

ISSUE 2 {2017}

# networking

BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO COMMUNITIES



## The future of aged care is here

Innovation and new technology  
transforming aged care  
for the better

## SALT of the Earth

How an innovative initiative  
is bringing the light of Christ  
into communities





# Thanks Dean

On 16 May about 250 people gathered at the Kenmore Campus to say thank you to Chief Executive Officer Dean Phelan, who will have his last day with the organisation on 3 July. Read more about the event on page 6.



“ Dean has enabled generational change and instilled a sense of community throughout Churches of Christ ”



■ Top, Dean and Janette Phelan. Above, Council Chair, Geoff Charles, with Council and Board members. Left, David Swain (right) with Dean's Superman costume as Dean talks to Council member, Ron Hawkins.



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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. The submission deadline for the next edition of networking is 3 August 2017.



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Welcome to the latest edition of *networking*, with the theme of innovation.

For the past seven years, it has been a privilege to work with our Chief Executive Officer Dean Phelan and witness the growth and change the organisation has experienced under his leadership. He has been a champion for this publication and used it as a channel to share and discuss what is important to our mission, our churches and our services. I appreciate his support and guidance and I wish him all the best for the future.

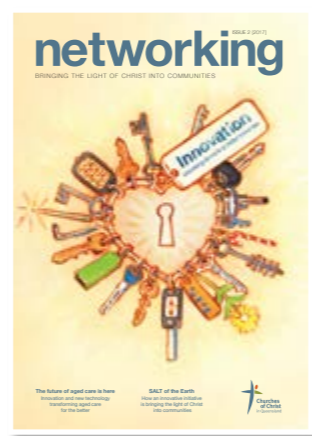
As you will read in the following articles, innovation is far from just being about technology: it is about introducing something new—new ways of doing things, new ways of connecting.

We are constantly striving to deliver the best possible care, services and support, and this has driven our focus on innovation. We look at how the organisation has embraced technology in our delivery of care; is using the latest environmentally friendly initiatives; and is looking at new and different ways to engage with, and meet the needs of, communities.

By listening, supporting and engaging, our community chaplains are on the frontlines in communities, bringing hope and light to the most vulnerable and marginalised. I encourage you support our chaplains as they connect to people in need. Please donate to our end of financial year appeal today at [giftachaplain.com.au](http://giftachaplain.com.au).

In May we marked Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. The Queensland Government has released a number of resources as part of the 121 recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report including online resources to support health workers. I encourage you to have a look at these resources. They are available at <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/end-domestic-and-family-violence>.

Every year we celebrate and recognise the dedicated work of individuals, teams and projects



**The networking cover illustration**

*Through innovation we have the keys to bring the light of Christ into communities. This illustration shows the many keys we have to access individuals and communities to enable us to innovatively bring them uplift and light.*

from across our churches, mission and community services with the CEO Excellence in Service Awards. Nominations open in July for the 2017 awards at [cofc.com.au/nominate](http://cofc.com.au/nominate), so start thinking about who has living our values today.

There is so much to our history, and for the past four years Evelyn Colbran has been studiously gathering a century's worth of history on Women's Ministry in Queensland's Churches of Christ from 1913-2013. I was proud to present Evelyn with a bound copy of the items she had uncovered. If you have any historical items relating to Churches of Christ in Queensland, please send them through to [communications@cofcqld.com.au](mailto:communications@cofcqld.com.au) or contact 07 3327 1620.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *networking* and reading about the things that are important to us. Sign-up to receive the electronic version straight to your inbox at [cofc.com.au](http://cofc.com.au) and don't forget, you can read previous editions as well as our other publications online at [cofc.com.au/publications](http://cofc.com.au/publications).

**Desley Millwood**  
Director, Communications



I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our Chief Executive Officer Dean Phelan, who will have his last working day with the organisation on 3 July. Under Dean's seven years of leadership Churches of Christ has grown substantially and implemented significant initiatives to extend our mission across hundreds of communities in Queensland, Victoria and Vanuatu. I look forward to joining with you to recognise Dean's many achievements in November.

Churches of Christ in Queensland has been built on innovation. We have been responsive to God's call, and individual and community needs, and not overly shackled by rules, regulations, or funding streams. Our innovative approach as we live our mission of bringing the light of Christ into communities is part of who we are: it's woven into the DNA of Churches of Christ.

We are unafraid to go against the grain and do something different, something that our peers or others are not. Innovation, by its meaning, is to introduce something new. A key priority of our Strategic Plan 2015-18 is to grow our core services, and we have been doing this through introducing a number of new initiatives such as the set-up of our Strategic Action Leadership Teams (SALTs) and Mission Action Partners, the growth of our Children, Youth and Families services to focus on early intervention and our key projects and redevelopments, which are providing state-of-the-art integrated communities and modern developments to connect local communities.

Work will commence this year on our next Strategic Plan, which will guide us through the coming years and continue us on our journey.

I write this column at the conclusion of National Reconciliation Week. Reconciliation Australia says "reconciliation is about unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians. It is about respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and valuing justice and equity for all Australians".

To bring about reconciliation, we must



Reconciliation is about unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians. It is about respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and valuing justice and equity for all Australians



first know what we have to reconcile: what are our differences, what are the past hurts, or the present injustices.

At our Head Office last week we had the privilege of hearing from Aunty Flo Watson.

Flo is a member of the Ghunghanghi People (traditional owners of Yarrabah) and also has family ties to the Kukulayangi People of Maytown, Palmer River area and the Wulguru Kaba people of Magnetic Island near Townsville. Aunty Flo was taken from her family when she was 11, and 30 years earlier her grandmother was shot dead by police trying to stop Aunty Flo's mother being taken away.

One of our staff in attendance asked the question at this session, "Why were children taken from their parents?". In hearing the story of Aunty Flo, in answering this staff members question, and in explaining what there is to reconcile, we must be prepared to confront some terrible parts of our history, and frankly of our present. We all need to be prepared to get uncomfortable, and not defensive, with what we hear and see. If we get uncomfortable enough, perhaps we'll be more likely to contribute to practical reconciliation.

I thank God for Aunty Flo, and for the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have the courage to tell their stories. I pray that we have the ears to listen, and the strength of character to come along side our Indigenous brothers and sisters, to meet them on their terms, and with unconditional love.

Finally, many would be aware that

the search has been on for our next CEO. That search is now over, and we look forward to introducing the new appointee to you in the next edition of *networking*. It has been an absolute pleasure and an honour to serve the Conference in this key role over the past six months.

**David Swain**  
Acting Chief Executive Officer







## Thank you Dean Phelan

On Tuesday 16 May, Churches of Christ in Queensland staff and community took the opportunity to say thanks to Chief Executive Officer Dean Phelan.

Dean resigned his position as Chief Executive Officer to focus on his health, with his last day on Monday 3 July.

About 250 people gathered at Kenmore for an informal morning tea and chance to say thank you.

Since commencing in the role in 2010, Dean has instigated a number of major changes for Churches of Christ in Queensland, including closer ties between our care services and mission; the introduction of consumer directed care and moving our children's services to be prevention and early intervention focused.

He also oversaw the development of a number of community housing complexes, acquisition of complementary services and transformational changes in information technology, governance and models of care.

As Acting Chief Executive Officer David Swain attested during his speech, when they prepared the original position description for a new Chief Executive Officer, they were looking for someone special,



■ Top, Janette Phelan, Dean Phelan, Geoff Charles, Gary Edwards and David Swain and centre, Dean Phelan, David Swain and Jean Milligan. Above, Dean and Janette Phelan.

super even. And that's what they got.

Board Chair, Gary Edwards, praised Dean for his leadership and the positive changes he has affected, which has seen the positive leadership of our churches, the installation of our Strategic Action Leadership Teams and Mission Action Partners to deliver on our mission and vision, and the growth of our services.

"Dean has enabled generational change and instilled a sense of community throughout Churches of Christ in Queensland," Gary said.

"With the support of the Board and Council, Dean strategically increased investment for the benefit of our people and those we care for.

"We are thankful to Dean for bringing together our churches and care services as one organisation, enforcing our values and ensuring we all work towards the one mission. With Dean's unwavering commitment and steady hand, he leaves Churches of Christ in Queensland in good shape."

A more formal recognition of Dean and his many achievements will take place in November. We will let you know more details in the coming months. ■

Completed in February 2017, the \$15.6 million Wattle Apartments development at Acacia Ridge (pictured below) provides 40 thoughtfully designed homes for over 55s previously living in under-occupied public housing.

Built on underutilised land adjacent to our existing Brig-O-Doon Aged Care Service and Retirement Village, the development forms part of an innovative integrated community.

We meet two of Wattle Apartment's first residents, Brenda McGinnis and James Reid, as they settle into their brand new abodes.

### BRENDA'S STORY

"Easy to clean, nice and quiet neighbours and I don't have to mow the lawn anymore," listed Brenda of the positives of her recent move to Wattle Apartments.

Coming from a three-bedroom house with a yard into a one bedroom unit with a balcony, the grandmother is enjoying time off from maintenance required in a bigger place.

