic and family violence.

"Domestic and family violence does not discriminate; it does not matter if you work, don't work, are wealthy or are homeless. Domestic violence is an issue that we all need to talk about, raise awareness and say Domestic and Family violence is never okay," Linda said.

To find out more about the Red Bench Project, go to [redrosefoundation.com.au/index.php/redbench/](http://redrosefoundation.com.au/index.php/redbench/). ■

# First connected youth starting their adult lives

**T**he first young people have graduated from the Youth CONNECT program, with 13 completing all of the required outcomes for the innovative three-year program. It has been a huge achievement for the young people who have shown the strength of spirit to overcome adversity to begin their adult lives.

On 1 December 2017 Churches of Christ in Queensland, in partnership with the Queensland Government, officially commenced the Youth CONNECT program.

Youth CONNECT is an individually-tailored program that supports vulnerable young people to get on their feet and survive and thrive in their adult life. It delivers sustainable housing and wrap-around support for young people exiting, or who have exited, statutory care and who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It aims to build resilience and reduce homelessness for these vulnerable young people.

Mason\* graduated from the Youth CONNECT in late-2020. While tirelessly looking for a job, he came across an opportunity to work at a resort close to Uluru. With the support of his Case Manager who he was still in regular contact with, he was able to end his lease, book flights, get to the airport and start the next chapter of his life, with the most spectacular backdrop. He is starting to build social connections in his new home, but still connects weekly with his case manager to have a chat and relieve some of the loneliness of being so far away. Mason is just one of the success

stories from the first round of graduates. It is not just an exciting time for the participants, but also for the Youth CONNECT team members who have been on the journey with the young people.

Case Manager, Brian Girot, says he and his colleagues experience great pride in seeing the growth and development of the young people. "Some of the young people have left us feeling proud, and we have had a sense of accomplishment and amazement as we have followed their journey to independence," Brian said.

Case Manager Jane Marks is optimistic for the futures of the young people who have completed the program.

"I'm proud to have been able to have an impact in their lives while they were in the program. As I see their journey with Youth CONNECT come to an end, I feel that I have equipped them with the keys to success as they start their journey of independence and success," Jane said.

The young people are an inspiration to many, including Case Manager Taylor Alapaki.

"Many of the young people who enter the program come from challenging backgrounds with instability, which can perpetuate vulnerabilities. It gives me comfort knowing that when a young person graduates from Youth CONNECT, they have a stronger foundation. I am amazed to see them develop into independent and resilient young adults," Taylor said.

The innovative Youth CONNECT

program is delivered under a Queensland Government-issued Social Benefit Bond since 2017. The outcomes-based bond arrangement involves the Queensland Government, valued investors and Churches of Christ in Queensland. Over the six-year period, it will support 300 young people. For the program to be deemed as meeting its obligations under the bond funding, 20 per cent of participants need to graduate from the program. So far, the success rate is 37 per cent, far out pacing expectations. For the investors, witnessing the first young people successfully complete the program, should give them confidence that they have had the opportunity to make a meaningful difference to the lives of a vulnerable cohort of young people.

On 1 June 2021, the program accepted the final referral to the program, with the 300th young person commencing their three-year journey. There are currently 214 young people being supported at various stages of their journey. They are each working together with their Case Manager and those around them to find 'homefulness', a sense of connection, and the necessary skills they need to thrive as adults. ■

\*name changed to protect identity

# Ready for the challenge

**F**or the past three years, teams of determined young people from our Children, Youth and Families services have taken part in the Kokoda Challenge. This year, on Saturday 17 July, four teams, all called the Desert Daisies, tackled the challenge in the Gold Coast hinterland. The Desert Daisies teams were comprised of young people aged just 11 to 16 from our foster care services, Supported Independent Living Services and Residential Care Services, including Kookaburra House and Bundamba Lodge. Participating alongside the young people were Children, Youth and Families team members Rachel Robinson, Jacob Spall, Ben Pritchard, Molly Robinson and Kylie Collins, with support crew member, Brent Iverson. Regional Manager, Rachel Robinson, was proud to report all of the young people who started the trek successfully finished it.

“Despite being incredibly tired by the end and having very sore legs, the young people’s months of training, as well as their encouragement of each other, helped all four teams get to the finish line,” Rachel said.

Rachel said the Desert Daisies undertook a cross-training program by way of preparation.

“The kids did a lot of Adventure Therapy, including mountain biking, walks and also camps at North Stradbroke Island. Some did boxing weekly, which is fantastic endurance training, and others played footy every week. We also did weekly long walks at Daisy Hill and White Rock.”

In addition to the physical training, Rachel said participating in Kokoda was an opportunity for these young people to prove to themselves they can set and reach goals.

“The teams walked up and down mountains covered in rocks and trails that were uneven through the day and night to achieve the goal that they had worked for.

“Participating in this challenge was incredibly positive for all the young people involved. They were able to challenge and push themselves to achieve something that not all of them had thought they were capable of. Seeing the pride and achievement on the young people’s faces after having completed this was incredibly satisfying and moving.

“One young person talked about how when she was participating in Kokoda, it made all the negative thoughts and everything else that was happening in her life go away,” Rachel said.

Engagement Officer and Desert Daisy team member, Jacob Spall, said he has deep admiration for the support the young people showed for one another on the trail as teammates, and also in their day to day lives.

“It is so inspiring to see these young people form such strong connections with each other. They invite each other to parties and treat each other like family. It was wonderful to see how incredibly supportive they were of each other as teammates during training, and how they encouraged each other on the day at Kokoda,” Jacob said.

Rachel said the mood of the group was positive for nearly all of the time.

“During one of the breaks, Ben, the case manager, read out positive messages from our Facebook post promoting the event to the kids to motivate them to keep going to the finish line. It was a really nice moment.

