

# Ballarat Health Services

## Residential Services



Ballarat Health Services  
Putting your health first

SPRING NEWSLETTER

October 2011



## Lionhearted gesture

The Brown Hill Lions Club recently presented the Geoffrey Cutter Centre with four bariatric wheelchairs and two bariatric shower stools.

The equipment, valued at more than \$3600, was handed over by club president Ed Bawden and secretary Bryan Craven.

Geoffrey Cutter Nurse Unit Manager Wendy Burgener said the gifts would make moving of residents will be safer and easier.

"A growing number of residents need this equipment," Ms Burgener said.

"It will help them get to outdoor activities, provide a more inclusive environment through greater participation and generally improve residents' quality of life now and into the future."

Mr Craven said the Lions Club had decided that given Australia had an ageing population it was keen to do more for aged care.

After consultation and research, a decision was made to supply the wheelchairs and showers, with the Lions Foundation matching the Brown Hill Lions Club's donation of \$1860 towards the purchase.

The wheelchairs were procured through Ballarat-based company, Astec.

The Brown Hill Lions Club has a history of provide great support to Ballarat Health Services.

The club recently donated a number of thermometers to the Paediatric and Adolescent Ward at the Base Hospital.

## Memory Book

Everyone has a unique story to tell. Julie Cox, Lifestyle Coordinator at WB Messer Hostel certainly believes this as she took up the challenge of writing a "Life Story" for one of the hostel's residents.

Winifred "Clare" Lakey was selected by Julie to be her first participant in the project which involved meeting with Clare and her daughter Beth at regular intervals and researching information and memorabilia from Clare's life journey. Items such as family photos and stories were collected into an eight-page booklet.



Clare was presented with her Memory Book by Julie. "I love this and I will pass it onto my daughter," Clare said.

As well as being a wonderful way of recording a person's life, Memory Books enable nursing care staff to have a deeper understanding of a person's history, culture and relationships and helps in developing meaningful activities and conversations with residents.

The Lifestyle Coordinators Group is looking forward to continuing with the project in other BHS facilities.

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## INSIDE STORY



# Melissa Armstrong

## Personal Care Attendant

Melissa has been at Eureka Village now for almost a year and is the youngest staff member there. Many of her fellow staff members are old enough to be her mother! Melissa certainly has plenty of people giving her advice.

"As a little girl I always liked spending time with the elderly. I would go and see my great Nan in a nursing home and would love to sit with all the residents and talk with them.

"As I got older I still loved the aged but thought I could never work in aged care as I was worried how I would deal with the loss of residents and becoming too attached."

After finishing school Melissa worked at the North Britain Hotel, a busy and demanding environment. The work was hard and Melissa grew up quickly in the working world.

"After two years I thought I should look for more permanent work and as my interest in the aged person had not waned I started my Personal Carer course," Melissa said.

"This took five months and I worked in a couple of areas on placement – I loved it and knew this is what I wanted to do."

Melissa applied for a job at EVH when her course was finished and was successful in obtaining the position.

"I was so excited to get the job, I have been there a year now and as a 21-year-old I couldn't see myself doing anything else."

## Q & A

**DESCRIBE YOUR ROLE?** I'm a PCA so I care for the elderly and look after their personal needs.

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE JOB?** The satisfaction you get when you help them because they are just so grateful.

**WHAT WAS YOUR PREVIOUS ROLE?** I worked in a pub as a kitchenhand for two years.

**IF YOU COULD GO ANYWHERE WHAT FAVOURITE MEAL WOULD YOU ORDER?** I would go to Scotland and order mince (savory).

**WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE?** Camping with family and friends up the river and swinging on ropes into the water.

**WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT YOU HAVE HAD WORKING IN AGED CARE?** I have several every day.

**I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT:** My family, friends and my work, making sure I provide the best care.

**IN FIVE WORDS I AM:** Caring, loyal, honest, fun and passionate.

## Young visitors to Bill Crawford Lodge

Residents at Bill Crawford Lodge recently had the opportunity to connect with babies, toddlers and kindergarten aged children during a morning playgroup.

The children sang and danced along to the Wiggles music.

Others did drawings and colouring in, whilst some chose to play with dolls.