"Carpet is only in the bedroom and with the rest being tiles it is just a quick mop," explained Brenda of her new cleaning routine.

Having events organised for her through the community chaplain is also another appealing feature of the apartments.

Working as a bingo promoter during the week, Brenda says depending on her days, she can be either full of beans or exhausted when she gets home.

"Sometimes I may feel like company, other times not so much so I am really looking forward to getting to know a few of the other residents better at activities in the common area."

"Not that I didn't like living near

# Wattle Apartments in bloom



teenagers and young families, I just didn't realise how much I would enjoy being around people my own age."

### JAMES STORY

"As happy as Larry" is how James Reid describes his status as one of the newest residents of Wattle Apartments.

"I've not had to change a thing except my address."

An Acacia Ridge local for 48 years, James has watched his children through school, then adulthood and

now with their own lives and families. He has also watched the local area expand.

Describing his move as the smoothest of transitions, James says there's been little disruption in his life.

"The same bank, the same doctor, the same church, I am even still able to catch up with my regular coffee friends.

There's also a local healthy heart walking group I belong to locally and I like to catch up a few times a week for exercise with those folks. This area has so much to offer for so many age groups." ■







■ Main, an artist's impression of the courtyard area at Warwick. Left, The proposed site map of the development at Meridan. Below left, An artist's impression of the courtyard area of the new development at Boonah. Below, work is progressing on the development of the residential aged care extension at Stanthorpe.



# Investing in communities

An update on our key projects and redevelopments

**C**hurches of Christ in Queensland is committed to remote, rural and regional communities, and ensuring that senior Australians' care needs are met into the future.

Our integrated community model brings together the care, faith community and support services, who all work together to bring uplift, not just to the people living on the campus, but to the broader community.

The organisation is currently in the process of creating campuses in a number of Queensland locations including Stanthorpe, Warwick, Boonah and Meridan. These developments, when finished, will have created great spaces for people living on the campus and for the local community. They will provide a mix of residential aged care accommodation, home care and support services. Each is architecturally designed and will be landscaped to

complement their own unique local environments. A number of other important developments are also underway, including the continued redevelopment of our Kenmore Campus and a new affordable living townhouse development in Kallangur. We have also recently completed Wattle Apartments, a new community housing complex at Acacia Ridge co-located with the residential aged care service and

retirement village. For more information regarding these developments and to keep track of their progress, go to [cofc.com.au/developments](http://cofc.com.au/developments).

## WARWICK

We are investing \$32 million in the development of a state-of-the-art campus on the site of our Regency Park Retirement Village. Once complete the campus will include a community centre, 128-bed aged care service, home and community care and retirement living all in one convenient location. Construction commenced with a sod turning event held on 15 February, and is scheduled for completion in late-2018.

## BOONAH

A new integrated community at our existing Boonah campus will increase the current capacity of aged care places, retirement living and home care services

in the Scenic Rim region. It will also include new administration offices, cafe, lounge, community centre and major landscaping features.

The first two stages will include the creation of a new lake, aged care service, multi-purpose community hub and 38 independent living units, with future stages for the site to be determined dependent on the local demand.

The Development Application was lodged with the Scenic Rim Regional Council in March 2017 and at the time of print we are waiting on approval.

## MERIDAN, SUNSHINE COAST

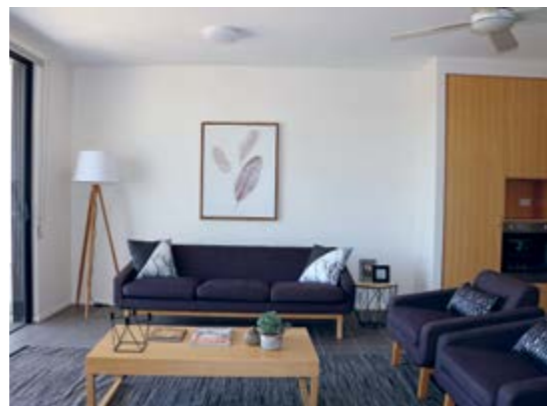
Over the next 18 months to two years a community hub and seniors living campus will be developed for the use of the local community and people living on the campus who will enjoy access to a range of services, facilities and

social spaces. The initial investment will focus on establishing a community hub with café, multi-purpose community centre and social spaces and development of a 96-bed residential aged care service. A sod turning event was held on Monday 6 March 2017, with construction of the first stage to commence this year with anticipated completion in late-2018.

## STANTHORPE

In 2014, we took over operations of the 38-bed Villa Carramar Aged Care Service in Stanthorpe. In September 2016, construction commenced on an extension to the service, which when completed will accommodate over 100 people in home-like cottage model accommodation with beautifully landscaped gardens and community area. The development is due for completion in late-2017. ▶





■ Left, an artist's impression of the new Community Centre at the Kenmore Campus and landscaped gardens to be enjoyed by the local community. Above, inside the new Wattle Apartments.

### KENMORE

Construction is almost complete at the front of the campus of a \$5.5 million community centre, which includes a 350-seat auditorium, meeting room and café space. The community centre, surrounded by landscaped gardens, will be available for the local community to use when it is completed in late-2017.

You can read more about some of the environmentally friendly innovations in the Kenmore Head Office building on page 17.

### ACACIA RIDGE

Earlier this year, Wattle Apartments at Acacia Ridge welcomed its first residents. The development, built in partnership with the Queensland Government, comprises 35 one-bedroom and five two-bedroom units

across two, three-storey buildings for people aged over-55. Recently, Wattle Apartments was recognised for its environmentally sustainable design principles through Urban Design Institute of Australia's EnviroDevelopment assessment tool, qualifying for all six sustainability elements in the areas of ecosystems,

“Wattle Apartments was recognised for its environmentally sustainable design principles”

waste, energy, water, materials and community. You can read more about some of the first residents who have moved into the new community on page 7.

### KALLANGUR

Building is underway on a 50-townhouse development on land donated by local philanthropists Ian and Neva Handy, from Rivers Church of Christ.

The generous donation by the Handy family is helping grow the supply of affordable housing for those on low to moderate incomes in the area. Due for completion in late-2017, the townhouses will be predominately targeted at key workers (employed across the retail, hospitality, and community services), seniors and people living with a disability. ■

What will residential aged care look like in a decade?

“A focus on an individual's preferences and enablement will shape the future of residential aged care. The biggest change in the sector is, and will continue to be, an emphasis on how people wish to live their life,” Director of Seniors and Supported Living Bryan Mason said.

According to Bryan, it is this paradigm shift to person-centred care that is the key to meaningful ageing.

There has been a focus on preference-driven care in community care, and now in residential aged care the same shift is set to occur.

“Over the next decade, people living in aged care will have greater autonomy to determine how money and resources are delivered for their care.

“Listening to and delivering on their wishes is a direction we have already committed to, and one that I see being implemented sector-wide,” he said.

In economic terms, this change is about transitioning scarce resources away from government and provider decision-makers and into the hands of the consumer.

“They will be much more responsible for directing that funding. And they will do a better job of it.”

The Positive Wellbeing Model of Care used across our residential aged care services is underpinned by a comprehensive understanding of the personal preferences of people living in aged care.

“The most exciting transformation will be a change in culture. A move away



■ Through listening to and recognising John's preferences and needs, innovative ways have been found to increase his wellbeing as he lives in residential aged care.

“The most exciting transformation will be a change in culture. A move away from aged care based on a medical model to a focus on people living life to the full”

from aged care based on a medical model to a focus on people living life to the full.”

Accompanying this move to person-centred care is a change in the way that staff talk to and engage with people living in aged care, focusing on the individual rather than their illness or disability.

For the aged care industry, it will be about finding out how to make an

individual's life enjoyable, comfortable and abundant.

These changes will have implications and challenges for the workforce, and strong changes to recruitment may be required, Bryan said.

“Working in aged care has historically been dismissed as less attractive than a fast-paced hospital setting. A key change for our industry is understanding and embracing the social benefits of work and making a positive difference to someone's life,” he said.

“No longer can task-related responses be definitive criteria for employment. Yes, you will still need to know how to change a bed or clean a room, but the focus must be on the person first, not the task.

“This purpose and passion is what we need to get right in our workforce culture. The future in caring and supporting older people must include maintaining, and even building, capabilities and potential, not simply managing decline.” ■







We don't want people wasting away in chairs, we want them up and moving



Adele Camp, physiotherapist



Physiotherapist Adele Camp is passionate about her role with Churches of Christ Care. On a daily basis, she gets to change someone's life for the better.

"We are keeping people mobile longer. They enjoy it and we get such satisfaction," Adele said.

This is a feeling that is shared by others who are working to re-enable people living in our aged care services.

Allied Health Team Leader at Buckingham Gardens Aged Care Service, Craig Wilson, has seen a transformation in both staff and residents since the opening of what has affectionately been dubbed 'Buck's Gym'.

The dedicated exercise room at the Alexandra Hills service looks similar to a hotel gym, but the equipment has been specifically designed for seniors.

"There's no clunky weights, which put a lot of people off in a traditional gym setting, with the machines all working on air-pressure," Craig said.

