

the Voice



Issue 1, 2017

Home is where the heart is

Living life your way with our in-home care services.



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To purchase tickets to events or for more information email events@wmq.org.au

Wheller Gardens Auxiliary Garage Sale
- 19 May

Virtual Golf and Networking Event at Parkwood International – 26 May

Taking Flight Hummingbird House Gala
– 3 June

Happy New Year to all of our supporters, and I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Thanks to you we were able to bring hope and joy to more than 1,600 people in need this festive season through our Red Bag Christmas Appeal. The level of engagement in this year's appeal from individuals, schools, churches and workplaces was testament to the wonderful community we live in here in Queensland.

2017 will be a big year for Wesley Mission Queensland as we continue to meet the needs of people in our community, and there will be milestones to celebrate and openings to attend.

But for me it's the small things, the everyday moments shared between our clients, residents, staff and volunteers that really make the difference at Wesley Mission Queensland. Stories like that of Anna Chaddock, who this month celebrated 25 years as a family day care educator with us. In that time Anna has nurtured and loved more than 150 children, many with additional needs, and been a vital support for their families.

Or the story of a young person at our Logan Youth Foyer Support Service who, thanks to a donation from an individual, was able to purchase clothes for a job interview and feel supported in her quest for employment. It's these small moments that often mean the most to the people with whom we work, and it's that essence that we have captured in a recent campaign that you can read about on page 8.

Also in this edition you will read stories of people doing remarkable and inspiring things – the everyday Queenslanders Dean Gibson and Kate Perry who won our recent Campaign for Change initiative; and a heartfelt story from a staff member who is using her own personal tragedy to support other widows and widowers in the community (page 7).

There will also be challenges this year with the ongoing campaign we are running with the UnitingCare Aged Care Network to oppose the Federal Government's funding cuts to residential aged care. We need to focus government attention on a longer term, evidence-based solution that provides sufficient funding for a quality and equitable service that honours our most vulnerable older citizens with the care and support they need.

We are committed to remaining vocal in this space and standing up for those on the margins of our society, as we have done since the organisation began more than 100 years ago.

Until next edition, I wish you all a wonderful Easter and hope you find time to connect with family and friends.

Warm regards,

Geoff Batkin
CEO, Wesley Mission Queensland



YOU'LL LOVE LIVING AT ROSEMOUNT

Rosemount is Wesley Mission Queensland's newest community for retirement.

Located at Sinnamon Park, Rosemount offers over 65s a premier lifestyle of independence, security, and relaxation. Co-located on site with the Sinnamon Village residential aged care community it features a café, heated swimming pool, library, gym and lush gardens. Residents can also enjoy access to the Sinnamon Village wellness centre, including the hydrotherapy pool, right from their doorstep.

Call our friendly sales team today to find out how you can secure your own perfect slice of retirement life. Phone 0417 661 912, email us at reception.wotp@wmq.org.au or visit www.wmq.org.au



STAGE 1 NOW SELLING

ROSEMOUNT
COMMUNITY FOR RETIREMENT



Innovative technology keeping minds active at *John Wesley Gardens*



With dementia the single greatest cause of disability in older Australians, John Wesley Gardens is committed to innovate techniques (like the Brain Trainer) to help keep residents mentally active.

John Wesley Gardens' residents are empowered to live active lives, both mentally and physically. Recently, this commitment was reaffirmed with the introduction of a 'Brain Trainer Plus™' into the community—a stand-alone 20-inch touch screen with sophisticated memory games.

Wesley Mission Queensland's Director of Residential Aged Care, Annie Gibney said the use of the Brain Trainer Plus™ is an important diversional therapy activity for all residents, particularly those living with dementia.

"We know from research the importance of keeping our minds active and engaged as we age, and these short-term memory games offer stimulating and easy games for our residents to play," she said.

"Using tools such as the Brain Trainer Plus™ allows staff to find innovative and unique ways to engage each resident and cater to their interests and find out how we can support them on their journey."

Director of Brain Trainer Plus Australia, Simone Ell, said the software is easy to use for all age groups.

