

ISSUE NO. 4

UNITING SA

AUTUMN 2018

# FLOURISH



## 11 SCIENCE MEETS COOKING TO INSPIRE FOOD IN AGED CARE

### IN THIS ISSUE:

5

One client's story of dreaming big under the NDIS

6

Generous clothing donation set to help hundreds

7

Vision brings older people into heart of West Lakes

12

A celebration of multicultural food traditions

14

A special 100th milestone for Home Care Services

*“Malcolm’s legacy will live on  
in the people and programs at  
Taperoo Community Centre  
and we will be forever grateful  
for his contribution to UnitingSA.”*

CEO LIBBY CRAFT, 2018



## WELCOME

I would like to dedicate this edition of *Flourish* to one of our treasured volunteers, who sadly passed away in February.

Malcolm Salmon was a volunteer at Taperoo Community Centre for 19 years and his commitment to supporting people at the centre was invaluable.

Many will remember Malcolm for his jokes, uplifting nature and incredible generosity and willingness to help.

Taperoo Community Centre coordinator Kathy Miller best summed it up when she said: ‘Malcolm had a strong heart for the centre and the local community’.

His legacy will live on in the people and programs at Taperoo Community Centre and we will be forever grateful for his contribution to UnitingSA.

It is people like Malcolm who help our organisation support more than 13,000 people each year across the state.

While a lot of our services are in metropolitan Adelaide, we also have a dedicated team of employees and volunteers supporting people in country communities.

In this edition, it is with great pleasure we share a glimpse into the wonderful work taking place in the state’s South East.

We share the story of Rebecca, a vibrant Bordertown local who our team is supporting in a number of ways, including by helping her develop independent living skills.

Under the many changes taking place through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Rebecca has big dreams for her future and our team is determined to help her achieve them.

We also travel to Kingston to share the incredible work of Wesley Social Enterprises (WSE), which provides meaningful employment and activities for people with a disability.

We introduce you to some of the WSE ‘originals’, as well as some newcomers who say they have never experienced such satisfying work.

Also in this edition, we recognise two significant achievements for UnitingSA in recent months.

In February, we became the first organisation to be formally recognised by the Mental Health Coalition of SA for our commitment to recruit, support and grow our workforce of people with a lived experience of mental illness.

A few weeks later, UnitingSA achieved compliance against both Certificate and Award levels of the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES).

These achievements go to the heart of UnitingSA and are testament to our incredible staff and volunteers who are improving the lives of people across South Australia.

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**Ms Libby Craft**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## IN THIS ISSUE



4

Robert draws on his life of painting to inspire others in aged care



8&9

Take a glimpse into the operations of Wesley Social Enterprises in the South East



13

Volunteering helps Patricia experience happiness after heartache



## UPCOMING DATES

April

16 School holidays begin

18 Youth Homelessness Matters Day

25 Anzac Day

May

21 National Volunteer Week begins

26 National Sorry Day

27 Reconciliation Week begins

June

5 World Environment Day

11 Queen's Birthday

17–23 Refugee Week

## UNITING SA ANNUAL PROFILE



13,157

PEOPLE SUPPORTED



947

EMPLOYEES



124

VOLUNTEERS



3,165

PEOPLE CARED FOR ACROSS AGED CARE



5,952

OCCASIONS OF EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE



## ROBERT'S LIFETIME OF ART INSPIRES OTHERS

Robert Ballinger has painted with Australian greats such as Pro Hart and is now inspiring residents at our Regency Green Multicultural Aged Care home to find their creative streak.

Every Tuesday Robert spends an hour leading a painting class for residents – some of whom had never before picked up a brush.

Many of them would not realise their teacher – a fellow resident at Regency Green – was once a professional painter who has two works hanging in the National Gallery in London.

Hints can be seen when you enter his room; a few paints scattered around, blank canvases, shelves full of art books.

But apart from one painting hanging in the Regency Green function room, all of Robert's works have been sold or donated over his lifetime.