This opportunity offered the residents a form of community engagement, with laughter and cuddles.

All involved agreed the morning was a great success and the children also shared morning tea with the residents.

## Knitting for the needy

Merle Inglis has been a resident at WB Messer for 2 years, a keen knitter for 5 years and a handicraft hobbyist for about 20 years.

Recently she has been knitting scarves for Leprosy Mission Australia, which distributes the scarves abroad.

Merle, who turns 90 in November, says her latest load of scarves were sent to Nepal.



Fellow resident Rose Kitchinhan has also caught the scarf-knitting bug, so too WB Messer Lifestyle Co-ordinator Julie Cox and Julie's sister, Gail Rutter.

Julie said knitting for Gail had become a wonderful distraction as she recovered from breast cancer.

Volunteer Cherie Duncan is also knitting and now Julie is organizing a knitting group which will knit scarves for Ballarat's homeless along with scarves for Leprosy Mission Australia.

Merle says knitting is a satisfying past time which can be pursued while watching television or chatting with fellow residents.

Any donations of eight-ply wool, no matter how small the quantity, are gratefully accepted and can be dropped off at WB Messer in Gillies St North, Wendouree.

## Moving into a residential aged care home

The decision to move into a residential facility can be a daunting and stressful experience for the person involved and their family. Ballarat Health Services believes that it is important to support individuals and families with this transition. It was decided to seek feedback from recently admitted residents and or their representatives about their experience and whether they felt they were adequately supported in making the choice of which care home to move into and then assisted in settling into the care home environment. As a result a survey was developed to be completed by residents and or their representatives approximately 4-6 weeks after the move into a care home.

The survey was a pilot aimed at obtaining feedback as well as testing the suitability of the survey questions.

### Part A "Choosing a Care Home To Move Into"

Survey participants were asked to respond to a number of questions in an effort to gain an understanding of their experience and whether they felt informed and supported in choosing a care home in which to move. These included the following:

1. The support provided by the BHS aged care admission staff helped you choose which care home to accept entry into
2. The information provided of the care home and services available gave you an understanding of the services to expect from the care home
3. The opportunity to visit different care homes did assist to make the best choice of which care home to enter
4. Your decision to move into the care home was undertaken with a real sense of control
5. Sufficient time to accept the move into the care home was made available
6. The support provided by

nursing staff at the care homes you visited helped you choose which care home to accept entry into

In response to questions in "Part A", responses overwhelmingly indicated that throughout the process they felt that they were well supported, which as a result enabled them to make a well informed decision.

While the results were pleasing it was noted that some scope for improvement could be achieved in relation to two questions in particular, the first being in relation to visiting different care homes and the second in regards to having a real sense of control in making the decision to move into the care home.

### Part B "Settling into the Care Home"

In seeking to support resident's rights and ensure personal preferences remained a priority, survey participants were also asked to provide information about their experience in settling into the care home by completing a range of questions which included the following:

1. Following admission your orientation to the care home included being shown the home's layout and informed of services available
2. Your orientation of the care home included being told who to go to/contact for help when needed
3. Ways in which you and/or your family could continue to have input into your care have been discussed and encouraged by staff
4. Management's approach has assisted you in dealing with your change of circumstances, feelings and concerns
5. Support shown from staff did assist you with the move into the care home
6. Friendship shown from other residents did assist you with the move into the care home

Responses to questions in relation to "Settling into the Care Home" once again were positive although there were a couple of instances where "the orientation of the care home as part of the admission process" was considered as being limited.

In addition a small number of survey participants felt that a "lack of friendship" was shown from other residents. The comments were made by residents' representatives whose family member was admitted to a care home that cared specifically for residents with advanced dementia.

An encouraging response rate of 65% of surveys distributed was achieved. Feedback received was overwhelmingly positive with some scope for improvement evident at times.

All survey questions were completed, suggesting ease of comprehension and completion.

The addition of "prompts" in the survey to aid recording of individualized details particularly where the desired outcome have not been achieved will be considered for future use.

The "Survey Tool" is to be presented at BHS Consumer Advisory Committee as part of the review process, with any suggestions considered along with other stakeholder's feedback.