"Experiences from users show that the Brain Trainer Plus™ has an enormous improvement in quality of life for aged care residents and contributes to a fun and playful atmosphere in communities where residents can engage and play the games together or with family and friends."

The inclusion of the Brain Trainer Plus™ was made possible thanks to a community grant.

If you would like to learn more about John Wesley Gardens, or book a tour, please visit wmq.org.au/jwg

The stories of John Wesley Gardens



'I wanted somewhere where I could have my meals cooked for me, my laundry done and someone to talk to at the dinner table. The staff are just beautiful. They make me feel so special, so loved, so welcome and so comfortable. They have lovely hearts. It was just so easy to fit in.

Everything just flows here. I have a girlfriend who calls it my first class hotel. She tells everyone "you should see Faye's first-class hotel".

To have company and to have someone help you put your eye-drops in, to turn the light off and say "goodnight"... It's lovely to have someone say goodnight to you. It is just so comforting really.'

- Faye, Resident



'It's just a happy place to be; there is no sadness. It feels like home and it feels like the staff and other residents are all family.

Just recently it was Valentine's Day and the staff got all the couples together and did a beautiful Valentine's Day luncheon with candles and champagne. It was so beautiful to see. Couples don't stop being couples once they move into aged care, their love continues, and that is truly understood here.'

- Belinda's parents-in-laws are residents at John Wesley Gardens

An *uplifting* start to the year

This year marks Art from the Margins' 10th anniversary of supporting artists living with disabilities, mental health concerns or social isolation to exhibit their work, attend workshops and participate in community cultural activities.

On 24 February, friends, family and local community members gathered in the Fortitude Valley studio space to officially celebrate the opening of a newly installed all-access lift – a significant milestone in the history of the program.

Until now, the lower level workshop area was inaccessible for artists who use a wheelchair or require lift access.

Art from the Margins Manager, Anthony Anderton, says accessible art and creativity is at the heart of what the program strives for.

“Our program is all about making art accessible for all, no matter your circumstance in life. Last year our move into our new Fortitude Valley studio was a big step in the right direction.

“The functional lift will provide even greater opportunities for all of our artists to not only take part in the workshops we offer, but also be part of a community of local artists who are making an impact on the history of Queensland art.



Thanks to the support of friends like you, Jo is one of many artists at Art From the Margins who now has access to the full services and facilities in Fortitude Valley thanks to the new lift.

“What’s been most inspiring in the pursuit of the installation of the lift is the fact that it was made possible by people who contributed to our UpLift Appeal. The funds raised helped make this lift possible, and most importantly, it shows the community support for what we do as a program.”

The project is proudly funded by an Access and Inclusion Community Partnership Program grant from Brisbane City Council, The Order of St John, the AFTM Board, and friends like you who supported the Uplift Appeal.

For more information on Art from the Margins, or to give a gift, visit artfromthemargins.org.au

Say YHES to help a young mum

Being a parent is one of the hardest jobs in the world. It's an incredible privilege to raise a child but it's a 24/7 occupation.

The 250 young parents who access our parenting service at Southport generally have little or no support network. They are often in their late teens, struggling to find permanent accommodation, having difficulty finding a job, and dealing with mental health and substance issues. For many, our YHES House is their only support and safe haven. Rebecca shares...

I'm 24 years old and now have three children. I first linked in with YHES House when I was on the street at the age of 16.

Because of my drug and mental health challenges, there were times I was unable to look after my children. YHES House supported me through this tough time and helped me to get back on track. YHES House was an advocate for me, and worked with the Department of Child Safety so I was able to get better and get my children back.

Thanks to support from YHES House, my family has grown stronger together and we are now able to live a happy family life.



With your tax-deductible gift of \$25, YHES House can give young Gold Coast couples access to a new parent group class, and the support of a qualified young-parenting facilitator.

YHES House relies on the generosity of our local Gold Coast community to continue offering these services. If you are able to help with a gift today, you will be making a tremendous difference to these young people, and building a stronger, healthier and happier community on the Coast. To donate, visit wmq.org.au/donate. Thank you.