"When I was younger I would start painting in the afternoon and I would still be painting at 3am," he recalls.

"Painting is my passion. It really is relaxing and I just lose time."

Robert, now 74, started painting at age 14 and went on to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Adelaide.

In the mid-1970s he piled his easel, paints and some clothes onto the back of a Honda 50cc scooter and spent two years travelling the country, selling art along the way to fund the trip.

Later jobs took him away from art and Australia to work in the mining industry in Indonesia and Antarctica.

He says foreign lands have never inspired his work, with the pull of the rural Australian landscape always drawing him home.

"I usually use oils but I've done a few water colours over the years," he says.

"I paint landscapes and old buildings in classical style – I don't like abstract."

"My favourite piece is of the original main street of Victor Harbor."

When Robert started art classes at Regency Green last year, eight residents attended.

Now, he averages 20 participants each week.

"It's really interesting to watch them because some of them have never painted before and some are actually pretty good," he says.

"We are starting to pin the paintings up on the wall to form a gallery."

"They really get into it and enjoy it... that's what it's all about."

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**"Painting is my passion.  
It really is relaxing and I just lose time."**

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## HELPING PEOPLE REACH NEW HEIGHTS

**T**he National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is allowing Rebecca to dream big.

With an infectious smile, there's a lot the 29-year-old loves – meeting new people, watching footy, day trips, cooking desserts, superhero movies, craft and going to the gym.

But there's more to her vision.

"I have dreams," she explains.

"One day I want to get married and get my own house.

"My own place would be really good and really smart – a nice colourful house.

"I also want to get a new car but first I need my licence."

Rebecca takes part in UnitingSA's individual supports program, where staff and volunteers work with her to develop her independent living skills.

UnitingSA's Bordertown coordinator Kelly Wigney says the NDIS – which gives people choice and control over their funding – will go a long way to supporting this process.

While the NDIS is causing confusion and angst across much of the country, Kelly's view is testament to the way her small team is tackling one of the most significant changes ever experienced by people with a disability.

The team's focus is simple – to ensure they can use the NDIS to achieve the best outcomes for the people they support.

"It's about the client and what their needs are and ensuring they feel valued in their community," Kelly says.

"In Rebecca's case, the NDIS will give her access to more support and enhance her ability to meet her goals of independence.

"This is why the NDIS is going to be such a good thing – people will be able to do what they want to do, when they want to do it.

"For us our client's happiness is the marker of success."

**To find out more about UnitingSA's services in Bordertown, contact 0416 036 681.**

## Leading the way in mental health support

**W**e are incredibly proud to be the first organisation in South Australia to be formally recognised for our commitment to recruit, support and grow our workforce of people with a lived experience of mental illness.

As part of our involvement in the Mental Health Coalition SA's Lived Experience Workforce (LEW) Project, we have spent almost 12 months implementing new standards and guidelines.

We established a new lived experience procedure, provided extra training for staff, updated staff induction and corporate orientation, and created a new brochure to highlight the importance of our lived experience workforce.

Shandy Arlidge and Belinda Brown, from the Mental Health Coalition of SA, audited our processes in February and commended us for providing a positive and supportive work environment for staff and volunteers with a lived experience of mental illness.

UnitingSA's Mental Health Services consumer consultant Kez Robelin says the LEW Project is so important because "it shines a light on the professionalism of the lived experience role".

"The project offers insight into the expertise used daily by our lived experience workforce and opens the door to others who were seeking a safe and supported workplace before disclosing their own story," Kez says.

"Lived experience workers position themselves alongside an individual in the support role.

"They draw from the skills and knowledge from walking in similar shoes and demonstrate real evidence of hope and recovery."

Kez says being the first organisation officially recognised for valuing and supporting our lived experience workforce is "a real buzz".

"It confirms my belief in UnitingSA's values as they couldn't show better evidence of their sound belief in recovery and the people they walk alongside."