“All of the young people were incredibly proud of themselves and what they achieved, and whilst initially they all said they never, ever, ever wanted to do this again, by the end, after a big meal and a bit of a rest, some were saying they would not only do it again, but would consider doing the longer trek next year.

“We are already making plans to compete again next year, and training for 2022 is underway!” ■



■ From top: Rachel Robinson, Ben Pritchard, group walking, Kylie Collins, Molly Robinson, Ben and Jacob Spall.

# The Desert Daisies



**T**he Desert Daisies are named after an artwork created by Uncle Alan Parsons, an Elder from Bidjira/Yiman Country in Central Queensland. After meeting Rachel Robinson and Jacob Spall and learning about our Adventure Therapy program, Uncle Alan was inspired to show Rachel and Jacob his painting, saying it reflects the spirit of many of our young people in care.

Uncle Alan explained he was exploring the Northern Territory and came across the daisies, which seemed to be growing from nothing, adding remarkable vibrancy and colour to a sparse landscape. He was moved by the resilience and resourcefulness of the daisies, overcoming harsh desert conditions to grow into thriving, beautiful flowers. He was inspired to create the Desert Daisies artwork, incorporating actual desert sand. The young people who have overcome challenging circumstances in order to flourish and thrive represent the Desert Daisies. Their determination and strength is as inspiring to witness as that of their namesake. Uncle Alan's painting was anonymously donated to CYF, and has become an inspiring symbol for the young people participating in Kokoda, and those who support them. ■

## Bundles of joy for Bundaberg foster families

**B**undaberg Church of Christ has been bringing hope by supporting local children and young people entering foster care and their foster families by providing emergency care packs and hampers.

A member of the Bundaberg Church of Christ community, who is also a foster carer with Churches of Christ, told the church of the critical need for foster carers to have access to emergency care packs for when children suddenly require care. Often, children are placed with their foster carers the same day or next, with many children unable to bring necessities with them, and the families may not have the supplies they need. Service Manager Juanita Varley said that her service welcomed this excellent partnership with the Bundaberg Church of Christ and the thoughtful donations to support all involved during a challenging time.

“The members of the church check in regularly with our team to understand what the young people in our care need. They do stunning work, taking care of the presentation of the hampers and emergency care packs they provide for the children and families. In addition, they include thoughtful items that make the children feel safe and at home, such as dolls, nappies, clothes, shoes, school supplies and much more,” Juanita said. The foster carers receive a hamper with a range of supplies, depending on their needs, including grocery items, bath products, chocolates and personal care items.

For the children, the packs are designed specifically for their age and gender and could include items such as toiletries, a small toy or colouring book and pencils, a teddy, clothing, and a reading book. Baby hampers include beautiful knitted or crochet items, clothing, baby wipes and toiletries, as well as a teddy. Juanita said the partnership with the church has also quickly progressed to lovingly providing other support, including hampers for specific needs or

acknowledging a significant event for carers and children.

“The church has created hampers for the birth of a baby, a foster carer being unwell, grief and loss in the family, and young people turning 18 and exiting care. Each hamper is thoughtfully crafted for the person it is designed for and makes a difference,” Juanita said. Recently, the church curated hampers for families who were ending their journey as carers to say thank you for being there for the children.

Feedback from carers, children and young people has been extremely positive and appreciative of what the church is doing for their community. “Comments from the recipients have included: ‘It is lovely to know that someone cares’, ‘Wow, that is so kind’, and ‘I am overwhelmed, thank you so much for this, it is so kind’,” Juanita said.

The Bundaberg Church also didn't slow down last Christmas, with the Church offering to host a Christmas event for children and carers after the usual Children in Care Christmas party was cancelled due to COVID.

“The party allowed the kids and foster carers to enjoy a live band, Christmas carols, Santa, craft events, fun and games in the hall, a hamper of Christmas goodies and a barbeque - all COVID safe, of course.”

Residents at Sugarland Gardens Retirement Village have also been supporting local foster carers.

“Some of the residents donated 21 ‘Calm and Cuddle dolls’ that they have beautifully crafted themselves to children in care. Each one included a change of clothes, carry bag and blankets,” Juanita said.

The residents also wrapped plants as thank you gifts to foster carers for their dedicated work in caring for children. “It is fantastic to see the benefits and difference a united approach can make to the lives of children and those who are caring for them and the light that this can bring to all involved.” ■



# Tailored support helps a young family stay together

**O**ur Children, Youth and Families services are designed to help families grow, thrive and belong. While foster care and other out-of-home care services for children and young people are a large and proud part of what we do, we are also concerned with helping families before they reach a point where these more drastic steps are taken. With our wrap-around service approach and by working with others, we can bring real change to families and help them when they need it most. The following story follows a single father and his three children, who have learnt to thrive.

Families are referred to our Intensive Family Support Service to receive specific support that responds to their varied and complex needs, allowing them to find their feet and thrive as a family.

A single father with three children aged three to eight was referred to the service to navigate how to provide appropriate care to his young family. He needed support for his mental health and suitable stable accommodation.

The children needed additional help to deal with the impacts of exposure to domestic and family violence and other issues throughout their young lives.

Ron\* and his children lived in a small, two-bedroom cabin at a caravan park, where he sleeps on a small sofa to allow his children to have a bed. Ron lived there when he took full-time custody of his children. Before this, he had spent four years couch surfing and without a place to call home.

The family received kind support

from fellow residents, including care and meals. However, the cramped conditions proved to be an unsuitable environment for the young children, and they also received numerous noise complaints from others in the park. Eventually, the family were asked to move out. However, through their relationship with the Intensive Family Support Service, which advocated for them to the park's management, they were able to remain in their home until they found new accommodation. While housing stability was a primary concern for the family, this was compounded by Ron's multiple debilitating health conditions that impact his physical mobility and significantly complicate family routines and household maintenance. The eldest daughter, who is only eight years old, often physically assists her father and helps with parenting her younger siblings.

