

Hamilton Base Hospital  
Coleraine District Health Service  
Penshurst District Health Service  
Merino Community Health Centre  
Frances Hewett Community Centre  
National Centre for Farmer Health  
Grange Residential Aged Care Facility  
The Birches Specialist Extended Care Facility  
Youth Services



# Western Wellbeing

A NEWSLETTER FROM  
Western District Health Service

## New wing opens for rehab

On 15 August 2013 the Hamilton Base Hospital Sub-Acute Redevelopment was officially opened by the Member for Lowan and Minister for Sport and Recreation, The Hon. Hugh Delahunty MP, on behalf of the Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. David Davis MP.

Western District Health Service (WDHS) Chief Executive Officer, Mr Jim Fletcher said the opening not only celebrated the completion of modern, new and upgraded facilities to provide rehabilitation care and care for people with functional decline, but also celebrated the eight year journey to establish a comprehensive inpatient and community based sub-acute program to care for the restorative and functional decline needs of our community.

Mr Fletcher described a sub-acute program as being 'the jewel in the crown' and 'at the very heart of a comprehensive Sub Regional Health Service system'.

The project to establish a comprehensive sub-acute program began with WDHS's service and capital master plans, followed by a sub-regional plan undertaken in conjunction with Barwon South Western Regional Department of Health and neighbouring health services at Portland, Casterton and Heywood. This led to the establishment of a sub-regional pilot rehabilitation program, including the establishment of three inpatient beds at Hamilton Base Hospital on 31 May 2005.

Mr Fletcher said this was 'a very modest beginning' to the project and acknowledged that at the time WDHS was very grateful for the support of the Hamilton and District Aged Care Trust, who provided funds to assist with the conversion and refurbishment of a ward area for rehabilitation use.

From this humble beginning, in August 2010, a capital grant of \$3.5 million was obtained from the Council of Australian Governments for the redevelopment of sub-acute inpatient services to cater for up to eight beds. In keeping with the organisation's long term vision and planning, there is future capacity for up to 12 beds in the redeveloped area.

The total cost of the sub-acute inpatient upgrade and expansion was \$4.1 million, consisting of six two bed wards, new ensuite bathrooms, a daily living skills kitchen, gymnasium, gait training and outdoor area.



WDHS Chief Executive Officer, Jim Fletcher and Board President Mary-Ann Brown with Member for Lowan and Minister for Sport and Recreation, The Hon. Hugh Delahunty MP, unveil a commemorative plaque at the opening of the new Hamilton Base Hospital Sub-Acute Wing.

After the official proceedings, Mr Delahunty was taken on a tour of the new facilities, where he met patients and viewed equipment in use. Impressed by the high standard of the facilities, Mr Delahunty showed particular interest in a kitchen bench in the day activities centre, that uses electric motors to adjust its height for people restricted to wheel chairs.

A tour of the facilities was also provided to many people associated with the Health Service, including builders, contractors, government officials and Southern Grampians Shire Council representatives.

During the eight year journey to establish the comprehensive sub-acute service model, WDHS has developed and introduced an inpatient rehabilitation program, an inpatient program for people with functional decline, a bed based and community based transition care program, a rehabilitation in the home program, expanded continence services, enhanced chronic disease programs focusing on diabetes, respiratory and heart conditions, extended community rehabilitation centre programs and established a community falls clinic.

As a result of the project WDHS now has a comprehensive inpatient bed based and community based rehabilitation service, in modern, well equipped facilities, to cater for the restorative care and functional decline needs of the community.

Completion of the sub-acute redevelopment also involved preparation for future works, through the installation of a concrete slab for the commencement of the \$55 million first stage redevelopment of the Hamilton Base Hospital. The first stage forms part of the WDHS blue print for the future.

At the opening Mr Fletcher thanked all those who made completion of the project possible, including WDHS Medical, Nursing Division and Allied Health staff for their support and contribution during the eight year period, as well as the Aged Care Trust for their original funding support in 2005. He also thanked those directly involved with the building works, including WDHS Facilities staff, the architect, builders, mechanical engineers, local trade businesses and consultants.