"Most gym equipment only allows a change of weight in five kilogram increments. Our equipment is so gentle, it allows 100 gram movements, which is important in designing exercise programs for this age group."

After a consultation with a service physiotherapist, residents are issued with a swipe card with their personalised exercise program. The card then slots into any machine, automatically setting the weight and how many repetitions they can safely lift. It also keeps a record of their regime.

The results for people using the gym are inspirational. "We have an 86 year

old who has put on muscle," Craig explained, bringing up the exercise routine for John. "There's a 900 per cent increase in his upper body strength."

When Craig first met John he had a walking stick, and a cancer scare had forced the keen bushwalker off his feet while his body fought the disease. While John tried to focus on living life to the full his body had other ideas.

"In this, and so many similar situations there's a tendency for functional decline so we need to recondition muscles," Craig said.

"Legs and shoulders start to go from a lack of exercise, and then the mind can follow."

John agrees.

"I was living at Cooroy [Sunshine Coast hinterland] on my own, and was used to doing a lot of walking. Family members moved abroad and interstate and then . . ." John shook his head when remembering his mindset a year ago.

"Let's just say, I'd be buggered without the gym. So yes, I would say coming to



Above, the specially designed Buck's Gym allows residents to exercise and build strength. Main photo, Beryl is up and dancing with physiotherapy student Daniel.

the gym and doing this program has given me a new lease on life."

Craig swapped John's walking cane for a set of taller Nordic walking sticks and he hasn't looked back.

"He now has a purpose because he has strength back," Craig said.

"You mean that solo bushwalk I did at Christmas?" John piped in.

For Bryan Mason, Director of Seniors and Supported Living, these stories are what drives staff to have passion and purpose in their work.

"John could hardly lift a cup off the table. Now he is stacking the dishwasher. Then there's the lady who was transferred from hospital, told she would never walk again. The physiotherapists started her off on a light exercise program, then eventually got her in the gym. After a couple of months she stood up on her own and walked. I mean, she was told she would never walk again," Bryan said.

For Bryan, this focus on a person not their illness cannot be underestimated.

"The more uplift we can bring to a person, the less they are thinking about the negative, about the things they can't do.

"We speak about meaningful purpose in the workplace and we talk about passion. I know I can speak for all the staff when I say we have a positive commitment to people's wellbeing."

The gym equipment will soon be rolled out to other Churches of Christ Care aged care services including Bribie Island and Moonah Park. ■





“

This is my space, all my junk is here, my computer is here, I can have the radio on the station I want

”

## The changing face of home care

**R**esearch consistently shows that people are healthier and happier when they continue to age in place in their own home.

There have been recent changes to how home and community care is delivered, as it becomes consumer driven.

Seniors Chaplaincy Team Leader Peter McRoberts has seen the move of people remaining at home for longer over the past decade.

“People who were no longer able to wash or cook for themselves would often go into hostels, and then, as they became frailer, they moved into aged care,” Peter said.

“People are now skipping the hostel. I now see them for short periods of time in a palliative or dementia stage in aged care. Thanks to support, they are remaining in their own home, and their own community for longer.

“It’s a meaningful and important change for an individual’s wellbeing, as

they can remain around what’s familiar and their support, including that of family or a neighbour,” he said.

Maurice Kingston (pictured) receives community care from Churches of Christ Care so that he can continue to live in his home. Maurice receives the highest level of care, a Level 4 Package, which includes meal preparation and washing and ironing six days a week. At 98 he is still living an abundant life.

“This is my space, all my junk is here, my computer is here, I can have the radio on the station I want,” Maurice said.

“Doing it with you, not doing it for you” is an important mindset of helping people like Maurice stay at home, according to Occupational Therapist Sandra Smith.

“We are really looking at what people can do rather than what they no longer can,” she said.

Sometimes, according to Sandra, it may just take fresh, trained eyes to help people think of their abilities rather

than focusing on their disabilities. A common example is gardening.

“Many seniors we see living in their own homes do not have the physical ability to get out in the backyard.”

By moving plants into pots on a veranda and keeping tools at table height, these simple changes can help people continue to enjoy their passion.

Churches of Christ Care’s Home Maintenance and Modification Service team and Occupational Therapist work together to ensure people can perform activities in a safe and well-designed environment.

“It may only be a small change we are making to a person’s home—a grab rail that can help them in and out of the shower, or a frame that can help them get on and off the toilet—but the impact on their life cannot be underestimated,” Sandra said.

And for people like Maurice, it means they can continue to live happily, in their own home, with their own belongings, for longer. ■

## Turning fleet emissions into trees

**A**t the end of 2016, we announced that Churches of Christ in Queensland had partnered with not-for-profit organisation Greenfleet to plant trees to offset our fleet emissions.

Throughout May we took part in plantings on the Gold Coast and Bundaberg as part of the innovative program.

On 9 May we joined other stakeholders in a large planting in Bundaberg at the Barolin Nature Reserve, which backs onto the Mon Repos Conservation Park, a regional park supporting the largest concentration of nesting marine turtles on the eastern Australian mainland. In particular, Mon Repos is the most significant loggerhead turtle rookery in the South Pacific and is a key global nesting area for the vulnerable green turtle.

Over 80,000 trees have been planted in the Barolin Nature Reserve. Greenfleet will maintain the trees until they are established, with the local council guaranteeing that the trees will remain in place for a minimum of 30 years.

On the Gold Coast, a koala corridor is being created at Tallebudgera, where several thousand trees have so far been planted and koalas are finding a home in their branches.

Eight volunteers from Churches of Christ in Queensland took part in the Bundaberg and Gold Coast plantings and have helped the regions by planting 850 trees.

Group Manager Richard Schuster attended the planting in Bundaberg.

“Through these plantings, we can offset the 1,900 tonnes of emissions from our fleet of vehicles each year,” Richard said.

“Our values as an organisation



■ Greenfleet tree planting day, Gold Coast Friday 5 May. Staff from across the Gold Coast attended the planting including Graham Wheat, Kathryn Rains, Elizabeth Hutchinson, Shannon Townsley and Gabrielle Roussetos.

outline that we are to be ‘Good Stewards’. In a perfect world we wouldn’t have vehicle emissions such as carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides. But we do. So offsetting our vehicle emissions is great stewardship and helps the environment.

“In partnering with Greenfleet though, we are actually doing more than just offsetting our vehicle emissions. We are helping build a koala corridor on the Gold Coast and helping save the turtles at Mon Repos near Bundaberg, as well as the Great Barrier reef as we plant trees in North Queensland.”

This partnership with Greenfleet is a first for Churches of Christ in Queensland and sets us apart from our peers in many of the sectors we work in. Greenfleet is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to connecting people with real climate change action. Since 1997, they have planted more than 8.7 million native trees across 425 biodiverse forests in Australia and New Zealand to offset carbon emissions. ■

*To find out more about Greenfleet, go to [greenfleet.org.au](http://greenfleet.org.au).*





# Looking after

How can we live our organisational value of being good stewards and how does this relate to securing the environment for generations to come?

**T**he definition of 'being a good steward' can be interpreted in many ways and Churches of Christ in Queensland's Fleet, Procurement and Sustainability Group Manager, Richard Schuster admits, it's a constant fine line.

"If you look at stewardship in terms of our work here, we ask 'are we being responsible with our money?', but we also ask the question, 'Are we looking after God's creation?'" Richard said.

The organisation is fine-tuning its sustainability strategy—and while there is so much to do, there is also a lot to be proud of, including the features in our new Head Office building.

"Our building has been designed with the environment clearly a focus, with solar power potentially saving 210 tonnes of CO2 annually, spaces for electric and hybrid cars in the carpark, and even cleaning products that are biodegradable," he said.

An organisation Richard looks up to and admires in the not-for-profit sector is the Uniting Church in South Australia, the first registered charity in Australia to be Certified Carbon Neutral. The organisation received the Premier's Award for reducing their carbon footprint, reducing electricity consumption, company fleet fuel, and waste to landfill. Richard would like to see Churches of Christ in Queensland in this league.

As a speaker at last year's Centrifuge event as part of Celebrate 2016, Richard challenged staff to think greener. And the response was encouraging.

"People were suggesting ways we, as an organisation and individuals, could do better for

# God's creation

the environment. It showed there is a good appetite within the organisation to push for sustainability," Richard said.

With that in mind, he is focused on examining what we could do better.

"Our carbon footprint as an organisation looks like being of the order of 21,100 tonnes of CO2, that's not good. Our aged care services generate over one million contingence pads per year and these go to landfill. Our 500 vehicles consume three-quarters of a million litres of fuel annually."

One myth that Richard believes is a barrier to any organisation choosing more environmentally friendly work practices is that it costs to be green.

"Look at it over a longer timeframe, from our experience, Churches of Christ in Queensland is actually reducing its overall costs with the sustainable infrastructure and policies we have already put in place.

"We all need to keep questioning how we can be good stewards in our everyday life and work. It's more than just turning off our computers and lights when we leave the office.

"This is God's world. He put us in charge and if we, the church, can't be looking after the Earth, who should? We can't not do this."