The Intensive Family Support team worked with Ron to develop routines around the house to reduce risk and increase the wellbeing of his children. They worked with a childcare provider to support the children's social and emotional needs while also supporting Ron to access a mental health care plan through his doctor. As a result, he is now receiving the treatment and support he needs to assist with his stress and help manage after school routines and challenging behaviours. Ron was also approved for NDIS support, relieving the burden placed on his young daughter. Appropriate and stable housing is a crucial concern for families. The Intensive Family Support team secured a large, three-bedroom home for the family through partnerships and networks, with a large fully-fenced yard and just a short distance from the children's childcare and school. The children can now play and make noise in a safe environment, and Ron has his own bedroom and a new bed. Ron was overwhelmed and incredibly grateful for the support he received. To have his family in a suitable house left him in tears and without words. Through tailored support, Ron and his children are together in their home and receive ongoing support to thrive. ■

\*Name and image changed to protect privacy



■ David and Kelly with one of their sons, enjoying their new home.

## Coming to the rescue of Logan family facing homelessness

**A**mid the pandemic, a family of eight found themselves homeless and separated, desperate to find a place to call home.

David and Kelly and their six children were required to move out of their private rental of eight years, through circumstances beyond their control, when the owner decided to renovate the property.

The family faced intense competition in the tightest rental market ever recorded in Queensland and struggled to find another appropriate and affordable rental property for their large family. In the end, they were separated, staying with family, friends and couch surfing while desperately searching for a new private rental suitable for them all. “Our youngest was staying with David's mother in a one-bedroom unit. One daughter stayed with friends close to her school, and the older children stayed with their friends or partners.

David and I moved every few nights from friends' places, depending on where we were able to stay,” Kelly said. David said they attended countless rental inspections and submitted dozens of applications but were turned down every time.

“I kept on going because I just wanted to find a place so we could get the family back together again,” David said. The family's housing insecurity was further compounded by the added stress of Kelly's chronic respiratory illness and mental health struggles.

“I am a carer for Kelly, and we also get support through the NDIS for things like cleaning and yard maintenance,” David said.

Desperate to get the family back together again, David and Kelly reached out to the local community organisation Youth and Family Services (YFS) in Logan, who referred the family to our Churches of Christ Housing Services in September last year. As a result,

we were able to house David, Kelly and their youngest three children in one of our Crisis Accommodation Program properties in Slacks Creek, just in time for Christmas in 2020.

“Churches of Christ Housing Services have been amazing from the start. Dominee, our Housing Support Worker, has helped us so much. For example, we didn't think we would be able to give our family a Christmas last year, and Dominee showed up with food hampers, gift cards and presents for the children,” David said.

The family now hopes to find more permanent housing in a bigger home with space for their large family with the support of our Housing Services team. ■



■ Michael Brand, David McConaghy, Gary Edwards, Sera Lyle and Alicia Follent inspect the new development. Right, an aerial view of Coolamon Apartments Stage I and II at Bongaree.

## Local seniors prepare to move into their new homes

Our seniors' housing developments have been a welcomed addition to our housing portfolio, as we have steadily increased our supply with purpose-built developments across the South East corner.

The latest development at Bongaree on Bribie Island will welcome residents from July 2021 following its completion in June.

The residents of the new 83-unit development will join a thriving community of seniors on the picturesque and lifestyle-orientated Bribie Island. In addition, there is the existing neighbouring 87-unit Coolamon Apartments at Bongaree, which was completed in 2012, as well as our nearby retirement village, residential aged care service and home care. These surrounding services mean that residents can access a continuum of care that we know is important for seniors as their needs change as they age.

General Manager Housing Services, Alicia Follent, said the development, built in partnership with the Queensland Government, has been a successful model in transitioning under-occupying public housing tenants out of their public housing family homes into more suitable and appropriate accommodation. The family homes are then freed up for families desperately seeking accommodation in a very tight rental market.

"Over the past 10 years, we have welcomed seniors to our developments in Mitchelton, Bribie Island, Hillcrest and Acacia Ridge. The choice to move to these developments has been a very positive and lifestyle changing decision for transitioning residents. We have further growth plans to deliver more affordable independent living accommodation in more priority communities," Alicia said.

The Bribie Island development will form Queensland's largest affordable

housing complex targeted at low-income seniors whose financial and lifestyle situations mean private housing options are out-of-reach. Bribie Island Campus Chaplain Luke Finlay has worked at the campus since 2012 and is looking forward to welcoming residents to the new development and the Bribie Island Campus.

"We have a great sense of community here at Bongaree. Over the time that I have been chaplain here, I have seen some people come into the community and flourish. They have developed friendships, found new interests and developed a sense of comfort and security. In particular, the Social Club has proved to be a lifeline for many residents. There is always so much going on, and everyone is welcome," Luke said.

We look forward to welcoming the new residents to their homes and making them feel part of a community to focus on their wellbeing. ■



## Nimal's beautiful world

**W**e believe that being a community housing provider is more than just bricks and mortar. We provide support and opportunities above and beyond simply providing a home. When residents move into our housing developments, we hope that it allows them to live their best lives and do what they love. We want our residents to feel connected, belong, and be part of a supportive community.

Many of our residents give back to their communities through volunteering. Nimal enjoys volunteering and giving his time with joy, kindness, gentleness and quiet modesty and humility.