It is proposed that on finalising the survey tool it will be implemented for all residents admitted to any of the BHS aged care facilities on an ongoing basis within 4-6 weeks of admission.

It is anticipated that the information gained will place each facility in a position where they will be able to ensure residents/representatives are supported in managing the major life transition of moving into a care home. In addition periodic summary reports will be completed as part of the continuous improvement process.

# FIVE MINUTES WITH...



## Joan Davidson

**BORN:** I was born at home in Tonbridge, Kent on 19/11/1922.

**RESIDENT SINCE:** 2004.

**OCCUPATION:** first job was post-mistress at Adisham village post office for two years. Then worked in a children's convalescent home for four years then in a secretarial position at

the Canterbury Railway Station. then in a secretarial position at the Canterbury Railway Station.

**INTERESTS:** I played netball as a girl. After contracting polio I now like to read.

**BEST PART OF MOVING TO JACK LONSDALE LODGE:** The good care.

**MOST CHALLENGING PART:** Having the people around me see my intelligence.

**MY EARLIEST MEMORY IS:** as a three-year-old walking under the subway at Greenhive Railway Station where dad worked.

**WHEN I WAS A CHILD I WANTED TO BE:** a nurse.

**MY GREATEST MOMENT IN LIFE WAS:** Getting married.

**IN THREE WORDS I AM A:** People, animal person.

**CAT OR DOG:** Ginger cat.

**WHEN I WANT TO SPOIL MYSELF I:** Buy some books.

**THE FIRST THING I REACH FOR IN THE MORNING IS A:** Cup of tea.

**THE HARDEST THING I HAVE DONE IN MY LIFE IS:** Sending my dad back to England.

**IF I COULD CHANGE ONE THING IT WOULD BE:** To have my husband still with me.

**AFTER LIFE THERE IS:** Life.

**I LOVE:** My family and cats.

**IN MY LIFE I HAVE LEARNT TO HAVE:** Hope.

**MY PET DISLIKE IS:** Know-it-all people.

**I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT A:** Cup of tea.

**BEFORE I DIE I WOULD LIKE TO:** Go back to England.

**IF I COULD INVITE FIVE PEOPLE TO DINNER THE WOULD BE:** My three children, princes Harry and William.

**IF I WOULD BE ANYONE ELSE FOR THE DAY I WOULD BE:** A cat with a good owner.

**I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT:** My children.

**A SONG THAT INSPIRES ME IS:** Climb Every Mountain.

## Star employees for March and July

Hailey House nurse **Karen Clarke** was the March BHS Employee of the Month.

Karen was nominated by her colleagues at Hailey House and the citation stated that:

"As the week day nurse Karen runs the show. She regularly starts her day assisting the carers with their duties including showering etc before her own and all staff approach her for assistance."

Karen has also "implemented several new practices and procedures to assist staff with work requirements including an organized showering system which allocates staff to certain showers so that the work level remains even for all on each shift."

"Karen Clarke has created an atmosphere where the staff feel secure and assisted which in turn filters out to the residents."

"Karen continually shows times where she'll extend herself way beyond her duties for both the staff and residents' benefit."

James Thomas Court ward clerk **Laurinda Hastings** was July Employee of the Month.

The award citation said "Laurinda displays incredible customer service at all times, being well mannered, helpful and professional.

"Laurinda is always accepting of new work practices and is more than happy to assist with new ideas and systems.

She "is always willing to accept extra duties and expectations beyond her role" and "has an ongoing role making improvements to the facility".



Karen Clarke

Laurinda Hastings

## Smoking Policy

Don Garlick, Manager, Emergency Management, has advised that a Residents' Safe Smoking Policy is been introduced.

The policy acknowledges that "Residents of Ballarat Health Service Residential Aged Care Services facilities have the right to exercise choice and control over their lifestyle whilst not infringing on the rights of other people."

The policy requires smokers to be assessed regularly to determine their capacity to continue to smoke independently and safely.

Smoking can only take place in specially designated areas equipped with a fire blanket, fire resistant seating and away from vents or building entrances to ensure smoke does not enter buildings.

In all cases residents who smoke must be identified and their smoking management plan must be made available to all staff.