## What are we doing?

### PLUG-IN HYBRID ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Two plug-in hybrid electric vehicles are a part of our fleet, and will be charged predominantly from solar generated through the panels on the roof of the Head Office building. The vehicles can travel approximate 40 kilometres on battery power alone, and a further 450 kilometres on the petrol engine.

### HYBRID CARS

Ten Hybrid Toyota Corollas have been purchased to become a part of our fleet. With lower fuel consumption because of their batteries, which charge when braking and rolling downhill, they are better for the environment.

### TREE PLANTING

We are planting approximately 7,000 trees on the Gold Coast and in Bundaberg through Greenfleet to offset the 1,900 tonnes of carbon emissions produced from our vehicle fleet.

As the trees grow, the native forests capture carbon pollution from the atmosphere, provide vital habitat to native wildlife, conserve biodiversity and generate resilience to climate change in the landscape. ■

## Looking ahead

**A**t only a year old, the Kenmore base for Churches of Christ in Queensland is already being used as a national case study for sustainable and innovative energy design.

Solar panels, which provide photovoltaic energy generation through converting energy from the sun into power, alongside electric car bays and the eight water tanks holding up to 75,000 litres of rain runoff from the roof, contribute to its environmental credentials.

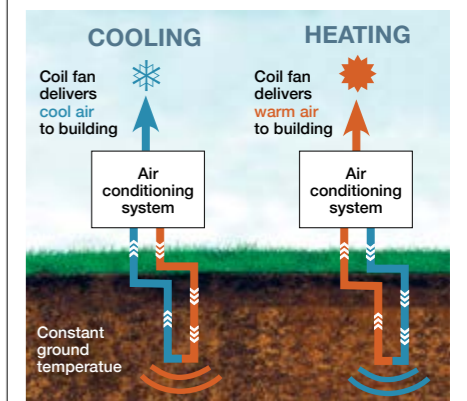
The building uses geothermal heating and cooling, which is aimed at the highest possible energy efficiency rating. The system is one of the first of this size and is the largest direct exchange geothermal project ever undertaken in Australia. Taking advantage of the constant and moderate temperatures in the ground, air-conditioning maintenance and operating costs will be significantly less compared to traditional heating and cooling.

The geothermal heating and cooling system (pictured below) is one of the largest in Australia comprising over 14,000 metres of copper tubing. ■



### Six tips for greener work

1. Encourage phone or video meetings
2. Use stairs instead of the lifts
3. Turn off computers at the end of the day
4. Use the recycling and paper bins, and know what goes in them
5. Keep a reusable bag handy for a quick shop
6. Speak out if something could be done better to reduce our impact on the environment







**LISTEN COMFORT EMPOWER**

IN A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE IS TALKING;  
COMMUNITY CHAPLAINS ARE LISTENING

**SUPPORT OUR END OF FINANCIAL YEAR APPEAL  
AND GIVE THE GIFT OF A COMMUNITY CHAPLAIN**

If just 165 people gave \$60 a month, together we could support one full time chaplain for a year\*!

We invite you to invest in bringing this vital support to individuals and communities by donating today.

**DONATE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
1800 600 900 | [giftachaplain.com.au](http://giftachaplain.com.au)**



Churches of Christ in Queensland's chaplaincy program is entirely self-funded through donations, partnerships and income from our fundraising activities. \* overall average cost per chaplain over 12 months. Includes salary, superannuation, administration and human resources, vehicle, IT and other employment costs.



## In good times and bad we listen, comfort and empower

**F**or our Community Chaplains, two words sum up the most important thing they can do: listen first.

“Rather than imposing solutions, it’s about listening, then asking. What are a person’s hopes, what are their dreams? How can we authentically walk with them to see long-lasting results in their life?” Community Chaplain Team Leader Tim Burns said.

Tim coordinates and supports our six Community Chaplains working across six regions. We also have seven chaplains covering 28 of our community housing complexes.

For Tim, the role of Community Chaplains is as much about being proactive as reactive.

“From a disaster response point of view, we are there and able to help,” he said. When ex-Tropical Cyclone Debbie resulted in significant flooding throughout Queensland in March, Community Chaplain in the South Burnett region, Mark Wall, was on hand to rally volunteers to help local farmers remove significant amounts of flood debris from hay crops.

“Understanding the problem and understanding that these farmers were not able to employ labour, I and our volunteer Rural Chaplain gained the assistance from a keen bunch of volunteers from the Caloundra Church of Christ and removed the flood debris, as well as clean irrigation lines, which enabled a large majority of the crops to be recovered. As a very happy farmer said to me a week later, “Tell those boys that their work was very successful. I only came across one piece of flood debris when I was mowing the crop and I saw it in time before it went through the machine’,” Mark said.

In flooding rains, and throughout years

### Did you know?

- The Community Chaplaincy program does not receive government funding and is only made possible through your donations, partnerships and income from other activities.
- The need in our communities is great and our aim is to add another two chaplains by 2018 to help more people.
- If just 165 people gave \$60 a month, together we could provide one full time chaplain for a year\*!

of drought, our community chaplains are there providing a listening ear, and hope. The relationships they develop and their long-term presence mean they can work to bring communities together to support each other, increasing resilience.

Adrian Toft, a Community Chaplain based in the Samford Valley, has become a valuable member of the community, able to help people in their time of need.

“Even though it is a more affluent community, scratch beneath the surface and there are people who are struggling through mental health issues, domestic and family violence, death of a loved one or money problems,” Adrian said.

“When the owner of a local shop, for example, became ill and had to go home to New Zealand for treatment, I was able to gather support to ensure that his wife could continue to run the business and support their children.”

“Through all the situations life throws at us, our Community Chaplains are working with people to make life more comfortable, and more bearable,” Tim said. ■

**This end of financial year, invest in your communities by giving the gift of a community chaplain.**

*Give the Gift of a Community Chaplain*

*Will you help us make this valuable investment in people and communities?*

*To make your once-off donation, or to set up a regular gift visit:*

*[giftachaplain.com.au](http://giftachaplain.com.au),  
call 1800 600 900 or email  
[fundraising@cofcqld.com.au](mailto:fundraising@cofcqld.com.au)*

*All donations over \$2 are tax deductible*





## Ready for remote education

Located approximately 750 kilometres west of Brisbane, and over 200 kilometres from Charleville, there are not many places more remote than Cunnamulla.

When the kindergarten teacher left our Early Childhood Centre in Cunnamulla last December, the centre set out to find a new teacher to take up the challenge of teaching young children in such a remote area.

On Tuesday 18 April, Jane Webb stepped into the vital role.

Jane said she was drawn to the position in Cunnamulla as she knew she wanted to work in a rural area after graduating from a Bachelor of Education – Early Childhood. Jane had spent many years working as a nanny overseas, and has worked in the Northern Territory and Arnhem Land. “I worked for a year in Arnhem Land, but Cunnamulla is much more remote, about a third of the size,” Jane said of moving to the small western Queensland town.

“Everyone here is really nice and I am enjoying working here. I want to set down roots somewhere for a while,” she said.

The Cunnamulla Early Childhood Centre and Kindergarten, which is the only early education centre for many hours, currently has 14 children taking part in the government funded kindergarten program. And with a qualified early childhood teacher, the children are set to receive the best possible start to their education.

“While we teach literacy, numeracy, name recognition, months, and the alphabet and so on, the main thing we try to focus on is building the children’s independence and social interaction—how to do things for themselves and building valuable social skills—so they are ready and equipped to start school,” Jane said.

The new kindergarten teacher’s arrival has been warmly welcomed by the service and local community. Service Manager Margaret Darcy in particular was glad to welcome their new, highly experienced teacher to the dedicated team.

“While we have had our qualified staff stepping in to help teach the kindergarten children so far this year, it is wonderful to have Jane now to educate our children and be part of our team,” she said. ■



■ Above, Service Manager Margaret Darcy, Jane Webb and Kindergarten Assistant Caitlin Spaul.



■ Shine WOMEN participants, with Modupe Akib (front centre) during the nine-week program.

## Regency Park residents Shine on

*Shine WOMEN is a personal development program that aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills needed to develop greater self-awareness and personal growth. It reinforces the uniqueness of every individual and celebrates their different strengths, qualities and skills. It also addresses issues such as low self-esteem, poor self-acceptance, condemnation, low confidence and those negative core beliefs formed from childhood that may have impacted negatively on the individual.*

Residents from Regency Park Retirement Village in Warwick were the latest to take part in the Shine WOMEN program.

Welcomed by Retirement Living Manager Chris Newley, the program guided eight women from the village through the nine-week program facilitated by Modupe Akib and Yvonne Muller.

Learning and Development Facilitator Modupe was inspired by the women’s transformation over the program.

“One of the participants acknowledged that her lack of confidence in self and low self-

esteem emanated from her father who believed that women could amount to nothing. Shine WOMEN has definitely assisted in boosting her confidence, and knowing that she has worth. The feelings that came with seeing her blossom like a flower and shine at the end of the program are inexplicable,” Modupe said.