Queensland's best and brightest social innovators unearthed

An app challenging age discrimination and a series of video stories to celebrate the lives of Indigenous men have been awarded a \$25,000 grant to kick start their ideas as part of the 2017 Campaign for Change initiative.



Social change makers Kate Perry and Dean Gibson were joined by Hon. Grace Grace and Stirling Hinchliffe MP, at One William Street on February 9 for the official presentation of the awards.

Kate Perry's winning idea for social change is to challenge age discrimination by providing older Australians an online place to share their experiences.

"The Wiserr Network will connect those rich in knowledge with those in need of know-how through entrepreneurship, employment, mentorship and volunteering opportunities," she said.

"My aim is to turn age discrimination on its head and bring generations together to share skills, appreciate one another and add value.

"Wiserr provides an opportunity to help anyone who has feelings of disconnection, worthlessness and financial strains to connect with someone cross-generationally and improve the wellbeing of the community."

Dean Gibson's idea, 'The Black Man Project' aims to share empowering stories of local Indigenous men.

"The Black Man Project is important to me as an Aboriginal man living in Brisbane, because there is a real disconnect when it comes to empowering men in our community," he said.

"Face-to-face groups aren't for everyone, but there's a real need to connect, empower and inspire men around the city, and especially those who share an Aboriginal heritage.

"This project will involve a series of empowering videos so that similar men in our community can be inspired and spark their own change.

"My hope is to break the stereotypes around Indigenous men and share the real stories of pride, passion and courage."

Commencing in 2012, the Campaign for Change Initiative aims to empower the community by providing individuals or groups the opportunity to share in a grant and expert mentoring to establish their very own community support program.

Wesley Mission Queensland's Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Batkin, said with more than 60 applications and then five outstanding finalists, it was inspiring to see such a strong response to the initiative.

"Dean and Kate's ideas are innovative and demonstrate the passion that Queenslanders have for their local community in finding solutions to support people in need," he said.

"We would like to congratulate everyone who put forward their ideas; they were all fantastic initiatives for bringing about positive change."

Campaign for Change was made possible this year thanks to the support of the Queensland Government.

"We are proud to support this wonderful initiative to give people the opportunity to see their bright idea become a reality and improve their local community," said State Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Shannon Fentiman.



(Left to right) Mr Stirling Hinchliffe MP, Kate Perry, The Hon. Grace Grace MP and WMQ Board Chair Paul Newman.



Dean Gibson.

HOME is where the HEART is

For over 60 years,
Betty, 79,
has called her
residence in a leafy
western Brisbane
suburb home.

It was the home where her children grew up, family milestones were celebrated and where her husband Ron created a magnificent garden.

When Betty found herself in hospital for six months four years ago and in need of daily care, she never imagined that the care she would receive would not only allow her to remain independent in the home she loves, but that it would allow for the formation of new friendships.

“When I left hospital, I was recommended to use the services of Wesley Mission Queensland. I am so glad; I couldn’t still be in my own home today without them,” she said.

“For over four years, each morning I have had a carer come to support me with daily tasks, including showering, dressing and preparing my medication. Of course, the best part is they also

make me coffee and we have a chat – it sets me up for the day.

“Care is such an important part of my life. My day couldn’t start without their support, and it is a real comfort to know that my carers will be there each morning. If I wake up during the night with any concerns, I feel supported knowing that it won’t be long until the carers are here. It’s more like having a friend visit, I look forward to seeing them.

“The care has made a tremendous difference to my life. I’m still independent and I have a fantastic case worker who is responsive to my needs. If I need something, I only need to mention it to my case manager or carers and they will look after it.”

In addition to receiving care in her own home, Betty also has support to remain active in her community and attend her

regular appointments.

“Each week I have Jo, one of my carers, come to assist me with my appointments. You won’t believe it, but the first time Jo walked into my house she said “Were you a teacher at Oxley High School?”. I was her teacher many years ago, and now we have met later in life under different circumstances and have formed a wonderful friendship.

“We have our ritual of going out for coffee or breakfast on the same day I have my appointments. We’re regulars at our favourite café so we always get that little bit of extra service. Whenever I go out with Jo, I know she is looking out for me and what’s best for me. She always wants to make sure I feel comfortable and am having a good time.”