### In this issue

- **Supporter group a fantastic boost for The Birches**  
Page 5
- **\$65,000 Door Knock**  
Page 7
- **New canine volunteers**  
Page 9
- **Taking the pain out of accessing specialists**  
Page 11
- **Charity House on track**  
Page 13

## From the CEO



### What a great year

2013 has been a great year for Western District Health Service (WDHS) with the completion and opening of several of our capital developments, the introduction of new services, the innovative use of Telehealth to improve access to specialist services in our community, the commencement of the construction of the Charity House, a range of awards

and a record Door Knock Appeal - just to name a few of our successes and achievements.

We are indeed extremely fortunate and privileged to receive outstanding support from our community to ensure that we continue to provide state of the art equipment and facilities to support the high quality work of our clinicians and support staff.

### Openings and progress of our capital program

We are fast drawing to the end of our three year \$36 million Capital Rebuilding Program with the \$600,000 second stage internal upgrade of the Hamilton Medical Group building completed and operational, the completion and August opening of our \$4.1M Sub Acute unit for rehabilitation and functional decline inpatient services, which includes bedroom upgrades, new ensuites, a new daily living skills kitchen, gymnasium, gait training and outdoor area.

The completion of the Sub-Acute Inpatient Development, together with the expansion of community based sub-acute programs now enables us to provide a comprehensive range of services for the restorative and functional decline needs of our community. In addition, a comprehensive sub-acute program is the very heart of a comprehensive sub regional health service system.

On the 8th November the Member for Lowan and Minister for Sport and Recreation The Hon. Hugh Delahunty MP opened the Kolor Lodge Hostel redevelopment at Penshurst.

This \$520,000 upgrade included the redevelopment of bedrooms, ensuites, installation of overhead lifting equipment, air conditioning, new work stations, widening of doorways, new furnishings and re painting of the facility. It was made possible thanks to substantial donations from two long term residents of the Penshurst township, Mr Sandy O'Brien and the late Ms Sheila Harrington. The significance of the opening and redevelopment was the acknowledgement and recognition of these two outstanding people and their love for their community.

As a result current and future residents of Kolor Lodge Hostel will enjoy the comfort of living in a modern and homely environment for the next 20 plus years.

This redevelopment also completes the \$1.75M upgrade to facilities at the Penshurst Campus over a period of four years, all of which have been funded by community donations and Health Service reserves. To complete the Capital Master Plan vision for the Penshurst Campus requires a further \$4.5M and will need the State Government to dip into their pockets. The community has done their bit and we need the State Government to come on board to complete the long term building program at Penshurst.

Our final and by far our biggest Capital Project, the \$27M 'One Stop Shop Health Precinct' for our Coleraine Campus is drawing to an exciting conclusion as aged care residents have moved back into the newly redeveloped Mackie Court.

It is expected that in mid to late November patients, residents and all support services will move from the current Hospital site in McKeberly Street to their brand new facilities in McLeod Street.

The Health Precinct Project which began in August 2011 will be completed four months ahead of schedule and within budget.

The precinct includes a brand new Hospital with 10 acute beds and 27 aged care beds with support service facilities for catering, maintenance and administration, a new medical, dental, maternal health and primary care services building, a total redevelopment of the 24 bed Mackie Court aged care residential unit plus new facilities for physiotherapy, podiatry, planned activity group and other allied health services.

The new state of the art facilities will serve the community for current and future generations into the next century. The one stop shop health precinct vision is now a reality and we look forward to the opening to celebrate this incredible achievement for WDHS, the Coleraine community and the Southern Grampians Shire.

### Old makes way for the new

The old Coleraine Hospital which has served the Coleraine community for over 75 years will be demolished, in keeping with the commitment given by WDHS to the community to ensure the building is not left to become derelict, vandalised and an eyesore for the town. It is expected that the demolition will be completed by February 2014.

### Our future blue print for Hamilton Base Hospital

Whilst we have had one meeting with the Department of Health regarding our \$55M first stage redevelopment and re-configuration of services on the Hamilton Base Hospital site, we have become frustrated with the tardiness in receiving a further response from the Department of Health.

Our aim is to have our First Stage Blueprint on the agenda for inclusion in the Health Portfolio Capital Budget commitments of both parties for the November 2014 State Election.

We will continue to harass the Department and seek political intervention if necessary to keep the discussion and consideration of our Blue Print moving along to ensure it is front and centre of the next State Government's election platform.

### New and expanded services

We welcome new and expanded services to Hamilton Base Hospital with Mr Alasdair Sutherland, an Orthopaedic Surgeon from Warrnambool commencing an Outpatient Consulting and Inpatient Theatre Operating Service on 9 October 2013. Initially this service will be bi-monthly then change to monthly from June 2014.

