

## Manager's notes...

The end of the year is approaching fast and we acknowledge that Christmas time can be a most difficult time for many of our clients.

While we will be closing only on the public holidays—Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day—we will continue to run our 24 hour crisis care response for recent sexual assaults throughout this time on 1800 806 292

Shireen Gunn  
BALLARAT CASA MANAGER

## BUSINESS HOURS

9am—5:15pm  
Monday—Friday  
Late appointments  
Available.

Located at:  
Ballarat Health Services  
Sebastopol Complex  
on the Corner of Vale &  
Edwards Streets,  
Sebastopol.

Phone: 03 5320 3933

## AFTER HOURS:

Crisis Care  
1800 806 292



The Ballarat CASA  
is supported by the  
Victorian Government



## Take Back The Night 2014

Once again, the Ballarat community joined together in the ongoing effort to end sexual violence in society. The crowd met at Town Hall and marched along Sturt St to conclude at Trades Hall in Camp St. The crowd could be heard chanting anti violence slogans from all around the CBD in a sea of orange. The night included passionate speeches from activist Phil Cleary as well as Ingrid Irwin, a lawyer and victim/survivor of sexual abuse. Catering was provided by Bean Me Up coffee and Le Petit Patissier. The march also enjoyed wonderful entertainment provided by the White Ribbon Day Men's choir and the Sweet Mona's. Ballarat CASA would like to thank all marchers, sponsors and supporters of the march. It was a fantastic effort by the CASA team and turned out a great success.



*The Vagina Monologues* is being performed in Ballarat in 2015 and OWL Productions is calling for people interested in performing, supporting or donating to contact us now! This year OWL Productions

will be supporting the Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA), and is calling on community members to participate. They are looking for women of all ages and experience to join us, and men are welcome to volunteer in supportive roles as well.

The performance will run for three shows over February 26-28, 2015. Women interested in performing need to be able to commit to night rehearsals for the month leading up to the show. People interested in being involved are encouraged to email Ms Barclay on [janeway215@gmail.com](mailto:janeway215@gmail.com) with: Contact details, Whether they would like to perform, support (for instance, with promotions, technical support venue management or music) or donate and a short paragraph on why they are interested in being involved. If applying to perform, ability to commit to night time rehearsals on January 29, February 9, 16, 23, 25 is a must.

Anybody interested in performing or supporting *The Vagina Monologues* is invited to submit their details to OWL Productions by December 17, 2014. For more information about VDAY, *The Vagina Monologues* and the ONE BILLION RISING campaign visit <http://www.vday.org>.

## Supporting the Royal Commission

Ballarat CASA has continued to work with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse throughout 2014 and support clients in accessing and attending private hearings. On September 19<sup>th</sup> 2014 Justice McClellan, Chair of the Royal Commission accepted an invitation to attend a meeting with the "Ballarat Survivors Group" – a men's group that has been meeting fortnightly at Ballarat CASA throughout the year. The evening was an opportunity for the group to inform the Royal Commission of their past abuse within a supportive environment. While the meeting was very intense the feedback from all was that it was very worthwhile. Ballarat CASA will continue to facilitate the men's group throughout 2015 and plans to also run a support group for partners.

## CASA's change in business hours

CASA have introduced small changes to the hours the Ballarat Office are open. Office hours will now be 9am to 5:15pm and the office will no longer close over lunch. Late appointments for clients are able to be made. From 5:15pm, the phone diverts to the Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL) who arrange for Ballarat CASA After Hours staff to be called to attend and provide crisis care support



### Childrens Art Therapy Program

This year has been a great success for the beginning of the art therapy program here at CASA.

We successfully ran a children's art therapy program near the start of this year which was a lot of fun! The young girls involved gained confidence within themselves both personally and creatively and developed true friendships. In the final two sessions the group learnt how to make soft critters out of a method called wet felting. This process is tricky as it requires multiple skills and function's to take place simultaneously. As you can see (RIGHT) they created beautiful critters!



### Art Therapy Group for Women



In the latter half of this year we ran an art therapy program for adult women over 10 sessions. It was an extremely moving and inspiring group to facilitate. The women involved provided emotional and social support to each other thus reducing their experience of isolation. The women encouraged each other to take creative, emotional and social risks which resulted in the women experiencing enormous growth and self-worth, most importantly the women experienced themselves as creative, empowered and respected individuals, so much more than just a survivor!



The art therapy program was also a part of the Take Back the Night March . Members of the Ballarat community created flags which expressed their compassion, hope and a strong desire to end all forms of violence within the community. The flags are on display at CASA and will continue to grow over the coming years.



Recently the CASA staff participated in an Art Therapy activity which was a team building exercise and created these little figurines in their own likeness.

I undertook a final year student placement from the Graduate Diploma of Rural Social Welfare at Federation University. It was quite a journey from week 1. I had initially hoped to be placed at Ballarat CASA as I have a long running interest in the impacts of trauma and I believe that there is a great capacity to address some of these impacts through counselling, support and advocacy. I am also very interested in the work that Ballarat CASA does with young people with problem sexual behaviour and sexually abusive behaviour, as the potential for rehabilitation and prevention of further victims of sexual assault is fantastic.

My hopes for greater learning and understanding of the myriad complexities of working with people who have experienced sexual assault have been well met on this placement. I endeavor to continue to nourish the desire to learn and to affect the greatest good for those who need it most.

The staff at Ballarat CASA unanimously supported me through this placement, through my thousands of questions and requests for practice advice as I navigated the path from observation to clinical practice. Over the 14 weeks I have completed training, conducted external evaluation, worked as the intake worker 1 day per week, and had a small caseload. I am very grateful to have been able to tap into the well of knowledge and experience that the staff have graciously shared with me.

**Student on Placement**  
(14 Weeks April–Nov 2014)  
- Kate O'Toole