Above: Betty is able to live life her own way thanks to the support she receives from Wesley Mission Queensland's in-home care service.

The care Betty receives means she spends her days living life her way. Each day she gets to enjoy time in the garden her husband lovingly made, and that her son-in-law continues to tend to.

"I love to sit in my garden and read. My hen, Aggie, always comes and sits beside me and clucks away as if she's talking to me. She's a lovely thing and lays me an egg a day!

"I've had a good life and have a beautiful family I am so grateful for. And thanks to the support of my carers, I get to enjoy my home and my life even longer. They are like my extended family and I couldn't be more happy."

In February this year, the government introduced changes to the existing Home Care Packages. These changes

have empowered people by giving an increased capacity for choice to receive the care they want, when they want it.

Kris Sargeant, Wesley Mission Queensland Director of Community Care and Inclusion, says the changes are set to make the care we offer even more beneficial for people who receive it.

"It's a fantastic time to be on a package because you can really decide how you want to use it. Your home care package is yours, and you have the choice to use it how you wish. It could be something like going to the football or opera; we're here to walk alongside you and empower you to live the life you choose," she said.

"We really encourage each of our existing Home Care Package recipients

to let us know their thoughts about the care they are being provided. Feedback is key, and if you want things done differently, we're here to help."

If you would like to learn more about our in-home care services, please visit www.wmq.org.au or call 1800 448 448.

Restoring *hope*

“I reach out for Mark every morning in bed, and then that sleepy haze wears off in an instant, and I remember he’s not there anymore.”

Leesa Taylor has joined a unique club, one she never imagined belonging to, one whose members can all relate to this daily ritual and painful reminder that they are now widows or widowers.

“Mark and I had been together more than 20 years. We met in our twenties in Melbourne. We both had young children from previous relationships, and we raised our family together,” smiles Leesa.

“Our life revolved around our kids, their partners and our only grandchild. We both worked extremely hard all our lives, even on the weekends, building and renovating houses, with the knowledge, like many our age, that retirement was just around the corner, our baby of the family was about to leave home and then we’d travel and do everything we’d planned together. We were planning to go to Canada and Alaska the year after Mark died,” Leesa says with tears welling.

That holiday didn’t happen and all their shared plans and dreams for the future were shattered in the early hours of November 25th, 2015 when Mark suffered sudden and fatal heart failure, while Leesa was out of town.

“We spoke often every day, it was rare for us to have a night away and when we did we always spoke before we went to sleep,” says Leesa. “I had tried to ring Mark about 10pm to say goodnight and I thought it was strange that he didn’t answer, but I knew he’d call back. When my phone rang about 3am, I just thought it would be him. I’ll never forget those moments, the hours and the days that followed that phone call. The physical pain that engulfs your body is raw and so powerful, you don’t think you’ll ever recover. That phone call marks the end of my life, as I call it, and the beginning of this new life I’m living.”

Like many who recount the physical and emotional impact of grief, in those early days, Leesa needed to find someone to talk to, someone who had been through this exact experience.

That’s what led her to the Young Widows and Widowers Support Group (YWWSG), the only group of its kind operating in South East Queensland, catering specifically to the needs of young widows and widowers.

“People mean so well when you’re grieving, but only people who have lost a spouse themselves can ever really understand. You don’t know what hope is until you’ve lost it and I’d lost my future, I needed someone who had been where I was, to tell me I could climb out and I could find hope again,” Leesa says.

The YWWSG has been operating since 1991 and Coordinator Jo Langford says statistics show that 75 per cent of your support network will fall away after you’ve been widowed.

“My closest friends now are widows. They understand what it’s like, and they know that sometimes we’re just

going to break down and cry for no reason. And it’s OK. Many widowed people describe how their friends and social networks fell away after being widowed. Grief has no timeframe and it is different for every widow. We all have unique circumstances. You never really get over the loss of your spouse, you learn to live with it. It is important for people to know that they aren’t alone, there is the ability to find hope again and live a meaningful, albeit different, life,” Jo says.