Ms Caroline Tan commenced an Outpatient Neurosurgery Service on 22 October 2013 and will begin operating theatre services for low complexity procedures from 16 December 2013. This service will be provided monthly.

A new quarterly Kidney Specialist Outpatient Consulting Service commenced on 8 November 2013 with Professor Steve Holt from the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

All Outpatient Clinics for these services will be provided from our recently developed Cancer Consulting, Education and Resource Suite.

## Awards galore

Over the past few months we have received a number of Awards, including a Gold Medal Award for our 2012 Annual Report, the Southern Grampians Shire Business Award for Community Enterprise and the Judges' Team Leadership Award. In addition we received the Statewide Victorian Healthcare Association Judges' and People's Choice Awards for our innovative Telehealth Program for Cancer Services, Urology, Pain Management and Allied Health.

Mr Wes Walter, one of many great volunteers also took out the Senior Citizen of the Year Award. Our congratulations go to all staff and Wes for their outstanding achievements.

## National Standards Accreditation

I am very pleased to announce that we have passed our Australian Council of Healthcare Standards Accreditation under the National Standards with flying colours for a full three year period.

This is very significant and a great team achievement, as the new Standards were introduced from January 2013.

Our aim of embedding the National Standards into our culture is well advanced and the successful Accreditation outcome provides a strong base for future development.

## Annual Meeting & Life Governors

Our Annual General Meeting was another great success with sportsman, media personality and founder of the youth charity Whitelion, Mr Glenn Manton our guest speaker. Glenn's address on "How life events shape the person you become" was excellent.

A highlight of the evening was the induction of Dr Dale Ford and Mr John Dean as Life Governors of WDHS.

## Christmas greetings

Our Board of Directors, Executive and staff extend their best wishes to all members of our community for a safe and happy festive season and we thank you for your continuing support of our Health Service.

# Telehealth services recognised through State award



Rosie Rowe, Director of Primary and Preventative Health and Usha Naidoo, Manager Care Coordination receiving the 2013 VHA Award on behalf of WDHS. Pictured with Susan Williams, CEO Hardy Group International, The Hon. David Davis MP, Minister for Health, Kevin Hardy, Principal and Founder of Hardy Group International and Anthony Graham, VHA Chair.

Western District Health Service (WDHS) has won the 2013 Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA) Award for its Telehealth services. The services have significantly improved patient access to medical specialists for chronic pain, cancer, urology and speech.

The VHA Chair, Anthony Graham, congratulated WDHS "for outstanding innovation to address community needs". The team also won the inaugural Member's Choice Award, which was voted for by delegates at the Annual VHA Conference. Both awards were sponsored by Hardy Group International.

The new Telehealth services have enabled patients to access medical specialists by video-conference from Hamilton, rather than having to travel to Melbourne, Ballarat or Geelong.

Rosie Rowe, Director of Primary and Preventative Health, noted that the new services have "saved travel time and costs and reduced waiting times for specialist services. As an example, waiting times to access a pain specialist have been reduced from 18 months to just 1 month. This has saved the community approximately 24,000km in travel and \$16,000 in travel costs."

Pain specialist, Dr Malcolm Hogg, from Royal Melbourne Hospital has praised the WDHS Telehealth service, noting that the "positive involvement of nurses in the specialist consultation has improved communication, follow-up and coordination of care."

# 2013 Powercor Ace Radio Business Achievement Awards

## – WDHS Primary and Preventative Health Division

WDHS Primary and Preventative Health (PPH) Division was the winner of the Community Enterprise Award at the 2013 Powercor Ace Radio Business Achievement Awards.

The Division has 85 staff providing a diverse range of services, including both preventative health programs and a full range of community and allied health services.

It is renowned for its innovation, as demonstrated by the establishment of four new Telehealth services, the introduction of the award winning Care Coordination Model (which produces holistic and better outcomes for patients) establishment of an Electronic Care Model as well as numerous other initiatives.