# GENEROSITY THREADS A COMMUNITY TOGETHER

**H**undreds of people attending our Emergency Relief centre will have access to new clothes for free, thanks to the generosity of Marino Uniforms.

Marino directors Milton King and Simon Bowering visited our centre in Port Adelaide in March to deliver six boxes of new clothing.

The clothes are a mix of corporate wear and uniforms, including polo and business shirts.

The men plan to return regularly with different styles to donate, including various types of workwear, shorts, pants, caps and school uniforms.



"It's a great outlet for us to know that you have the people who need it," Simon says.

"If someone has a job interview or a funeral or special event, it's always good that they have something new to wear.

"It's great to see it go to a good home."

Milton says the clothes include sample garments and deleted styles that are surplus to the business's needs – but still brand new and in top condition.

"The clothing will only go to waste if we don't donate it and this is such a good cause," he says.

"It's a little thing that we can do to help."

UnitingSA's Anti-Poverty Team Leader Cindy Adey is overwhelmed by the generosity and the difference it will make in the lives of the people we support.

"We have so many people coming in saying they have a job interview and they don't have anything to wear," Cindy says.

"This donation will make such a difference.

"We never have new clothes to give away so this feels wonderful."

Marino Uniforms are the suppliers of our UnitingSA uniforms, which were rolled out across our organisation as part of our rebrand.

## Flipping for a good cause

**A**lmost 1000 free pancakes were handed out to the community on March 13 when we celebrated our annual Pancake Day outside our offices at 70 Dale St, Port Adelaide.

UnitingSA staff and volunteers cooked and served pancakes, while also having a chat with passersby about the services we provide in local and regional areas.

The event was organised as part of the national UnitingCare Pancake Day, which brings the community together to enjoy a sweet treat while raising money to help those most in need.

Channel 10 personality and Pancake Day ambassador Rebecca Morse dropped by to show us her pancake flipping skills.

Weather presenter Kate Freebairn also paid a visit to run a live weather broadcast, which featured familiar UnitingSA faces.

Funds raised went towards purchasing food hampers for our Emergency Relief clients.

UnitingSA's Anti-Poverty Team Leader Cindy Adey says the service hands out more than 25 hampers each week to support people in need.







# KICKING GOALS FOR OLDER SOUTH AUSTRALIANS

Our plan to bring older people into the heart of the western suburbs has been warmly welcomed by the community.

The vision includes a five-storey development incorporating residential aged care, retirement living, retail and office space.

UnitingSA West Lakes will be located on 6,600sqm of land fronting West Lakes Boulevard and forms part of the transformation of Football Park, being undertaken by Commercial & General.

It will replace the north-east corner of the football stadium, which is being demolished as part of the WEST redevelopment.

Within hours of releasing our plans publicly in February, we were fielding calls from people wanting to register for the top floor independent living apartments.

“Aged care sites are often found in suburban backstreets but this development changes that and brings residents into the vibrant hub of the community,” UnitingSA Chief Executive Officer Libby Craft says.

“The immediate interest these plans generated shows there is a real need for this type of accommodation for older people.”

Among the development’s key features:

- Three storeys of residential aged care including 108 private rooms with en-suites
- An 18-bed memory support unit for people with dementia
- A top level featuring 17 retirement living apartments with balconies
- An active street frontage including café, hairdresser and allied health services, which are open to the public.

“The innovative design invites the wider community to come in to enjoy the ground floor shops and services, while also making it easy for residents to get out amongst the action,” Ms Craft says.

“With everything at their doorstep, residents will be able to easily access parks, shops, cafes and health care. As we age, this is more important than ever.”

Plans are being assessed by Charles Sturt Council and it is hoped building will be able to commence early next year.

The development will provide an economic boost for the area, with more than 400 jobs estimated during construction and 100 ongoing.

Commercial & General, General Manager Communities Chris Menz says he is “delighted that UnitingSA will also be joining the WEST

community with its state-of-the-art aged care facility”.