In the first week, the women took part in a session where they were to mention their name and affirm “I am valuable” to themselves and the group. One woman didn’t consider herself valuable enough to be able to bring herself to say it.

“After a quiet chat she went away, and came back the next week after time of self-reflection and journaling, she called out her name and affirmed ‘I am valuable’. It was very empowering.

“It was really heart-warming and encouraging to see those, who according to them, hardly ever played an active role in the village pair up with others to join for swimming, yoga, exercises and other available activities in the village.”

Chris Newley has seen the positive impact the program has had with residents who were unable to attend hearing about the inspiring program and putting their names on a waiting list to attend the next.

“Not only has Shine WOMEN allowed our residents to participate in experiential and interactive activities that boost their social and interpersonal skills, they have found the nine weeks together most valuable,” Modupe said.

The women who took part in the empowering program were grateful for the experience, with feedback including “I will live my life with more confidence”, “I will be the ME I was created to be”, “my potential is limitless”, “I will rise above difficult situations” and “I have become more positive and strong enough to face life’s challenges”. ■





# SALT of the Earth

*In communities across Queensland, Victoria, Vanuatu and beyond, dedicated teams are meeting regularly to determine how Churches of Christ in Queensland can meet the unique needs of communities. From large scale infrastructure projects to working with other local organisations to make things happen, Strategic Action Leadership Teams are all asking and finding answers for one simple question: What can we do to bring the light of Christ into this community?*

**S**trategic Action Leadership Teams (SALTs as they are commonly known) are an innovative concept that brings together members from Churches of Christ in Queensland management and staff, local churches, local community and business leaders to create strategies to address the particular needs of that area. There are currently approximately 30 SALTs, with over 200 active members, and 60 per cent of our affiliated churches taking part.

Acting Group Manager of Strategic Mission Development, Brent Sweeney, helps to oversee the teams, and is an

active member on many of them.

“In a large organisation it is crucial to have a mechanism that allows us to listen to local people. Our SALTs allow us to listen to the grassroots and allow them to influence us as an organisation,” Brent said.

“By nature the teams are unifying — they cluster together all parts of our organisation in a region.”

For Brent, the SALTs ask the question, “if we work together what could we do to bring the light of Christ into this region?”

“They are a space where local people and needs meet a large organisation with resources.”



■ Leading members of our Strategic Action Leadership Teams: Back row: Ross Dinnar, Tim McMenemy, Dean Phelan, Desley Millwood, Steve Drinkall, Kevin Hamer, Karen Huxley. Front row: Brent Sweeney, Donna Savill, Sharon Lowe and Craig Sadler.



■ Left, The SALT on the Sunshine Coast engaged with the local community to discover their needs for services and facilities on a large block at Meridan. Construction commences later this year. Right, Steve Gray in front of Burleigh Heads Church of Christ, where a new SALT is addressing the needs of the southern Gold Coast community.

Of the many SALTs currently meeting and bringing light into communities, here are four examples of big, small, old and new teams that are each working to meet the needs of their communities in different ways.

## BURLEIGH

The Burleigh SALT is the newest team to be brought together. Established with the long standing Burleigh Heads Church of Christ and their new pastor Steve Gray, the SALT will set out to see how they can meet the needs of the community and families on the southern end of the Gold Coast. “There is a lot of need, homelessness, community facilities and families, and the SALT team has been formed to see what this support looks like. The driver has been the new pastor, who has a young family and wants to see what they can do in the community,” Brent said.

With our Children, Youth and Families services on the Gold Coast, they hope to work with them and addressing the needs they see in the community. It is the second SALT for the Gold Coast.

## FAR WESTERN QUEENSLAND

For a number of years, a SALT has been active in Far Western Queensland; for communities west of Toowoomba including Dalby, Roma, Chinchilla, St George and Cunnamulla.

The SALT has been active in finding small ways to impact these communities. In St George they have worked with the local Uniting Church to bring a Community Chaplain to the area.

Seniors Chaplain John Teunis, has worked at our Warrawee Aged Care

Service, assisting residents, and offering support to their families.

“One day, a lady spoke to John and asked if he could visit her son who was a farmer and not doing so well. He visited the farmer, and as the farmer's mother had told him he was to talk to John, he opened his tractor door and let John up for a chat.

“These are strong farmers, but they are one of most at risk groups of people for suicide,” Brent said.

The SALT has also been working with the local Aboriginal people to achieve positive outcomes in bringing them together with the farming community. They have worked with the Uniting Church to create a new community centre with coffee facilities so that the local Indigenous families, who have felt uncomfortable going in to town, have somewhere to come together and enjoy a coffee with other local families.

## SAMFORD VALLEY

Samford Valley, north-west of Brisbane, is an affluent and established community, with a median house



■ Adrian Toft in the community garden at Samford Valley. Produce from the garden is picked and packed and given to people in need.

price edging \$1 million, and strong community spirit. A SALT is active in the picturesque, leafy-green area and found that there were social issues present in the insular community that ‘outsiders’ had failed to be able to address.

Without a desire to come in and bring in ways to fix the community, the SALT looked to the community to find a way to help address the needs, and found a Community Chaplain in Adrian Toft.

Over the past year, Adrian has embedded himself in the community, becoming a trusted confidante and talented community wrangler, gathering helping hands to assist others in need.

## SUNSHINE COAST

For many years, the Sunshine Coast SALT has been working on a way to bring the light of Christ into the community by the finding the best possible use for a large parcel of land at Meridan. While a residential aged care development was known to be needed to be built there, they wanted to see what else the community needed.

As one of the fastest growing cities in Australia, and the ninth largest, the Sunshine Coast is full with young families. The SALT worked to find out what the needs really were, what they could do to be able to connect with the community. Across the road from a large school, the block in Meridan presented opportunities to address their needs.

The Sunshine Coast SALT has been successful in that it has innovatively thought about how they can meet the needs of the community and then used their influence to encourage Churches of Christ in Queensland to develop a new, innovative integrated community on the Sunshine Coast. ■



# Fresh Horizons' change in 2017



**A**fter seven years of hosting the annual conference 'Finding Your Fit in Life's 2nd Half', Fresh Horizons is taking a different approach in 2017 and going regional.

Teaming up with HumeRidge and Springwood Church of Christ churches, they will host two special events with the theme of 'Creating Community Across the Generations'.

Today, we find multiple generations worshipping under the same roof. How these generations relate to each other will determine the course of the church in Australia over the next years and decades.

Graham Agnew (pictured) is the Ministry Team Leader at Blackwood Church of Christ in Adelaide and is a passionate advocate of the Intergenerational Church. Graham will be the Keynote Speaker at these events, supported by young university student Emma Simpson, founder of 'Connect2Veterans', along with guest artists Steve Drinkall (HumeRidge) and Brendon Walmsley (Springwood).

These dinner events will be held from 5pm to 9pm at HumeRidge Church of Christ on Saturday 12 August 2017 and Springwood Church of Christ on Saturday 19 August 2017. Event tickets

will be \$15 per person available from the respective churches and will include pre-dinner drinks, nibbles, a two course meal and a great program.

The events will replace the Fresh Horizons two day conference this year and are open to all generations, from millennials to baby boomers and seniors.

## FRESH HORIZONS TOUR TO ISRAEL

Has the thought ever crossed your mind: "Just once in my lifetime, I would like to experience the land of the bible". If not now.... when? Join Richard and Shirley Pearce as they lead a journey of discovery through Israel and Jordan with a Fresh Horizons 22-day group tour departing Brisbane on 12 April 2018.

The tour will take you to see the bible come to life as you visit sights and regions where events in the Old and New Testaments took place. Let your faith be enriched as you see places where Jesus walked, taught and performed miracles. A great opportunity to join this cost effective tour. ■

*For information and a brochure contact Richard and Shirley Pearce at [admin@freshhorizons.org.au](mailto:admin@freshhorizons.org.au)*



## Medical Santo update

# Return volunteers make remote visits

**S**ince September 2015, Dr Amanda and Dr Michael have made three trips to Vanuatu to volunteer at Churches of Christ Medical Santo.

The Geelong general practitioners love the variety of work they get to do, including providing primary health care at the Medical Santo clinic, consulting with other health professionals at the Northern Provincial Hospital, and running medical education sessions to help change the lives of people they come in contact with.

On their most recent trip, they were asked to accompany two rural health nurses and a pathology technician to the remote village of Sauriki, on the south-west coast of the island of Santo. A small boat carried the team and their



Below, Doctors Amanda and Michael and their team travelled by boat to the small, remote village of Sauriki. Above, the team delivered health education, screening and consultations to 150 people.



equipment up the coast, landing ashore with an exciting surf onto the beach.

Over the two day visit in a difficult environment, the team screened 150 people, providing treatment and advice where required.

"We faced many challenges on our village visit, primarily with creating an appropriate environment for medical assessments, with language barriers, cultural differences, poor health literacy, lack of confidentiality and limited testing and treatment options as challenges," the doctors said.

The villagers were very welcoming and helpful with interpreting if needed, while some of the children were a bit more wary of their visitors.