Accepting the Award was Manager, Care Co-ordination Usha Naidoo, Primary Care Services Manager Belinda Payne, WDHS CEO Jim Fletcher, Gerard Lucas (Sponsor Hamilton Spectator), WDHS President of the Board Mary-Ann Brown and Speech Pathologist Sue Cameron



Cecilia O'Donnell, Muriel Bailey, WDHS Surgical Unit Manager Rachal Porter, Carol McClusky, WDHS Clinical Nurse Specialist (Theatre), Nyrie Adams and Julie Waldron get a hands on look at the equipment that has recently been purchased with funds donated from the Hospital Op Shop.

Endoscopes are expensive pieces of equipment and need to be looked after," Nyrie explained.

The observation machine was purchased for the direct admissions area, where patients go into Theatre. All patients need a baseline set of observations taken, these include, blood pressure, temperature and heart rate.

"The observation machine is fantastic as it provides the nursing staff with this information in a very fast and efficient way. This is important, particularly on the very busy days, when there could be up to 25 patients to admit. The machine provides us with the relevant information within 30 seconds," Nyrie added.

The camaraderie between this diverse and energetic group of Op Shop ladies is evident in the way they all get along so well. The enthusiasm the ladies displayed at seeing the new equipment was palpable and this enthusiasm obviously flows through to the shop itself; as it is often not only bursting with bargains but full of laughter and chatter as the volunteers go about their daily activities.

"It was lovely to meet the ladies from the Op Shop, who all do such an amazing job. The Theatre staff really do appreciate their work, as the equipment we have been able to purchase through their funds has allowed us to provide a better service for our community," Nyrie said.

The Op Shop provides an amazing service for Hamilton, not only does it supply affordable clothing, but every dollar spent goes back to the hospital for the purchase of new Theatre equipment.

The Hospital Op Shop, at 33 Brown Street is open Mondays to Fridays from 10:00am to 4:00pm. It is staffed entirely by WDHS volunteers, who give up their time each week to not only serve in the shop but also sort clothing, books, crockery, shoes, handbags and anything else that is donated to the shop.

They play a key role in the fundraising at the hospital, having donated over \$50,000 in the past 12 months alone.

## Clothing with a conscience

Volunteers from the Hamilton Base Hospital Opportunity Shop recently visited Western District Health Service (WDHS) to inspect new equipment purchased with funds raised from the sale of goods at the shop. The ladies donated \$26,500 in just six months, which has been used to purchase various vital pieces of equipment for Theatre.

WDHS Clinical Nurse Specialist (Theatre), Nyrie Adams proudly showed off her new endoscopy trolley and observation machine. Nyrie was accompanied by the Surgical Unit Manager, Rachal Porter, who also displayed a vast array of surgical instruments, from laparoscopic graspers to a 5mm endoscope vital for key hole surgery.

"Endoscopy is a huge component of the service WDHS provides in Theatre, we average around 800 endoscopy procedures each year. As space is an ongoing issue, the stacker trolley is ideal for our endoscopy service.

The new trolley will mean that the endoscopes are better protected and less likely to get damaged during transportation.



Birches Unit Manager Linda Miller, Auxiliary Chairwoman Faye Gumley and Auxiliary Members Chris Phillips, Judy Sommerville, Peter Tew, Nancy Smooker and Marilyn Lyons celebrate the launch of The Birches Auxiliary

## Supporter group a fantastic boost for The Birches

Making life more comfortable for residents and breaking down the social stigma associated with dementia is the major focus of the newly-created Birches Auxiliary.

The Auxiliary, set up to raise funds to enhance the care and lives of residents and to raise the public profile of The Birches Specialist Extended Care Facility was initiated by former Western District Health Service (WDHS) Nurse Educator, Faye Gumley. Mrs Gumley has been a passionate supporter of The Birches since her husband Jim became a resident in 2012.

“The Birches has been in operation for 13 years now and we feel the formation of the Auxiliary will play a vital role in ensuring it receives the support and financial assistance it requires” Mrs Gumley said.

The Auxiliary will hold a number of fundraising events and activities to purchase equipment, furnishings, therapy and lifestyle items for The Birches residents.

Community support was strong at a recent celebration to launch the Auxiliary, which included tours of the facility and gardens and was attended by over 100 people.

The Birches Unit Manager, Linda Miller is excited about the formation of the Auxiliary and the effect it is having.

“Already we are seeing some really positive vibes coming from residents, their families and our staff about what is happening and the sense of energy the new Auxiliary has been able to generate” Ms Miller said.

Peter Tew is another committed community member who has joined the Auxiliary and is an enthusiastic advocate for changing public perceptions of the facility and dementia.