For Nimal, a resident at Wattle Apartments at our Acacia Ridge Campus, "Our lives should be about volunteering and helping others; money holds no value." He has curated a life filled with beauty. He holds many passions, including gardening and writing. He is a prolific writer and has made an outstanding contribution to literature by publishing 75 books, including novels, short stories and poetry across a broad range of topics and fields. His creative abilities have also allowed him to contribute to national Sri Lankan news and other media. Nimal volunteers with his local Sri Lankan community, including writing books in Sinhalese focused on self-development for young adults. He is a long-standing member of the Lions Club International, holding many senior roles. He sees the benefit in serving others and helping people and communities also benefiting himself.

Nimal and his wife of 53 years raised two sons. He has been guided by the life-living principles of practising kindness, getting in touch with nature and meditation. He hopes to pass some of these life lessons and philosophies on to his fellow Acacia Ridge residents by holding weekly meditation classes in the future.

General Manager Housing Services, Alicia Follent, said that having appropriate housing allows residents to focus on other aspects of their lives.

"We know that safe, stable, quality and affordable homes are fundamental to enabling a person to participate economically, focus on their health and wellbeing and participate in their community," Alicia said. ■



# Person-centric continuum of care

**O**n 11 May 2021, the Federal Government released the 2021-22 budget. Contained within the announcement was how they proposed to respond to the recommendations detailed in the final report from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety released earlier in the year. Director Seniors Living Richard de Haast reflects on what was contained within the budget, and what it means for Churches of Christ and the seniors in our care.

It seems a little ungracious not to be grateful for \$17.7 billion worth of additional expenditure. The Federal Government is to be applauded and congratulated on taking that first step to making sure that the industry and the ecosystem around the aged care industry is built up and has the necessary resources to deliver exceptional quality care for senior Australians.

There were a couple of high points for us at Churches of Christ contained within the budget. It is wonderful to hear that there are very concrete steps to clear the waiting list for Home Care Packages. It is an outrage that we still have close to 100,000 people waiting to have care delivered after having their packages approved. So, we are now on a pathway to make sure that this clearing of the backlog is happening. Once again, a lot of the steps in the

budget response echo the fact that home care is where the future lies, as that is really what consumers want. They prefer to stay in their own homes. With respect to residential aged care, we saw the confirmation that there will be a designated number of contact minutes per day per resident and we think that is fantastic. In fact, at Churches of Christ, we are almost there in most of our services. Almost two years before it is mandatory, we have either delivered it or are close. It still raises the question of how we are going to fund the increase in contact time? We await more details around funding the contact hours. There was an extra \$10 per resident per day announced in the budget, which will make a real difference for our residents. It gives us some space and latitude, for example, to look at shifting from a served meal to a buffet-style meal with more selections for residents. We will also look at spending some of that money in our lifestyle programs so residents have more meaningful and engaging activities around them. The real disappointment from the Budget announcement though was around workforce. I think the future of aged care in Australia is not just about dollars, it is about the people that deliver the ongoing support and care to people each and every day. Whether it is at their place, in their home, or at our place in some of our residential aged

care services.

I think the response was undercooked in respect to workforce. We need so many more workers in the sector. I personally was disappointed to see they are not introducing a registration system for personal care workers, I think that is a gap and a misstep from the government. But we will wait to see how the workforce strategy is going to evolve over the years. We need many more hundreds of thousands of people to look after our seniors, particularly as the baby boomer bubble starts coming through into aged care.

We need industry and government to work together in lockstep to make sure we are skilling people, are able to provide the workforce, and fundamentally have those individuals working in the industry feel valued for the contribution they are making to senior Australians every single day. It is wonderful to have the money announced in the budget. It starts a process of re-calibrating the industry and the sector. I am expecting lots more consolidation as providers decide if they want to be part of that new future and part of the new vision. Certainly, for Churches of Christ, we are already well on our way to get there. We are confident that the future is bright, where we can continue to deliver outstanding customer experiences and care to all those whose lives we touch. ■

# Innovative partnership welcomes NDIS clients home to Warwick

**C**hurches of Christ and Focused on Care today signed a first-of-its-kind partnership agreement to use 64 rooms at the Churches of Christ Warwick Campus to create new homes for NDIS clients in the region.

The 10-year licensing agreement will enable NDIS clients currently living in residential aged care services and hospitals to move into shared living accommodation with their peer group. Focused on Care Director, Gavin Dunlop, said the agreement represents a creative and collaborative approach to meeting an unmet need for NDIS clients in regional Queensland.

“There are currently over 600 Queenslanders with a disability living in settings that are not ideally suited to their needs, including hospitals and aged care services, because accommodation that meets not just their physical, but their social and location needs, is unavailable,” Gavin said.

“The best outcome of the partnership is we are able to support people under the age of 65 to live with peers in appropriate surrounds and a familiar environment, and for some back in the community they’re originally from. From here, they’ll be supported by the Focused on Care team to build independent living skills, which may see them one day moving into their own home in the community.”

Churches of Christ Director Seniors Living Richard de Haast explains the Focused on Care clients will have their own section of the modern Warwick Aged Care facility, which opened in 2019.

“When we built Warwick Aged Care Service, it was designed to serve the Southern Downs Region well into the future. While there is not currently the demand for residential aged care to fill the whole service, we are excited to be able to welcome residents who will gain so much from being there,” Richard said. “Our Warwick Aged Care Service residents enjoy a full range of lifestyle activities that nurture their wellbeing, keep them active and promote socialisation. Many of these same activities will be available to the Focused on Care residents so that they too can experience a full life and do the things that they like to do. They will also be able to access our innovative gym, which is specifically designed for individuals with mobility and strength limitations.”

Gavin said the close proximity of the aged care and NDIS serviced accommodation, and the congruent nature of their support requirements, mean there will be efficiencies in the sharing of support services, including allied health professionals.

“Through the increased need for physiotherapy, occupational therapy and other support services by our Focused on Care clients, it is hoped that the partnership will entice more professionals to the region, which will have great benefit for the whole community,” Gavin said.