“Its visionary design, integrating into the Charles Street precinct, will set it apart from other developments of its kind in the State,” Mr Menz says.

Charles Sturt Council Mayor Angela Evans has also welcomed the plans.

“The City of Charles Sturt value the contribution elders make to our community and are strongly committed to supporting them to live their lives with independence and vitality,” she says.

“I look forward to UnitingSA’s state-of-the-art aged care facility joining our city in the WEST development and trust that their residents will enjoy the very best of our unique waterway and coastal living, the new local shopping and recreation precinct and all that West Lakes and our community have to offer.”





# THE HEARTBEAT OF A COUNTRY COMMUNITY

**Take a glimpse behind the scenes of Wesley Social Enterprises in the South-East – a small operation with a big heart and huge impact.**

Ask anyone in the town of Kingston the way to Wesley Social Enterprises (WSE), their face will likely light up as they reel off directions.

They know that behind the unassuming shopfront, WSE provides meaningful employment and activities for people with a disability and the dedicated staff who support them.

The Lawn Rangers, Grandma's Pantry and Day Options are the main operations for the team, who seem more like family than employees.

The Lawn Rangers mow sites around town including several prominent council parks, while Grandma's Pantry creates condiments, cookies and other goodies for sale in the community and distribution across SA and other states.

"There's no other supported employment in Kingston so it's imperative that we continue to operate our service here," WSE Program Manager Sue Chester explains.

"I know Kingston appreciates us for what we provide and the community is very supportive.

"Working with these guys is a highlight in my life."

It's hot the day we visit, but that doesn't stop the dedicated Lawn Rangers crew heading out to mow several parks across town.

Aaron, 31, has been with WSE ever since leaving school at age 18.

"I like going on the ride on mower," Aaron grins, before taking off to mow an expansive lawn in the centre of Kingston.

"If it's wet I don't mind going in the kitchen but otherwise I like being outside and mowing more."

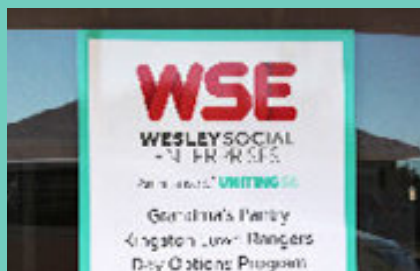
Back at base, we get to meet one of the WSE 'originals' – Matty, who is today in charge of chopping onions for the array of chutneys and sauces sold by Grandma's Pantry.

Matty, 41, has been with WSE for 28 years and says he "never cries" when on onion duty, making him the perfect person for the job.

Sue explains that Matty spends three days a week working for the social enterprises and two days in the Day Options program, taking part in activities and developing new skills.

"The focus for Matty is on independent living," Sue says.





"We are focusing on his cooking skills, budgeting and shopping.

"He makes his lunches and on Thursdays he makes a meal to take home with him to share with his mum and dad."

Gianni, 43, is another of WSE's earliest employees and he is quick to let us in on a trade secret.

"When we are working for Grandma's Pantry, if we burn something we put it in the jar and then we get to eat it," he divulges.

We take note and, after lunch, are delighted when the jar has some cookies to sample that didn't quite make the grade for sale.

Benita is in charge of chopping tomatoes on the day we visit and says while she sometimes finds the work a challenge, the people make it worthwhile.

"The people here are loving – they understand you," she says.

"We are very much a family."

Samantha joined the team in the middle of last year and with support from her supervisor is working on a new line of business for Grandma's Pantry.

The local pub, Crown Inn Hotel, is trialling small packs of biscuits to serve with coffee to patrons.

"Before coming here I had tried to get work in open employment and didn't have any luck," Samantha says.

"Nobody wants to hire someone in a wheelchair.

"Wesley Social Enterprises gave me the opportunity to work and it makes me feel needed and wanted."

Two staff who joined the team last year – Ron and Greg – are also full of praise for WSE.