"Many of the children had never seen white people before, so we were certainly curious beings, if not initially terrifying," Dr Michael said.

The consulting room was a log under a tree and the examination table, a mat on the ground.

"After we requested a private area to examine some of the patients, we were allocated a grass hut with no windows. It was a good thing we had our head torches!" he said.

The doctors provided health education at every opportunity, both individually and in larger groups. The rural health nurses concentrated on tuberculosis, HIV and Hepatitis B screening and increasing awareness of these communicable diseases, with one young man transported back with the team for tuberculosis treatment.

Doctor Amanda gave a talk to the "Mamas" on women's health issues, which was delivered via three women, in three languages. "It was so inspiring to have the three of us, all from such different cultural backgrounds, delivering the same message," Dr Amanda said.

Both doctors described the visit as an incredible experience and wonderful cultural exchange. Despite the challenges and limitations, they felt the team created a positive impact on the health of the Sauriki villagers and are keen to return to continue working with this community and the many others like it to continue changing lives in Northern Vanuatu. ■

**Donate today: 1800 600 900**  
**Your donation makes such a huge difference to people in Vanuatu.**  
**[give@medicalsanto.com](mailto:give@medicalsanto.com)**





## Reconciliation Action Plan update

In 2015, Churches of Christ in Queensland released the Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-17. This milestone for the organisation heralded a new era of recognition and commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

In the almost two years since the release of the plan, a number of in-roads have been made in implementing its strategies.

Acting Chief Executive Officer David Swain is passionate about improving the representation and acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

“Reconciliation describes the journey we must take in realising a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other Australians stand together as equals. We do not start this journey with a clean slate, as our shared history has often been painful, and its effects reflected in many areas including inequalities in health, education and employment,” David said.

The Reconciliation Action Plan outlines a number of actions that we, as an organisation, will take to contribute to reconciliation.

It is built on three core themes of relationships, respect and opportunities.

“Stemming from the actions outlined in this plan, we have built stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and communities,” he said.

“We have also worked at increasing cultural awareness and capability across the organisation, and are working towards

greater recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.”

With the plan set to expire, the next plan is being developed, and will be released later this year.

“We look forward to releasing an update to the Reconciliation Action Plan which will continue us on the path our initial plan has set us on.” ■



## Q&A

Tammy Wallace is a Jirrabal woman from the Tablelands in Far North Queensland. She shares her insights into what it means for her, her family and her people for an organisation to have a Reconciliation Action Plan.



■ Tammy Wallace said that having a Reconciliation Action Plan communicates that the organisation is willing to go on this journey together with you to achieve positive outcomes. Tammy is the Inclusion and Diversity Group Manager for Churches of Christ in Queensland.

**Q** For you, how important is it for Churches of Christ in Queensland, or any organisation, to have a Reconciliation Action Plan?

**A** It really communicates that the organisation wants to work in close partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It shows that they are committed to their wellbeing and want to partner with communities to achieve better outcomes for children, families and communities.

**Q** What does it mean for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to know their workplace has a Reconciliation Action Plan?

**A** It means that doors are open. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience the worst health outcomes of any identifiable cultural group in Australia. They have experienced significant trauma and there is a lot of mistrust of service delivery systems. Having a Reconciliation Action Plan communicates that the organisation is willing to go on this journey together with you to achieve positive outcomes.

**Q** Why is it important in this journey for everyone to face past truths and to understand the impact of past policies and colonisation?

**A** We all need to know and understand what the trauma looks and feels like. In terms of the organisation delivering services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait people, they need to make sure they know and understand that trauma, so they can be culturally competent in their work. Organisations can go in with the best laid plans and they can go astray. It is about working with communities on their terms.

**Q** What results have you seen since Churches of Christ in Queensland introduced its plan?

**A** The organisation has been doing great things with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Elders and communities across Queensland. They are supporting families and most importantly, supporting children who are over-represented in the child protection system. They are also providing housing and accommodation to people who would otherwise be homeless.

**Q** What would be the one message you would like people to go away with after reading this?

**A** Try and get to know the culture and the people. It is a collective responsibility and as we go forward we will develop that mutual respect and be able to bring more people together and as an organisation achieve greater outcomes. In your everyday jobs, consider how you can be more culturally inclusive, no matter which field you work in. ■



# History of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander ministry in Queensland



*an extract from The Church from the Paddock volume 2*



Last year, we released the second edition of the Churches of Christ in Queensland history book, *The Church from the Paddock*. The following is an extract from Chapter Nine "Ministry to and with Indigenous People in Queensland". Read the full story in our history book.

**T**here can be no doubt that the arrival in 1788 of 11 ships from Britain at Botany Bay had a disastrous impact on the lives of the Indigenous people of Australia.

There is no more pertinent summary of the responsibility of Churches of Christ in Queensland than what was released by the Social Services department in their 1988 report: "In our reflection we can also see that there have been some social disasters, which have resulted from the process of settlement and of special note among these is the position and place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australian society. We have a need to commit ourselves to the important tasks of seeking, in the name of Christ, to help our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and

sisters to stand with us in the equality that Christ bestowed upon all who are his disciples."

## STORIES OF GROWTH AND MINISTRY

There could be many, many stories told of the impact that the Churches of Christ in Queensland have had with Indigenous people in ministry. One such story is that of Vincent Mathieson. One of the encouraging aspects of this brief testimony is that it covers both the federal and state Indigenous ministry eras. Vincent's story is one of a lost man who, carrying the burden of alcoholism and also having been removed from his mother as a young boy, came to Pastor Phil Brewster at the Mareeba community church looking for help to get to the Aboriginal Reserve.

He received that help – and a whole lot more than he bargained for as well.

"At the end of 1979 the Lord showed Himself to me: He called out to me 'Come'. I was shaking. For days I kept hearing that voice calling me 'Come'. I was afraid. I told my wife 'Jesus is calling me'. My Christian wife, Pam, told her brother. Tom said, 'Tell him if he means it, to come with you to our Bible Study.' There Pastor Phil talked with me and I prayed for forgiveness. Then Pastor prayed for me. I felt as if a heavy load was lifted from me. I felt light. I now had God in my life. I did a real turn around. God could, and did, change my life! What a change! Since then I've stuck to my God and He to me! The journey hasn't always been easy. A couple of years ago when my wife was sick it was tough. I became her carer until the Lord called her home. But through it all God has helped and kept me. I've been one of the Aboriginal elders at Mareeba Community Church for years and on the Board of the Aboriginal and Islander Christian Fellowship since it began. I am also a Director of the Aboriginal and Islander Christian Community Centres Ltd. Over the years I've been involved in Sunday school, Youth Programs, open-air

meetings, Prison Chaplaincy, Gospel Outreach trips, bus driver, guitarist, singer, and shared in leadership in the church program. But in these last months God has been stirring me, and calling me to walk a new – to be more involved in ministry.

In February 2008 I began a Certificate III of Theology at Wontulp-Bi-Bunya College for Aboriginal Christians at Cairns. In December 2012 I married Veronica and we are now pastoring the Mareeba Community Church. I am also continuing my studies at Wontulp in Cairns. From Mareeba we do outreach to many places. As a Church we have a real interest in Townsville where I lived on the streets for many years."

The church is still growing at Mareeba, where 10 people were baptised in 2015.

Vincent's story is one of hope, one in which Jesus Christ takes a life that looks lost and not only recovers that life, but sets the person on to a path of giving others life. His story is one that reminds us that life is full of ups and downs, where sometimes events occur that we would rather avoid but eventually find strength and growth from. The same is also true of ministries. While there have been points along

the journey of Indigenous ministry in Queensland that we need to learn from, we can embrace the stories and the principles that show Jesus at work, through and alongside Indigenous people and their ministries. Vincent is now in full-time pastoral ministry at Mareeba.

The Normanton Christian Centre continues to impact the community around it, and one example of this influence is the annual Northern Aboriginal Christian Convention. The Convention was first hosted by the Normanton Christian Centre on the Delta Downs Cattle Station in 1984, and in 2011 attracted up to 500 people. The station is owned and managed by the Kurtjar people, who are the traditional owners of the land.

By mid-2013, the ministry of the Aboriginal and Islander Christian Fellowship (AICF) churches had spread beyond the four centres of Normanton, Eidsvold, Mareeba and Logan City. Indigenous ministry and mission is now spread throughout Queensland in a variety of ministry settings, including initiatives at Mount Isa and Townsville.

Lyle and Hazel Morris are still heavily involved in the ministry of the AICF, and coordinate the ministry on a voluntary

basis. The administration of the AICF is located in Brisbane, where the Morris' work tirelessly to ensure that the administrative load does not fall on the local AICF churches. Lyle still travels extensively to the fields, supporting the pastors and conducting funerals as needed. His and Hazel's ministry to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has lasted over 40 years.

Mt Isa is used as a base for Hazel Lauridsen's Mobile Christian Bookshop, which takes her beyond Queensland into the Northern Territory, a part of Australia where Churches of Christ have had little presence in Indigenous mission and ministry. Currently, Hazel's work there (and the work in Normanton) is one of the few instances of Churches of Christ mission in the Northern Territory.