The Churches of Christ Warwick Campus sits alongside a bustling community centre with café and auditorium, and the 99-unit Regency Park Retirement Village.

“We look forward to welcoming the new residents to our Warwick Campus and having them as part of our thriving community, which has flourished over the past year and become a centre for the broader Warwick community. The new residents will have access to great facilities on offer, be able to meet with their friends and loved ones in the café, and easily get out and visit the town,” Richard said.

The Focused on Care clients are expected to move into the campus from 1 September 2021. ■



■ Gary Edwards, right, with Focused on Care, Care Director, Gavin Dunlop signing the official agreement.



# #thankforcaring applauds aged care superheroes — today and every day

**P**eople were invited to give a virtual thank you to the unsung heroes supporting our seniors as part of this year's Aged Care Employee Day campaign.

Over the past 18 months, our aged care workers have been through a tumultuous time caring for older Australian's.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown those working on the frontlines really are our unsung heroes. The nurses, personal carers, cleaning staff, lifestyle therapists, maintenance, laundry staff, cooks, allied health professionals and administration staff are the heroes helping more than 1.3 million Australians access quality aged care services. Chief Executive Officer Gary Edwards said aged care employees had done an exceptional job in challenging circumstances.

"We are so proud of everyone working in the aged care industry; they are going above and beyond to protect our vulnerable seniors and each other.

"In this time of tremendous upheaval and uncertainty, they are out there working night and day delivering compassionate care," Gary said. As the pandemic remains an ever-present danger to aged care services, Churches of Christ is calling on the community to show their support for frontline aged care workers.

"Through this campaign, we want everyone to publicly thank the people helping to keep our older citizens safe, healthy and connected as best they can right now," Gary said.

It could be thanking the nurse caring for your mother, acknowledging your neighbour who volunteers at the aged care service, the support worker

delivering groceries and medications to your aunt, or the allied health professional who continues to support your grandfather.

"Many of us are touched by the work these unsung heroes are doing each day to serve and protect, but may not be able to thank them in person," Gary said.

Thank you to all aged care workers. ■

# A legend of the 'Rats of Tobruk' turns 100

The tranquil surrounds of our Chesterville Retirement Village in Melbourne, where John Campbell celebrated his 100th birthday, are a far cry from the World War II battlefields.

Born on 21 April 1921 in Mildura, Victoria, John's parents leased a fruit block, growing grapes. Times were hard during the Depression, and at the age of 14, his family left the fruit block and moved to live with his grandparents in Mentone. They became part of the Cheltenham Methodist church, now the Charman Uniting Church.

By 1940, World War II had been active for a year. At the tender age of 19, John enlisted in the Army alongside his cousin Bob. They joined the 2/3 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment and were sent to Tobruk, Libya.

The Siege of Tobruk lasted for 241 days in 1941. These were the first major battles of the Second World War, fought in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. For eight long months, surrounded by German and Italian forces, the men of the Tobruk garrison withstood tank attacks, artillery barrages, and daily bombings.

By 10 April 1941, the German and Italian forces under the command of Lieutenant General Erwin Rommel had surrounded the Tobruk garrison, which was being defended by British Commonwealth Forces, including more than 14,000 Australians under the control of Major General Morshead. During the Siege of Tobruk, fighting continued with heavy casualties, but the Tobruk garrison was held.

Finally, on 7 December 1941, Rommel was forced to abandon the siege. This battle gave rise to the legend of the mighty 'Rats of Tobruk.'

John attended the 80th Anniversary gathering of the Rats of Tobruk in April 2021, one of only seven Victorian 'Rats' still alive at that time.

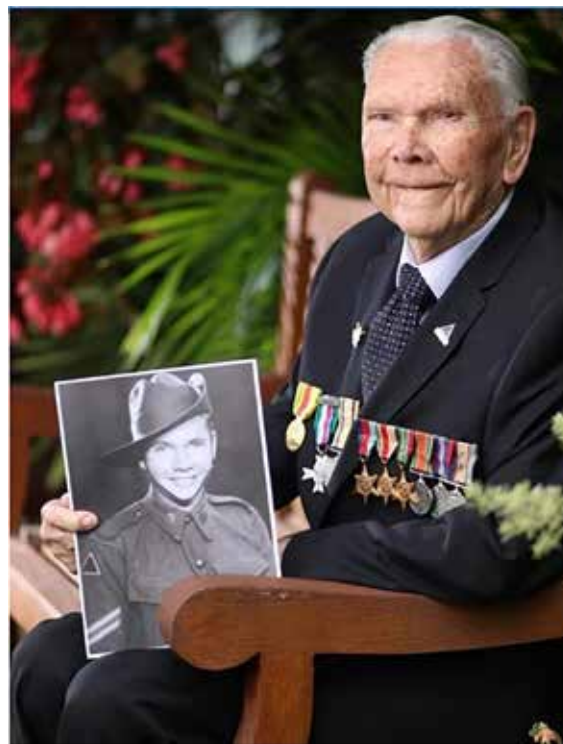
After the war, John returned with his new wife Val to Cheltenham, where he joined his father in a small tailoring shop. Over the next 30-or-so-years, he developed this into a thriving national formalwear business called Dress Circle, located on the corner of Chesterville Rd and Nepean Highway. Dress Circle dressed many brides and grooms over those years. John served the local community in many ways, including 30 years as Chairman of the Cheltenham

and Regional Cemeteries Trust and as part of the Cheltenham Uniting Church. John has four children, 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

John has resided at Chesterville Retirement Village with his partner Joyce for the past 15 years.

He celebrated his 100th birthday with several extraordinary events, including a special 'Happy Hour' at the Village, family lunches and commemorative events associated with the 80th anniversary of the Siege of Tobruk.