Greg spends three days a week supporting the Lawn Rangers and two days supporting the Day Options program.

He has had many different jobs in his life – including as a farmer, black-smith and a plant operator in the mines – but says he is relishing his new role and the ability to make a difference in the lives of others.

He genuinely beams when he talks about the advances he has made with Jason, who he supports through Day Options.

"The other day we went kite flying together and he actually started to look at it and fly it," Greg says.

"I've also modified a game of totem tennis so he can hit the ball now.

"I just like to make him feel good and give him a happy day – and I go home feeling pretty good myself."

Fellow newcomer Ron became the Business Supervisor for the Lawn Rangers last year, having spent much of his career as a mental health practitioner across the South-East.

Upon visiting Kingston, Ron says he "fell in love with the town" and when he saw the Lawn Rangers position advertised, he knew it would be the perfect fit.

"It's the best position I've had in 50 years in the workforce – we are the 'A team'," he says.

"It's pretty easy to supervise guys who know more about the job than you do.

"There's no way I would ever leave this... it's the most rewarding job I'll ever do.

"I'll be here until the day I retire or die."

**Wesley Social Enterprises is an initiative of UnitingSA. To find out more about WSE in Kingston, call 8767 2211.**



## A CHAT WITH TINA KARANASTASIS

**Tina Karanastasis joined UnitingSA's Ethnic Link Services three years ago following a diverse career working to improve the lives of people within multicultural communities. We sat down for a chat about her dedication to the sector, her role with Ethnic Link Services and how she felt to be recognised with a 'Community Quiet Achiever' Award on International Women's Day.**

### **Q. Can you tell me about your experience working in community services?**

**A.** Due to the fact perhaps that I'm the daughter of Greek immigrants who experienced many challenges when they first arrived in Australia, I've always had a strong interest and commitment to multicultural affairs. I've been involved in working with migrant and refugee communities for over 35 years in various capacities – as a service manager, policy analyst, and through extensive program development. This has included working with each new wave of refugee settlement, commencing with the South East Asian and Chilean refugees in the 1980s, and subsequently with those from Africa and the Middle East in the 90s. As the Chairperson of Welcome to Australia, I continue to be very involved in this work in a voluntary capacity.

### **Q. You joined Ethnic Link Services in 2014. What is its purpose?**

**A.** Ethnic Link Services was established in the 1980s with strong advocacy and support from the multicultural communities sector. It was evident that older people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds were struggling to access mainstream aged care services, especially those who

spoke little or no English and had limited understanding of the aged care system. Our service was specifically funded to address this gap by providing a cultural bridge to services. This was achieved by matching clients with workers trained in aged care who spoke their language and shared their cultural background. Initially, the service started out with a handful of languages but we now have staff who speak over 25 languages and work with clients from over 45 different countries of origin. Ethnic Link Services is quite unique, there is no other service like it in South Australia.

### **Q. What is your role within Ethnic Link Services?**

**A.** My role is to facilitate service development and to provide strategic advice and support to Ethnic Link Services as it navigates the national aged care reforms. If we consider that any of the proposed changes to aged care will be detrimental to older people from CALD backgrounds, then our role is to communicate that to Government and try to affect positive change. This involves working closely with the Department of Health in Canberra and the multicultural aged care sector in order to ensure equal access and participation for CALD and other special needs groups.

## FUN FACTS

**Favourite colour?**  
Red

**Favourite animal?**  
Meerkat

**Favourite food?**  
Pasta

**Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party?**  
Magda Szubanski, Judith Lucy, Dame Edna

**What three items would you want if you were stranded on a desert island?**  
Haigh's chocolates, French Earl Grey Tea and a good book (short life but a happy one)

We all strive to provide good services on the ground but I believe we also have an obligation to influence policy.