There are also ministry centres ('Cross Flow') in northern New South Wales based at Fingal Head and also one in Dubbo. ■

*To read the full story, go to [cofc.com.au/publications/corporate-documents/the-church-from-the-paddock-second-edition](http://cofc.com.au/publications/corporate-documents/the-church-from-the-paddock-second-edition), or pick up a hard copy today.*





■ Daniel (left) and Dean found the supported they needed to exit homelessness and find their independence.

## On the road to independence

**F**or Dean and Daniel, finding a stable home and receiving the support they need means they are on the road to independence.

The young men were part of the Churches of Christ Housing Services and Ipswich Independent Youth Services pilot program 'Supported People in Share Housing' (SPin) program, which through providing safe and stable home with the support of experienced case managers has helped them overcome barriers to independence and out of homelessness.

At a young age Dean and Daniel's family and living situations had broken down and they didn't have anywhere to go or didn't feel safe in the place they were staying in. They came to the service at different times but with the same need to find some stability and get support to start afresh.

Daniel moved from his small hometown to Brisbane at the age of 18 and lived with his grandfather for nearly two years and started studying a course in digital media and interactive gaming. However, when conflict started at home, he decided to move out with

friends from college. They didn't know at the time but the primary tenant of the new property was a dangerous addict. The stresses of living there were too much for Daniel to attend college, as he would often stay awake all night fearing for his safety. Through some old friends and case workers, he eventually found Ipswich Independent Youth Services who offered him a safe place to live and a new start. Dean, meanwhile, left home at 11 and constantly moved around, in and out of homelessness.

They were matched to live together by Ipswich Independent Youth Services, and quickly became friends.

“They bounce off each other in conversation and break out in fits of laughter”

According to Dean, it only took an hour of living under the same roof before they became friends. It's clear to see what a great friendship they have formed – bouncing off each other in conversation and break out in fits of laughter. They make a good team and work well together to ensure bills are paid on time and the household chores and cooking is shared equally between them.

The SPin program has helped them take a new positive direction in their lives and find a pathway out of homelessness by providing them with the guidance and opportunity to gain experience and skills to manage the pros and cons of share-housing in a supported environment.

The boys have transitioned now into a new share-house arrangement in a private rental.

Dean has been able to address some issues and sort out his finances and is currently seeking work in hospitality, while Daniel has identified that he has a keen interest in a career in Information and Communication Technology and is working towards completing a course in it. They will continue to receive support to help them take the steps towards the lives they deserve and aspire to. ■



## Taking our past to the future

**P**reserving our history and who we are as Churches of Christ in Queensland has come a long way. We have progressed from a few boxes stored under then Chair of Churches of Christ in Queensland Clive Burdeu's house to a purpose built archive facility. Now, we are looking towards the future with assurance, knowing that the preservation of our historical documents and other artefacts will be managed and stored safely and securely in our Historical Resource Centre at Mitchelton.

“If we don't move to digital, our history will pass us by,” explained Jonathan Smith, who works in the centre. The purpose built facility is a part of the Churches of Christ Campus at Mitchelton and is home to many historical items that are pieces of the puzzle of who we are.

The centre was specifically designed to keep physical documents, newsletters, photos, artworks and other artefacts in the best possible condition with temperature and humidity control. This is a far cry from how they have previously been stored.

“Over the years the documents have been kept under a house, ‘the dungeon’ basement of the Brotherhood Centre



■ Jonathan Smith has been digitally cataloguing the extensive physical archives. Top, temperature and humidity control in the purpose-built resource centre ensures that our archives survive for generations to come.

on Ann Street in Brisbane City, in a facility prone to flooding at the Kenmore Christian College, and at the squash courts at Mitchelton,” Jonathan said.

“Unfortunately, due to moves, temporary storage, moisture and mould, a number of items (books, documents, and a computer) have sustained irreversible damage and have had to be disposed of.” With the way society and technology is changing, the increasing reliance on digital documents and a move away from paper, the need for a dedicated digital archive is increasing.

Work has already commenced on the digital transition of current items through scanning and cataloguing, while options are being investigated to make it easier to capture and manage our digital history.

“We need to have an intelligent Historical Resource Centre. If we don't capture and keep our history, our memories if you will, we may move in a direction that is very different from our origins. We need the ability to look back on the decisions we have made and why we made them so that we have a clear sense of direction on the road ahead of us.”

Back in 1935, Frederick D Kershner said “...no transaction of any organisation should be regarded as unworthy of preservation. It is highly desirable that future generations should understand the facts of past history in order to more surely expand their own outlook.”

You can visit the Historical Resource Centre at the Churches of Christ Campus at Mitchelton. Contact Jonathan Smith on 07 3513 9045 to arrange a time. ■



# Big heart in Central West



Several times a week, Volunteer Coordinator Kaye Wood admits to shaking her head in disbelief.

Not at what is wrong with the world, but rather what is so good about the people she is surrounded by and their actions.

"I've been in this role for five years and am still constantly amazed at the lengths people will go to help others," Kaye said.

As the Volunteer Coordinator at Churches of Christ Care Barcoo Living Multi-Purpose Service, Kaye is grateful for those willing to give their time to help the centre.

"This week for example, one man, Ken Dent, drove the service's bus so residents could go to medical appointments in Longreach. That's a 400 kilometre round trip. The next day he did it all again, another 400 kilometres for his own friends," Kaye said.

With a district population of just 1,588, there is nothing small about the heart of the central west town and the local community does not take its volunteers for granted. Frances Blacker (pictured) a Barcoo Living volunteer, was named Citizen of the Year at this year's local Australia Day awards.

"One of the most amazing things about this woman is that she doesn't believe she has done anything special for our community," Kaye said.

Records indicate that Frances started volunteering in 1978, however it goes back further to the early years of Meals



“One of the most amazing things about this woman is that she doesn't believe she has done anything special for our community”

on Wheels in Blackall where she would coordinate volunteers, cook and then deliver meals. A service she continues to do with Churches of Christ Care to this day.

"Frances has enriched the life of Blackall simply by being who she is, someone who cares enough to give their time without expecting anything in return," Kaye said.

While Frances has been a life-long volunteer, Kaye said that other people stumble across volunteering when seeing the difference others make.

"People may not think that being able to give an hour here or there can make a difference, but it does. Playing cards, setting up a game, having coffee with someone who is lonely, it all means so much."

After seeing the difference in her mother's wellbeing after being taken on an outing, Wendy Just decided to become a volunteer at Barcoo.

"During a recent lockdown due to an influenza outbreak, Wendy drove from out of town in 40 degree temperatures to water plants so the residents still had a green space to enjoy," Kaye said.

Another volunteer, Jenny Hillier, visited her mother every day, and when she retired, she realised the relationships she had built with other residents as well. She now provides one-on-one support playing cards, being a lunch companion or a listening ear over a cup of tea.

"They really are an asset to this service." ■



■ Volunteers were celebrated at St James Retirement Village during National Volunteer Week. Over 50 residents and volunteers gathered for a celebratory morning tea.

## Live Happy Be Happy

National Volunteer  
Week 2017

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” – Winston Churchill.

From 8 – 14 May we celebrated National Volunteer Week to say thank you to all of our volunteers for their time, care, contribution and commitment.

Our volunteers make a significant contribution by providing support and assistance to our staff and organisation. Most importantly they make a real difference by providing direct care and support to our clients and residents in Queensland, Victoria and Vanuatu. This includes increased community engagement and creating meaningful

experiences through social activities, building friendships and adding value to all our services.

We now have 1,648 registered volunteers contributing on average 9,352 hours per month. But the community development and socialisation outcomes achieved through our volunteer program are immeasurable.

Our volunteers enable Churches of Christ in Queensland to provide more personalised care to clients and residents. They generously contribute their skills, talents and time across all areas of the organisation, working in teams alongside staff providing help and support to those who need it the most. ■

Imagine working for the love of it.

Imagine  
volunteering  
with us.



Given the diversity of our services, chances are your skills will be perfect for one of our roles. So you'll find your efforts as rewarding for yourself as it is for those you help.

[imaginevolunteering.com.au](http://imaginevolunteering.com.au)





# A year digging deeper into God



**W**hile a gap year for some can mean heading overseas, two young men have chosen a journey much closer to home, exploring how they can help Ipswich youth.

Chris Mobbs (pictured top) and Brad Murch (pictured below) have taken up internships in youth ministry at Whitehill Church of Christ.

"They are really bringing hope to this generation and showing teenagers their potential. They have taught me things, we are learning together," explained Ben Kulp, who has been based at the Church at Raceview as the Youth and Young Adult's Pastor for the past five years.

Working alongside Pastor Ben, Chris and Brad assist in school ministry, youth nights and camps.

"You see the good, but also the not so good. The home situations that are heartbreaking, it's made me even more committed to continuing a career where I am helping others in some way or another," Brad said.

Chris and Brad are completing a Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology through distance education at Hope College while working at the church two days a week.

"At this age, there is a reluctance to open-up about issues, so on the surface it looks like they don't need anything out

of those around them. It's only when you start digging deeper, through discussion groups or a walk on a youth camp you realise how vulnerable and lost boys can feel at this age," Brad said.