Congratulations John. ■



■ John Campbell attending the recent 80th anniversary gathering of the Rats of Tobruk

# Resident wellbeing takes centre stage at expo

In June residents at our Sugarland Gardens Retirement Village in Bundaberg enjoyed their very own curated 'Health, Fitness and Wellbeing Expo' organised by the village. Administration Officer at Sugarland Gardens, Rejana Currie, organised the inaugural expo for the village's 114 residents to educate them about the many and varied services available. "A lot of residents are not able to get out and find the services they need, so this event was designed to show them what was available and how they could access the services they needed," Rejana said. There were 11 local providers with stalls on the day, covering hearing, quality of life, residential aged care, mobility, and even lovely homewares and gifts. "This year, I had decided I wanted to help as much as I could to educate our residents on what is available to them and what they can access in Bundaberg. So even if they don't require services such as residential aged care now, at least they know what is available for when they do." The event, which was only open to

village residents and their close friends and family due to COVID-19 restrictions on numbers, was very well received. "It was something for them to look forward to. It has been so gloomy that it was good to plan something. It was also good to be able to support local businesses who have been doing it tough." Rejana said it also helped open social doors for people, not only allowing them to connect with fellow residents they may not have met yet, but with local organisations that offer social support. "We had local service providers who help with social isolation, as well as the Bundaberg Church of Christ, who came and talked about the morning teas and breakfasts they hold for men. Some older, single men can be socially isolated and not ask for help. By having these services there, it gave them help without having to ask." One particular resident who attended indeed had his life changed. Vince was new to the village and had experienced a deterioration in his health recently. But following the event, his family reported that they had never heard him so happy, as he was able

to access support that immensely improved his wellbeing. "Vince talked to Bundaberg Mobility, and that day they installed a raised seat on his toilet and were able to organise a mobility scooter for him. He was so happy, and his family were thankful. "It was worth the effort of planning the event for results like this." Jim Geary has been a resident at the village since January. He attended the event and thought it was extremely well done and got a lot out of the experience. "I have run Retirement Villages, and I found this event to be so helpful and I learnt a lot. RJ did a fantastic job and I definitely got the most out of it," Jim said. On the day, Jim connected with the hearing service (pictured below left) who had a stall set up and then and there was able to book an appointment and is now enjoying a new set of hearing aids. "The audiologist was terrific. I was always going to do it [get new hearing aids] but I never got around to it. I needed to get it done so just booked it in." ■





## Bringing the Beats

**H**ome Care clients on Bribie Island bring the sheer joy of live performance to the Sunshine Coast through their newly formed band, Bribie Beats. The band's performances have had reviews at our Bribie Island Aged Care Service and are now going on tour. Regional Manager North Coast Sandy Osmond said it all started with some keen members at the Home Care weekly social group catch up. The group decided they should include some exercise, and Bill, one of the clients, let the group know about an activity his wife had seen on social media involving exercise balls and drumsticks. "He mentioned how they had seen a group of people using a gym ball with drumsticks as an exercise program, and without hesitation, we purchased gym balls and drumsticks for the group. Then, with creativity flowing, one client started to beat a song, and the Bribie Beats band was born," Sandy said. The group was already blessed with two passionate musicians who embraced the concept, including Ralph, a Home Care client who was in a band in his younger years, and Drew, a Home Care worker who plays the guitar. Bribie Island Home Care Service Manager, Colleen Rawson, impressed by the group's musical talents, suggested they perform for the Bribie Island Aged Care Service residents.

"The group was so passionate and committed, and also naturally musically talented. It was a delight to watch them practice and learn eight songs in just a month. So, we booked their debut concert for 2 June," Colleen said.

"It was fabulous to see the Home Care clients entertaining our aged care and retirement living residents." Colleen said that the service strives to support clients to live their lives the way that they choose.

"If they want to pursue a passion for music and form a band, then our team will do everything we can to help facilitate that. It is wonderful to see our clients pursuing their individual goals and passions and making plans for the future. They are an inspiration," she said.

On the morning of the first concert, the Bribie Beats arrived in an authentic rock star wardrobe, wearing colourful outfits and wigs.

Band member Joan said the group didn't have any nerves for that first performance; they just wanted to get out there and perform.

"I was so excited as our audience, the residents of Bribie Aged Care Service, filled the hall, [I was] so proud to introduce the magnificent Bribie Beats for the first time," Colleen said.

Sandy said the band was a hit. "The residents loved it. They sang along with the music and played instruments

as well. The audience requested an encore from the residents, and if they could come back every week," said Sandy.

On checking with the band, the following morning, they were still pumped from the day before. "Their arms were ready to go again." Before the day ended, the Bribie Beats were getting bookings to perform at nearby Little Mountain Aged Care Service, and the band made plans to visit regularly. ■



■ Bribie Beats member Bill playing the exercise ball.



■ Warrawee Aged Care Service, St George

## New lifestyle option proposed for outback seniors

**C**hurches of Christ is proud to announce they will be offering Serviced Apartments to St George seniors, meeting an unmet need for the local community. Expressions of Interest are invited by 31 August 2021.

Regional Manager Camilla Taylor said an existing cottage at Warrawee Aged Care Service, will be re-purposed as the new, 13-unit Serviced Apartment offering.

“These units are intended for seniors who want to maintain their independence and connection with their community while downsizing and getting some help with day-to-day tasks,” Camilla said.

“We invite local seniors to register their interest in moving into a Serviced Apartment where they can have their meals, laundry and cleaning services included in their weekly rent.”

The Serviced Apartments will be available to rent for \$335 per week. Camilla said they decided to offer the

serviced apartments in collaboration with the local community. The initiative also responds to findings in the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, which noted that seniors want to progress through a continuum of care that gives them options as their needs change.