### **Q. What do you find the most rewarding part of your work?**

**A.** There are many rewards, especially when you see how your efforts over time have directly resulted in improved outcomes for those who are most vulnerable and at risk in our community. We all have those moments and they are great. Providing different experiences and opportunities to older people from CALD backgrounds is also important. One of the Ethnic Link Services programs I am most proud of is the Digital Literacy workshops we ran for our Greek, Persian and Spanish-speaking social groups in their own language. This project really challenged the prevailing attitude that older people from CALD backgrounds are fearful of technology and totally disinterested. That was not our experience at all and we now have other language groups which are eager to participate in the program.

### **Q. How did you feel to receive one of the Multicultural Communities Council of SA's inaugural 'Community Quiet Achiever' Awards on International Women's Day?**

**A.** I had absolutely no idea I had been nominated so it came as a lovely surprise. I have tremendous respect for what ethnic communities have achieved in South Australia and all they have done for their members and the wider community. This award has come from them – so it means a lot.





"These techniques are mainly used for fine dining, high-end restaurants so we are trying to make it everyday food suitable for people in aged care."

Among the delicacies he creates using these techniques are red wine jellies, for people who can no longer enjoy a glass of their favourite drop, as well as a variety of canapes, sandwiches and traditional meals, such as roast dinners.

He also uses molecular gastronomy to create flavoured foams, which disappear in the mouth making them possible for use by people who have no swallowing capabilities at all.

## INCREDIBLE RESULTS WHEN SCIENCE & COOKING COLLIDE



"There are people who have been tube fed for years who are able to experience the sense of taste again, using foams," Vitish says.

"I first got the idea when a gentleman who was nil-by-mouth said all he wanted before he died was to taste a beer.

"I created a beer foam and he had it for four days before he passed away."

UnitingSA is in the process of building a new kitchen as part of a redevelopment of our Hawksbury Gardens Aged Care site in Salisbury North.

Once it is complete, Vitish will start training kitchen staff in molecular gastronomy, with the view to start using it regularly for residents' meals in the second half of the year.

He will also present his techniques as part of the Tasting Australia festival in late April, where he will unveil a new project he is working on with scientists in Sydney and chefs from around the world.

The group is developing an ice cream which melts at a slower rate than other ice creams, making it potentially suitable for people with dysphagia.

"Because ice cream melts, the liquid can cause people with dysphagia to choke, meaning some people have not been able to enjoy ice cream for years," he says.

"The ice cream that is currently being formulated will have high protein, calcium and fibre and we will be conducting trials to determine its suitability for people with swallowing difficulties.

"Food has always been a big part of my life and it is such a privilege to be able to bring flavours back into the lives of other people."

Science is being fused with food to transform mealtimes for older people with swallowing difficulties.

UnitingSA Hotel Services Manager Vitish Guddoy is using molecular gastronomy to improve food experiences for people in aged care.

Using a specialised gelling technique, food which is usually pureed and served to residents is instead recreated to be as close to its original shape and texture as possible.

Vitish says the process helps bring the joy of eating back to people who have missed out for years because

of swallowing difficulties, known as dysphagia.

Figures from Speech Pathology Australia show that 50% of the residents in aged care suffer from dysphagia, and more than 60% suffer from malnutrition.

"Not being able to eat a variety of food due to swallowing difficulties can lead to malnutrition and weight loss," Vitish says.

"Using the gelling technique, you regain the sensory pleasure because each item of food has its own taste and texture.

"You can actually differentiate and see what you are eating and you can also pick it up, which encourages independence.



# EXPLORING FOOD THROUGH THE LENS OF MIGRATION



**T**he culinary traditions of South Australia's multicultural communities were showcased at a vibrant celebration of Australian food culture on March 25.

The 'Our Shared Table' Exhibition and Harmony Day Food Gala – a collaboration between UnitingSA's Ethnic Link Services and the Migration Museum – brought together the migration stories of nine culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

The event explored the deeper value of food through the life journeys of older migrants from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Bosnia, Russia, Egypt, India, Latvia and Uruguay.

More than 200 people attended the event at the Migration Museum, enjoying cultural performances, cooking demonstrations, food sampling and poignant stories of families and settlement.