Many of Wesley Mission Queensland’s community programs are created by people who have an idea to change their community and support those most in need.

“I’ve been working for Wesley for 17 years, and in my time I have seen how the organisation has this wonderful capacity to work with people and groups and collaborate to fill areas of unmet need in the community,” says Leesa.

“Hope is at the heart of Wesley. We walk alongside people in need and that is exactly what this group is about.



Leesa and Mark Taylor

Being part of Wesley Mission Queensland will allow the group to reach more people and offer increased support that is desperately needed.”

Jo says the financial, social and emotional impacts of becoming a widow can be crippling as many young widows may be required to stop work to look after their children.

“We’d love to expand the program to provide more social events, including playgroups, dinners and outings. We would like to be able to sponsor the meals once a month at our social gathering so no one must miss out because they can’t afford it. We want to look at establishing more opportunities for widowed people to be able to access information and resources, to hear from speakers that may benefit them, for example financial wellbeing, and mentors to help them through when they need it. It is also important that we can provide an opportunity for them to be able to give back when they are ready and if they want to. It would be wonderful to run a conference for widowed people and weekends away, for them and their families at reasonable cost”.

For Leesa, life is very different now.



Debbie Schier, Jo Langford and Leesa Taylor

“A lot of people told me I need to find purpose in Mark’s death,” she says. “It’s a very hard thing to hear early on; but I now understand and I look for it. I’m passionate about changing some of the rules around returning to work. At the moment, we give someone five days off to bury their husband, their wife or their child; yet we give maternity leave of up to 12 months off and 12- 18 weeks paid leave. It needs to be

recognised that losing someone makes just as big an impact on someone’s life as having a baby. We need a program to help people transition back to work.

“I remind myself every day that I need to live life in the present moment. Life drags you through, some days you have to force yourself to get out of bed, but you find little moments of joy and we celebrate Mark as much as we can.”

The Young Widow & Widower Support Group meets monthly and is open to everyone. For details, or to give a gift to support the group visit wmq.org.au/youngwidows, email Jo on Widows@wmq.org.au or contact us on 0419 170 183.



Small things can be the biggest things.

Whether you are looking for aged care, disability or community services, we can provide a range of options that are tailored to support you to live the life you choose.

Contact us on 1800 448 448 or visit www.wmq.org.au



How your Red Bag changed a life!

The 2016 Red Bag Appeal was a tremendous success: together, we raised more than \$35,000 towards the cost of food! Thanks to the generous support of the many businesses, schools, churches, community groups and individuals who got behind this campaign, we were able to provide Red Bags to more than 1,600 people in need.

We have already heard from a number of people who say their life has been positively impacted by the Red Bag Appeal. Here's one story, from a woman we will name 'Katie'...



Katie has two children (8 and 6). She left her partner due to domestic violence and lifestyle issues; he was regularly using drugs, and becoming increasingly violent. She has also been caring for her sister's children (13 and 11), as the children have been removed by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services due to domestic violence and chronic neglect. Katie works part-time in a local business and receives a very small wage. She is behind on the rent, and the family have been surviving on very little. Katie also has almost no personal support and suffers from depression and loneliness.

Katie went to Emergency Relief (ER) hoping to receive toys and a Red Bag. After taking part in ER's interview

process, Katie received Red Bags, fresh meat, and a large box of fruit and vegetables. In addition, she chose three toys each for her children and toys for her nieces.

Katie has made an appointment with ER's financial resilience counselling program, and she also had the opportunity for a one-on-one session with one of our counsellors. Katie was very appreciative of both the toys and the Red Bags. She was also very excited about linking to the Financial Resilience Counselling Program and started by engaging with the counsellor on site. She also made a commitment to visit with a local counsellor.

Thank you for your support! We couldn't have done it without you, and we can't wait to see what each of us can achieve during the 2017 Red Bag Appeal!