“There is no doubt that a major aim of ours is to work on breaking down the social stigma that is associated with dementia and subsequently The Birches. We have a wonderful facility here and making that well known to the wider public is something this Auxiliary will aim to achieve.

We look forward to working with other community organisations who may be able to support us in achieving positive change. Small things like improving the internal and external gardens are projects that other groups can help us with and can make such a huge difference to the lives of the residents and their families,” he said.

WDHS Chief Executive Officer, Jim Fletcher agrees that it is increasingly important for communities to develop a better understanding of the care needs of those with dementia and to remove the stigma associated with the condition.

“The community as a whole needs to better understand what it means to live with dementia and how we can all work together to ensure that people living with dementia lead fulfilling and meaningful lives,” he said.

Although not widely known or recognized, The Birches is designed to provide both home and general nursing care for many elderly citizens. Providing care to people with specialist needs and a secure environment comprises around 50 to 75% of the facility’s role, depending on demand. The remaining 25 to 50% of The Birches is available for general nursing home care.

The design of The Birches provides flexibility and various options to cater for a wide range of resident’s needs, depending on their assessments prior to taking up a placement.

Staff at The Birches also recently organized a dementia specific audit of the facility to develop new approaches to supporting and stimulating patients with dementia.

Professor Sam Davies conducted the Dementia Specific Environmental Audit to ensure The Birches environment was appropriate to the care needs of patients with dementia. The audit not only evaluated the physical environment, but suggested new ways to engage and stimulate clients with memory problems.

## Bulbs bloom for the babies

Hamilton and Alexandra College students held a bulb selling drive in May, as part of their Fundraising and Community Service Program. The fundraiser was so successful that the students were able to donate \$1,421 to the Western District Health Service (WDHS) Midwifery Unit, to assist with the purchase of a new Neo-Natal Jaundice Detector.

Pictured here are students Madison Whyte, Sophie Edgerton, Bryce Farrugia and Henry Dufty with WDHS Maternity Services Coordinator Sonia Shaw displaying some of the flowers and bulbs from their fundraiser.



# Hamilton Base Hospital continues to perform

The latest health service performance report recently released by the Minister for Health shows that the Hamilton Base Hospital is performing well and significantly exceeds statewide benchmarks for emergency departments.

The report indicated that in the June 2013 quarter HBH has:

- Admitted 1728 patients – up from 1630 admissions in the previous 3 months
- Provided a total of 4242 bed-days to patients – up from 3760 bed-days for the previous quarter
- Provided an average of 52 hours of care per day in the Intensive Care Unit, up from an average of 32 hours in the previous quarter
- Treated 100% of Category 1 emergency patients immediately on arrival at the hospital Emergency Department
- Treated 98% of Category 2 patients within 10 minutes of arrival at the ED – up from 94% in the June 2012 quarter, and beating the State-wide target of 80%
- Treated 96% of Category 3 patients within 30 minutes of arrival at the ED – up from 95% in the June 2012 quarter, and above the benchmark target of 75%
- Treated 97% of semi-urgent Category 4 patients within an hour of arrival at the ED – up from 93% in the June 2012 quarter, and above the State average of 70%
- Treated 99% of non-urgent Category 5 patients within 2 hours of arrival at the ED – up from 98% in the same period in 2012, and above the State average of 90%
- 95% of non-admitted Emergency Department patients were discharged home within the benchmark 4 hours – up from 94% in the June 2012 quarter, and above the State average of 78%
- Received 264 ambulance arrivals at the busy ED – up from 257 arrivals in the previous 3 months
- Completed the transfer of 100% of patients who arrived at the hospital in an ambulance within the target of 40 minutes, up on its 98.8% transfer rate in the June 2012 quarter and better than the State benchmark of 90%

WDHS CEO Jim Fletcher said: “The results are very pleasing and indicative of our commitment to providing the best possible range of services to our community, despite the ongoing pressure on our budget due to funding reductions. The results are a credit to the commitment and hard work of our clinicians and support staff.”



## Senior of the Year Award



WDHS volunteer, Wes Walter receives the 2013 Southern Grampians Shire Senior of the Year Award from Councillor Peter Dark

Each Year the Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC) presents a ‘Senior of the Year Award’ to a resident senior citizen who has provided outstanding volunteered service to the local community.