"Migrants and refugees have come to Australia from all corners of the world, bringing with them their rich culinary traditions," Ethnic Link Services Manager Shona Dudley-Martin says.

"These food practices have contributed significantly to Australian food culture and our sense of pride and identity as a multicultural nation.

"They have also provided a sense of comfort, community and cultural preservation during times of uncertainty as new arrivals strive to adjust to their new surroundings and way of life."

As part of the project, Ethnic Link Services' bilingual, bicultural staff supported older CALD community members to record and capture their stories, including their food culture and migration experiences.

Their oral histories were collected and transcribed and will be housed at the State Library.

Extracts of the oral histories and personal photographs formed the centrepiece of the 'Our Shared Table'

Exhibition, which will also tour across a number of metropolitan councils.

Ethnic Link Services Program Development Manager and Welcome to Australia Chair, Tina Karanastasis, says there is a strong desire among CALD communities to document and celebrate the life experiences and contributions of their older members.


"This generation of South Australian migrants are the custodians and teachers of their cultural heritage and traditions," Ms Karanastasis says.

"They seek to maintain and pass on many of their authentic traditions around food, cultural expression and story-telling.

"Our Shared Table provides the means through which older people from diverse cultural backgrounds can share their stories and food practices with the wider community, ensuring they are preserved for future generations."

Our Shared Table would not have been possible without the generous support of sponsors Welcome to Australia, Marino Uniforms, Atlas Event & Party Hire and Johns' Print Centre.





## VOLUNTEERING BRINGS HAPPINESS AFTER HEARTACHE

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**“It’s about helping and being helped.”**

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A family tragedy ultimately led to a new life path for Patricia Austin – one which would bring a smile to hundreds of aged care residents.

Twenty years ago Patricia’s youngest son Jamie lost his battle with leukaemia, aged 26.

“It made me look at life in a different way and people from a different perspective,” Patricia, 73, says.

“When we had our business and things were going well, I never thought about other people’s problems and I never thought about volunteering.

“It’s like I had a different life before Jamie passed away and a life after.”

A chance drive past an aged care home in Semaphore one day caused Patricia to stop her car to enquire about volunteering.

“They didn’t have any volunteers at the time and they said, ‘When can you start?’

“I said, ‘Tomorrow’ and that was it – the rest is history.”

For 13 years Patricia volunteered three days a week at that aged care home, known as Morpeth, which has since closed down.

Four years ago she moved across to our Westminster Village Aged Care home in Grange and has never looked back.

“The very first day I came here and was shown around, I knew I was meant to be here,” Patricia says.

“Every single person smiled and said ‘hello’ and they didn’t even know me.”

Five years on and they certainly now know the vibrant volunteer, who still dedicates three days a week to supporting residents.

She hosts sing-a-longs, bingo, the occasional karaoke session, and just generally supports residents to bring a smile to their day.

“I try to help in a small way just to make their day a bit better – as all volunteers do,” she says.

“But volunteering is also a two-way street. You get something out of it yourself.

“It’s about helping and being helped.”

Patricia says her volunteering has been transformative for her and she has two words for others in the community with time to spare: “Do it.”

**UnitingSA has a range of volunteering opportunities across aged care and community services. To find out more visit [unitingsa.com.au](http://unitingsa.com.au) or contact Jane Parker at [jparker@unitingsa.com.au](mailto:jparker@unitingsa.com.au)**



## HOME CARE PROGRAM MAKES HISTORY

**O**ur Home Care Program has reached a significant milestone and is now supporting 100 older people to live in their own homes longer.

This is the first time we have had 100 home care recipients at once since we started offering these services 30 years ago.

We reached the milestone in February when Joyleen Mills started receiving her Home Care Package through UnitingSA.

Joyleen suffered spinal cord damage when a bone marrow biopsy went wrong last year, setting in motion a series of health complications which affect her to this day.