Celebrating the Spirit of Queensland

In November, 460 corporate supporters, stakeholders and Wesley Mission Queensland staff, came together to celebrate and recognise the work WMQ had achieved in the community over the past 12 months. The WMQ 'Spirit of Queensland' gala dinner was our largest ever celebration event, and a unique opportunity to pause and reflect on the more than 100,000 Queenslanders who found hope and support through WMQ's services in 2016.

The dinner kicked off with a stirring performance of "You Raise Me Up" by the 70-strong 'Resonance of Birralee'

choir, and included entertainment from 'Lure', and inspirational crooner Tony Doevendans. This was also an opportunity to recognise and reward staff who have embodied the values and mission of WMQ, and to look ahead to what 2017 will bring.

Thank you to all of our wonderful sponsors, including Promogear, FKG Group, Applied Air Services and Fulton Trotter Architects for making this night possible!

Please contact us on 1800 448 448 if your company would like to sponsor a table in 2017.



News from the Pews of Albert Street

'Service' is a word I use several (if not many) times a day. In some ways it's a frustrating word, as it has a number of quite different meanings and implications.

We use it to describe helping or doing work for someone (such as voluntary service). And we use it to indicate a system that offers something to the public (electricity service, or church service).

This rambling introduction comes about because we often want to talk about both. At Christmas time we held some fantastic Christmas services, where a significant number of people came to church and had the opportunity to celebrate the Christmas story, and experience the presence of God.

We also held two Christmas day lunches (one in Wesley House and one at St Paul's Terrace) where over 300 people came together to enjoy sharing Christmas lunch. We had over 100 volunteers offering their service to make this happen! Christmas day lunch is for me a truly amazing experience, as I see both the guests and the volunteers enjoying themselves immensely. Thank you to everyone involved!

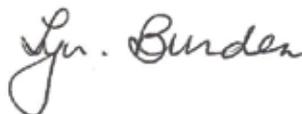
Christmas is over! We are now preparing for Holy Week and Easter services. Easter and Christmas both are occasions for joyful celebration as we experience the way God enters into our humanity so we can understand the truly loving nature

of God. The week leading up to Easter Sunday is a time where we focus on the way Jesus offered true service to his community, both intimately to his inner group, and to the world. Jesus showed his disciples what 'servanthood' involved, even stooping down to wash dirty feet, and then paid the ultimate price for the world, by offering his life that we might know true forgiveness.

My encouragement to you (and me!) is to embrace this concept of humble service. Perhaps you could spare a couple of hours a week to volunteer at Community Meal; maybe you could cook a meal and take it to a friend battling an illness; perhaps you could help your elderly neighbour pull some weeds and get the garden in order.

In Matthew 25:40, Jesus says that 'whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' I pray that we will each take up the challenge of these words and commit ourselves to make selfless, undemanding service of others a daily priority in our own lives.

Grace and Peace



**Reverend Lyn Burden,
Superintendent Minister**



Upcoming Events at Albert Street Uniting Church

Maundy Thursday
Tennebrae service |
Thursday, 13 April | 7pm

Good Friday service |
Friday, 14 April | 9am

Easter Sunday service |
Sunday, 16 April | 6am

Easter Sunday service |
Sunday, 16 April | 9am

Easter Sunday service |
Sunday, 16 April | 11am

Easter Sunday service |
Sunday, 16 April | 6.30pm



Leave it to us

If you want to leave a legacy of kindness and compassion that will echo across the ages, consider leaving a gift to us in your Will.

Donate
Gift in Will
Volunteer  **wesley mission**
QUEENSLAND

For more information, please contact us on **1800 448 448** or visit us at www.wmq.org.au



Celebrating 25 years of little moments:

Congratulations to Anna Chaddock, who recently celebrated 25 years as a Family Day Care Educator with Wesley Mission Queensland. In that time Anna has nurtured and loved more than 150 children, many with additional needs, and been a vital support for their families.

“Working as a day care educator means you have lovely community connections. I see young adults in the community, who I looked after as children, and it’s a wonderful feeling to know you’ve been part of their young lives.

“It’s nice to know you’re making a difference. I think the most important thing is just listening to the children, letting them lead the way with what interests them and what they enjoy doing, and making each child feel special.”

Get in touch with us:

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the
Voice