Chris admits he was in the same mindset a year ago. "Approaching the end of Year 12, I was putting all this pressure on myself to make a decision about the rest of my life. I wanted to be an athlete or go to university and then when I left that comfort of school it was daunting. I was a bit unsure when this opportunity came up, looking back I am wondering why it took so long to decide."

With few male role models, and only one in five Australian primary school teachers being male, Brad and Chris's influence is even more significant to the wider Ipswich community.

"It's an age where a positive influence and guidance is crucial. Some of the boys here, their fathers may be away for work, others they have female teachers at school so some are really longing for a male to talk to and to guide them," said Brad who has deferred his Occupational Therapy degree, a path he may still take up after internship.

"This year has really shown me, being of service and making a difference in someone's life will always be important to me." ■

## CEO Excellence in Service Awards

Online  
Nominations  
open 17 July  
2017

The awards allow us to publicly acknowledge and show appreciation of the incredible work individuals, teams or programs are doing through caring ministries to bring the light of Christ into communities.

You have the opportunity to nominate any colleague or church member who you believe shows 'excellence' in demonstrating our values and mission either through their role within the organisation or their personal dedication to those less

fortunate, through an activity/project in their community.

Due to the success of taking the awards to the regions we will once again acknowledge our winners at local events with their colleagues, family and friends.

Nominations will only be accepted through our online process. Please visit [cofc.com.au/nominate](http://cofc.com.au/nominate) and complete the nomination form.

Nominations close Friday 25 August 2017.

This year we will only be accepting online applications. Go to [cofc.com.au/nominate](http://cofc.com.au/nominate). Nominations open 17 July to 25 August 2017.



# { People & Events }

in our communities



### Rosie's helping hand

Through gardening, dancing and manicures, volunteer Rosie Newell is helping the people living in aged care at Buckingham Gardens live a more meaningful life. Rosie is pictured with her husband Eddie.



### Excellent acknowledged

Each year we present the CEO Excellence in Service Awards. Special Recognition Award recipient Lex Buchanan with grandson Scott Buchanan and Kelly, and four of Lex's 30 great-grandchildren, with Acting CEO David Swain and Conference Council member Andi Owen at Gympie Church of Christ.

### Delving into our HerStory

For the past four years, Evelyn Colbran spent many hours searching through boxes gathering items to compile a history of Women's Ministry in Queensland Churches of Christ. Director of Communications, Desley Millwood presented Evelyn with a bound version of her work, HerStory, which provides an insight into the work of our Women's Ministry from 1913-2013. This is a significant piece of work and demonstrates the extensive contribution and great work of our women in ministry since inception. We are grateful for the work and the extensive research to compile this information. Great work Evelyn.

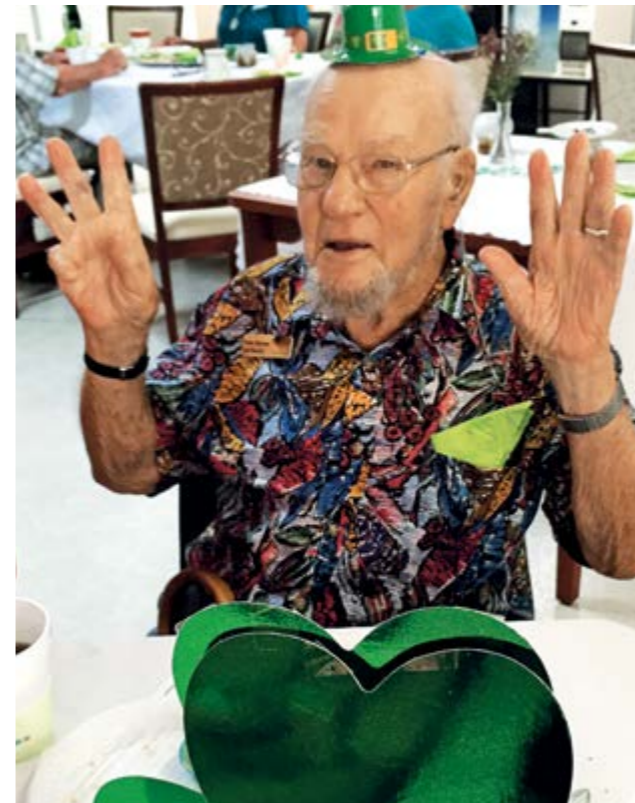


### Friendly Felix

Felix the poodle is a popular visitor to Buckingham Gardens. His owner, Larissa Lagas, is a personal care worker at the service and Felix, when not at her side, keeps residents company. He has become a much-loved addition, especially for the residents who previously owned pets, providing companionship and an interest.

### Flu jab protects all

Acting Chief Executive Officer David Swain lined up with many other staff at Head Office for his annual flu shot and reminded staff of the importance of protecting themselves from the flu, not only for their own health and that of our family and friends, but for vulnerable and frail client's health as well.



### Spirit of St Pat's

To be sure to be sure. Peter Barnes got into the spirit of St Patricks Day at Nubeena Aged Care Service at Toowoomba. Green was the theme and an Irish singalong was a feature of the day.

### A life of crime-fighting

Bribie Island Retirement Village resident Keith Smith is an ex-homicide detective. He shared his memories in a talk to a group of fellow residents called 'Behind the Crime'. Residents are looking forward to Keith's next talk.



### Murray is an Inspirational Leader

Housing Community Chaplain Team Leader Murray Thomson received the Australian Housing Institute Award for Inspirational Team Leader. He is pictured with Minister for Housing and Public Works, Hon. Mick de Brenni.



### Generosity after Debbie

Residents from St James Retirement Village in Townsville answered the call to help those impacted by Cyclone Debbie. Over 1,400 items were generously donated by the residents. Left to right: Stephen Scott with residents Merv Cockrell, Bob Plemenuk and Danice Wieden.



### Doreen's trolley delight

Keen gardener, Doreen Weller from Nubeena Retirement Village was overwhelmed when Damien Woods (right) from the maintenance team, and volunteer Todd Wright, presented her with her own gardening trolley. Doreen loves to help keep the gardens tidy and is never without her secateurs.





# Beryl Wiltshire Scholarship

For study towards a career in the caring profession

**B**eryl 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 the field of social welfare on Australia Day 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 with funding for their education and training to get them started in their career. 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 with 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 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.

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).

Preference will be given to applicants who do not have access to study assistance programs in their employer organisations. ■

**Please prepare an application including the following (attach full details):**

- Name
- Address
- Phone
- Reason for applying for this scholarship including personal goals
- Career being contemplated
- Reasons for choosing this career
- Education / training course etc to be undertaken including the name of the course and qualification and institution for study eg: training organisation, college, university
- Duration of course
- Annual costs to be funded: including tuition fees and associated costs
- Names and contact details of two referees

Please send completed application form by 30 September 2017 to:  
Beryl Wiltshire Scholarship  
30 Gregory Street, Clayfield Qld 4011  
Further enquiries: 0418 713 593

# { Events }

Find us on

## June

**JUNE 6 - JUNE 7**  
Faith in the public square

**JUNE 12 - JUNE 18**  
Men's Health Week

**JUNE 15**  
Centrifuge conference

## July

**JULY 2- JULY 9**  
NAIDOC Week

## August

**AUGUST 4 - AUGUST 6**  
Mission Leadership Training Weekend

**AUGUST 7 - AUGUST 13**  
Homelessness Prevention Week

**AUGUST 12**  
Creating Community Across the Generations – HumeRidge Church of Christ

## AUGUST 19

Creating Community Across the Generations – Springwood Church of Christ

**AUGUST 19 - AUGUST 27**  
Queensland Seniors Week

## September

**SEPTEMBER 1 - SEPTEMBER 30**  
Dementia Awareness Month

**SEPTEMBER 3**  
Father's Day

**SEPTEMBER 3 - SEPTEMBER 9**  
National Child Protection Week

**SEPTEMBER 8**  
R U OK? Day

**SEPTEMBER 21**  
International Day of Peace

**SEPTEMBER 21**  
World Alzheimer's Day

## October

**OCTOBER 8 - OCTOBER 14**  
Mental Health Week

## November

**NOVEMBER 4 - NOVEMBER 5**  
Girls Getaway Weekend

**NOVEMBER 11**  
Remembrance Day

**NOVEMBER 15 - NOVEMBER 16**  
2017 Ministers Forum and Annual General Meeting

**NOVEMBER 25**  
White Ribbon Day

## December

**DECEMBER 25**  
Christmas Day

**DECEMBER 26**  
Boxing Day

## In the Limelight

Motel-style twin share waterfront accommodation

Featuring guest speaker Heather Foord

email [donna.savill@cofcqld.com.au](mailto:donna.savill@cofcqld.com.au)

Option to add accommodation for Friday night also available.

GIRLS  
GETAWAY  
WEEKEND  
4-5 NOVEMBER  
MAROOCHY  
WATERFRONT





Bringing the light of Christ into communities  
[cofc.com.au](http://cofc.com.au)