“This all started with a kitchen table meeting with residents and community members identifying an unmet need for local seniors to get the support they need while maintaining their independence.”

“The Royal Commission identified this same need broadly for seniors, particularly in the regions, and we are proud to be leaders in providing seniors with the care and lifestyle options they want across regional and rural Queensland.”

Camilla said the community is highly engaged in the service and has asked to be involved in naming it, with a competition for the best name now open.

“St George locals are invited to submit their ideas for a name for the new Serviced Apartments for a chance to win a prize. There is a deep history and a sense of community spirit here, and we want that to be reflected in the name of the apartments – it could be a local legend, a type of plant native to the area, an unsung hero, the options are endless,” Camilla said.

The Serviced Apartments do not require an ACAT assessment to enter, and the weekly rent is not means-tested. In addition, residents will be able to access Home Care services for extra support. ■



# An 'Eziway' to study

**F**or many people looking at going back to study or looking at undertaking their first degree, besides the need for time to complete the work, one major drawback can be the expense. Eziway, our salary packaging provider, is making it easier for our team to make their study aspirations a reality through the Eziway Staff Study Assistance Scheme.

Team members from across the organisation who are thinking of or are currently undertaking study are encouraged to apply.

Eziway provided over \$75,000 to our team members to go towards course fees, study materials, and learning resources.

Danny Oliver received a 2019 scholarship, re-igniting his passion for learning and assisting in his personal and professional growth.

“The scholarship enabled me to apply and be accepted into a Bachelor of Healthy Ageing (Gerontology), and since commencing, I have learned something new each week that I have been able to feedback into my team, clients and the wider organisation,” Danny said.

“Without this scholarship and the support of my manager, it would not have been possible for me to go back to university. I learnt so much in the past year and am excited for all that I am yet to learn.

“If anyone is considering applying for the scholarship, all I can say is that being awarded one has provided me with amazing opportunities that I will be forever thankful for.”



For Sucheta Kapoor, a Personal Care Worker at our Toowoomba Aged Care Service, the scholarship and financial support helped her and her family during the pandemic, allowing her to complete her Bachelor of Nursing degree.

“I feel so lucky to be a part of this great organisation,” Sucheta said. Receiving the scholarship meant that international student Ivy Cubilla, who now works as an enrolled nurse at Brig-O-Doon Aged Care Service, could complete her Bachelor of Nursing.

“It was the best day of my life,” Ivy said. To learn more about the Eziway Staff Study Assistance Scheme email [learning@cofcqld.com.au](mailto:learning@cofcqld.com.au) ■

# Paige turning dreams into reality thanks to a scholarship

**C**hurches of Christ are excited to announce Paige Houlahan was awarded the 2020 Beryl Wiltshire scholarship to pursue her dream of becoming a nurse. Paige is a school-based trainee at Warrawee Aged Care Service in St George. The late Beryl Wiltshire, a long-serving Churches of Christ staff member and community leader, set up the scholarship to help meet the tuition and associated costs for any person wishing to embark on a career of service. The scholarship awards \$5,000 to fund one or more scholarships. Paige explained she knew she wanted to pursue a career in the health sector from a very young age. "Growing up as a young child in the bush access to basic healthcare was often taken for granted, seeing the vital role nurses play in caring for us and the need for them has driven me to want to pursue a career as a registered nurse. Now aged 18, I have lived through three floods and watched the drought drain the colour from our small community of Dirranbandi and neighbouring communities. Seeing the effects that this has had on family and friends was devastating. I wanted to be able to make a change and contribute to the community by educating other on the importance of health," Paige said. Paige said her traineeship at Churches of

Christ has been a great stepping stone for her future career pursuits. "This traineeship has not only given me a confidence boost that was needed, but allowed me to make a real difference in the lives of our Elders. I have learnt so much from the Elders in my community and enjoy caring for them in every way possible," she said. "Working as a Personal Care Worker, I have learnt that you are not only providing individuals with the daily activities to help retain their independence, but you are also giving back to the generation of Elders that helped shape this community." Kenneth Wiltshire, Beryl's son, awarded Paige the scholarship, and said her story struck a chord with him as she spoke of her Indigenous heritage and commitment to promoting healthcare in her community. "I have been very closely involved with Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities all my life, and my mother, Beryl, as well as my grandfather, were champions of Indigenous communities and their leaders. One of the great strengths of our Indigenous community is the way young people like Paige respect their Elders and seek to learn from them. So, this award gives me a great deal of pleasure," Kenneth said. "Paige's teacher and supervisor agreed



■ Paige with a resident at Warrawee Aged Care Service.

she is bright and capable, and they have confidence that her determination will make her successful in her pursuit of both a nursing degree and then a career in aged care.

"The selection committee at Churches of Christ unanimously selected Paige as this year's winner," he said.

Following receipt of the scholarship, Paige said she was thrilled to be accepted into the University of Southern Queensland.

Congratulations Paige and all the best with your studies. ■

**BACKGROUND**

Beryl Wiltshire AM was a highly respected leader in welfare and community work in Australia, especially during her long and distinguished career with Churches of Christ Care. She was also Queensland Mother of the Year and received the Order of Australia for service in social welfare in 1996.

She was a friend, counsellor, and mentor to any who were in need and sought her help and advice. Beryl had a particular talent for identifying the potential in people and quietly assisted many people with funding their education and training to get them started in their careers. This scholarship continues the tradition she established and is designed to meet the tuition and associated costs of a person or persons who wish to embark on a career of service within the social, welfare, human services, and caring sector. An annual sum of \$5,000 is available to fund one or more scholarships for study towards a qualification at any educational or training organisation which may lead to a career in the caring profession. The scholarship is open to persons of all ages and there are no conditions for candidacy.