She initially received help through our 12-week intensive Transitional Care Program, and then our staff helped her secure Commonwealth funding for interim support.

On February 23, her Home Care Package came through and she cemented herself in our history books.

Joyleen, a former volunteer at UnitingSA's Family Centre in Port Adelaide, credits our Home Care staff for helping her through one of her life's most difficult times.

*"When I came out of hospital I don't know what I would have done without them."*

JOYLEEN

"I think every day I had one of the support workers coming through and it was just amazing.

"My family don't live close by and so I really rely on these guys."

Joyleen, who lives in Taperoo with her dog Milo and cat Leelou, now has staff assist her with cleaning, shopping, physiotherapy and any other appointments that come up.

"It's not only that, it also gives you a little bit more security," she says.

"If something happens, I know I don't need to go into panic mode anymore... I just ring up and they sort it out for me.

"It's the best thing ever – it really is."

UnitingSA's Manager Community Aged Care, Home Care & Independent Living Simon Pavelic was surprised to reach the 100th milestone so early in the year, but says it is a sign of the growing need for home support.

"We didn't expect to make that target but we've had significant growth since the New Year," Simon says, adding that staff enjoyed a celebratory lunch in the office to mark the occasion.

However, he says it is not about numbers but about the people in the community the program has helped, such as Joyleen.

"Home care keeps people independent and living where they want to be, with links to their family, friends, pets and their community."

In addition to our home care recipients, we also support individuals through our Transitional Care Program and a further 150 clients in our independent living units.

**To find out more about UnitingSA's Home Care Services call 8449 7085 or email [HCPEnquiries@unitingsa.com.au](mailto:HCPEnquiries@unitingsa.com.au)**





## JOE'S LABOUR OF LOVE

**T**his three-foot replica of the *Titanic* is more than just a remarkable creation.

It is a three year labour of love for Joe Mammone, who is a client in our Supported Residential Facilities (SRF) program.

In an incredible show of Joe's appreciation for the support he has received from UnitingSA, he donated the sculpture to our SRF team in March.

The replica now sits proudly at our offices in Dale St, Port Adelaide, where anyone who visits can witness Joe's craftsmanship.

"I just wanted to give something back to the people who helped me do my artwork and gave me the support," Joe says.

"This ship intrigued a lot of people in its time but it's so sad that today everyone only remembers it because it hit an iceberg.

"I want people to remember the ship for the beauty that it stood for."

Every Monday since 2015, Joe has visited Trinity Alberton Uniting Church to participate in an art class run by our staff and pastor Anne Thyne.

It is during these weekly visits he developed the idea to turn his passion for the *Titanic* into a sculpture made out of metal and cardboard.

By no means an easy feat, Joe at times wanted to give up as the aluminium flexed and twisted, making it a struggle to form the required shape.

With encouragement from his community support worker, Donna, Joe persevered and completed his creation.

"I built it exactly how they would have done it more than 100 years ago, starting from the bottom and working up," he says.

"I do feel proud.

"I was also a little bit sad to finish because it was something I feel quite passionately about."

Joe says he is now devising plans for his next artwork, which is likely to be another metal sculpture – this time of the Eiffel Tower.

**To find out more about UnitingSA's Supported Residential Facilities program, contact 8440 2283.**

## Audit confirms client-centred focus



**U**nitingSA completed an internationally accredited quality improvement audit in March and achieved compliance against both Certificate and Award levels of the Australian Service Excellence Standards.

This is a great outcome and the Auditor commended us for putting our clients at the centre of everything we do and for always working towards our vision, mission and values.

The audit involved clients, volunteers and staff across our diverse organisation and included visits to our Taperoo Community Centre, Mental Health Services and Homelessness Services.

The Auditor made particular mention of our commitment to:

- be innovative and dynamic
- build leaders
- have a team focus
- be a learning organisation
- implement change, and
- embrace our new name.

The audit highlighted the passion and commitment of our people at UnitingSA.



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