**To apply, candidates should outline the nature of the career they wish to pursue, their motivation for undertaking study towards the relevant qualification, the course they wish to undertake towards this career, and give details of the likely annual tuition and associated costs (fees, books, equipment etc).**

**Applications are now open for the 2021 Beryl Wiltshire Scholarship. For more information, please contact 0418 713 593.**

# { People & Events }

in our communities



## Homeless Connect

Our Housing Services team were at the Homeless Connect Event in May to provide advice and answers to questions about our housing programs. We also donated blankets and warm clothes to those in our community sleeping rough. Homeless Connect happens yearly in Brisbane and provides support and services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness in our local communities.

## Centenary for Mr Chun

Moonah Park housing resident Mr Chun recently celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday surrounded by loving friends and family. Mr Chun's secret to living a long and happy life is simply: "Eating vegetables, staying active, being peaceful and not getting stressed or angry."



## Snakes alive

Love Me Like a Reptile and some of their scaly friends recently visited our Oak Towers Aged Care Service. Residents and staff handled frogs, lizards, turtles, snakes and even a sugar glider. Olivia from Love Me Like a Reptile was fantastic and ensured that everyone had the chance to see, touch and understand these unique, native Australian creatures.



## Volunteers honoured

Our Fair Haven Aged Care Service in Maryborough celebrated their volunteers with a special morning tea during National Volunteer Week 2021 (17-23 May). The volunteers felt the appreciation as they were thanked for their contribution.

## Launching into Ministry

We hosted our Launchpad workshop to welcome our 16 new church ministers, ministering people and chaplains who have recently begun their journey with Churches of Christ. The Launchpad initiative is an excellent opportunity for new pastors to hear and learn from various business areas about how their respective work contributes to and empowers the Churches of Christ movement.

It was a positive few days with plenty of insight, enthusiasm and reflection.



### “Making people happy makes me happy.”

Con moved into our Oak Towers Aged Care Service two years ago, and his kindness towards fellow residents and staff have made a significant impact. Every evening after dinner, Con sits on the couch with his box of chocolates and shares them with others. It starts a conversation and brings people together. Con is a proud Irishman and man of faith who finds peace in our community that shares his values. We appreciate you and your sweet tooth, Con!



### New laptop for bright young spark

A brand-new laptop for a bright young Housing Services resident has made online learning possible for a family in need. Doesn't that big smile say it all! Thank you to the RACQ Foundation for partnering with our DigiAsk Program to close the digital inclusion gap.



### Cosy pouches

Annette and Doris from Oak Towers have been knitting blankets and pouches for animals in shelters. They initially made blankets and donated them to the local RSPCA to provide comfort and warmth to animals in their shelters and animal hospitals. However, when the devastating fires tore through Australia in early 2020, many animals that survived found themselves in shelters across the country, many suffering burns and other injuries. So the ladies responded to the call for small pouches to be donated by the community to provide a safe and warm home for babies and injured animals rescued from their scorched homes.



### 102 years young

St James Retirement Village in Townsville celebrated the birthday of our oldest resident Mrs Elsie Prince who turned 102 in April. Elsie is an active member of the village community who regularly attends many of the village events. Happy Birthday Elsie and congratulations on your outstanding life and achievement.

### Thank you Owen!

A big thank you to Owen Stockwell for his generous investment towards an expansion project at our Barcoo Multi-Purpose Service in Blackall. The project aims to support the growth of services in the community, with an additional 10 rooms at the service. Work is expected to commence on the expansion in the coming months and is due for completion by early 2022. We are sincerely thankful to Owen and his ongoing and longstanding support of our service, our team and seniors in regional Queensland.



### NAIDOC inspired art

Fassifern Aged Care residents enjoyed an incredible workshop in June in preparation for NAIDOC Week. Indigenous artist and Boonah local Peter Fowler held an Aboriginal dot-work painting class for the residents. Peter shared his abundant knowledge of Indigenous culture, history and symbols, and explained the importance of connection to Country. Residents used acrylic paint on black tiles and were able to keep their beautiful artworks.

### Gwenda celebrates 100 wonderful years

Moonah Park resident Gwenda Kenny turned 100 on 1 July.

Living her life in Brisbane, the passionate Broncos fan said she loves music and used to enjoy singing on the buses with everyone singing along. She is a very social resident, and loves people and helping out with the social life of the cottage. Congratulations Gwenda!



### Bob's Beanies

Robert (Bob) Taylor has been a member of Redlands Church of Christ for many years. A few years back Bob and his daughter Janelle, who has Down Syndrome, started making beanies, with Janelle making small beanies for babies and children.

Bob started the hobby to keep busy instead of sitting around doing crossword puzzles. Since then, he has made over 3,000 and donated them to several organisations. He said he enjoys making something worthwhile that is useful and beneficial for others.

Pictured are a resident and team member at our Warwick Aged Care Service who have been keeping warm this winter thanks to Bob's beanies!

# Proud history. Exciting future.

## { Events }

### September

**5 – 12 SEPTEMBER**

National Child Protection Week

**5 SEPTEMBER**

Father's Day

**6 – 13 SEPTEMBER**

National Women's Health Week

**10 SEPTEMBER**

RUOK? Day

**20 - 26 SEPTEMBER**

Dementia Action Week

### October

QUEENSLAND SENIORS MONTH

**1 OCTOBER**

International Day of Older Persons

**10 OCTOBER**

World Homeless Day

**11 – 18 OCTOBER**

National Carers Week

**29 OCTOBER**

Day for Daniel

### November

**4 NOVEMBER**

Annual General Meeting

**25 NOVEMBER**

International Day for the Elimination  
of Violence Against Women

### December

**3 DECEMBER**

Day of Persons with Disabilities

**25 DECEMBER**

Christmas Day

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