This year the award was presented to Wes Walter, who for the past seven years has been a volunteer Community Transport driver for Western District Health Service (WDHS). The role involves Wes driving clients to medical appointments as far away as Melbourne on a weekly basis.

WDHS Volunteer Coordinator, Jeanette Ryan said that “As a

Community Transport driver, Wes belongs to a special group of volunteers who are kind, caring and compassionate. On most trips, drivers such as Wes have the responsibility of regularly caring for frail and vulnerable clients. They also cope cheerfully with the additional stress of driving for up to 10 hours in one day, with short rest stops.

Wes is also our ‘go to man’ when we need assistance from volunteers for fundraising events organized by the WDHS Community Liaison Team. He has manned the beef spit at the Annual Golf Day, assisted on the drinks station at the Fun Run and been a tremendous help with preparation and collection during our Annual Door Knock Appeal,” Ms Ryan said.

In addition to volunteering for WDHS, Wes is an elder of the Uniting Church. He is heavily involved in a wide range of Church activities, including organising building maintenance as convener of the Church’s Property Committee.

Wes has also been a past President of the Strathkellar Fire Brigade (of which he is still an active member) a volunteer at the Ansett Museum and assisted at Sheepvention.

Wes is a quiet, humble man who volunteers a great deal of his time for the Hamilton community, with little fuss or fanfare. There is no doubt that he is a well deserved recipient of the 2013 SGSC ‘Senior of the Year Award’.



Staff, guests and residents enjoy morning tea while looking at one of the new recliner chairs purchased with funds provided by the Freemasons Public Charitable Foundation.

L-R back row: Fiona Hodson, Hamilton Grand Lodge Master John Alexander, Hamilton and District Aged Care Trust member Carmel Schlaghecke, Hamilton Grand Lodge Treasurer Brian Wallwork, Trudy Boyes, WDHS Birches Unit Manager Linda Miller, Kate Bowe, Hazel Saligari, Angela Cook  
Front Row: Birches Residents Phyllis Baker and Jim Rivett

## Freemasons improve quality of life of residents

Residents of The Birches Specialist Extended Care Facility were the recent recipients of a generous grant from the Freemasons Public Charitable Foundation; an autonomous foundation that raises tax deductible donations for distribution to community organisations and charities.

For the third consecutive year, the Hamilton and District Aged Care Trust, in conjunction with WDHS, has obtained a grant from the Freemasons Public Charitable Foundation. The Grange Redevelopment program has benefited from the grants in the previous two years and now The Birches has been the beneficiary of \$5,000 to purchase four new recliner chairs for residents.

Members of the Hamilton Grange Lodge, Worshipful Master John Alexander and Treasurer Brian Wallwork attended a morning tea at The Birches to view the new recliner chairs with Hamilton and District Aged Care Trust representative Carmel Schlaghecke.

“The practice of benevolence, or universal charity, is a core belief of Freemasons everywhere. Freemasons Victoria’s Board of Benevolence is one of Victoria’s oldest charitable funds,” Mr Wallwork said.

Freemasons Victoria has been active in the community for over 170 years. It established the Freemasons hospital in 1937 and the Royal Freemasons Homes of Victoria in 1867 for the care of the elderly in our community.



WDHS Chief Executive Officer, Jim Fletcher said it was a terrific result given the current economic climate.

“We set the bar ambitiously high when aiming to raise \$60,000. To go past that target in such a convincing fashion is testimony yet again to the generous and supportive community we live in.

Each year I am humbled by the amount of support our Health Service receives, not only in financial donations

## \$65,000 Door Knock

Staff and volunteers at Western District Health Service (WDHS) joined together to celebrate a record total when for the first time the WDHS Annual Door Knock Appeal cracked \$65,000; \$12,000 more than the previous record.

The Appeal, coordinated by the WDHS Community Liaison Department and various volunteer members of the WDHS Development Council, ran over two weekends in June and called on the services of over 100 volunteers to help ‘door knock’ and collect funds for WDHS.

This year also saw the initiation of an unaddressed mail service (UMS) letter drop which sent letters out to many rural families who had not been reached in the past.

The UMS worked well, bringing in \$4,500, with many donations coming from new donors. The door knockers themselves brought in \$38,000. The balance of funds raised, (another \$23,000) was posted in by generous donors who had missed giving to the collectors.

but also from the volunteers who give up their time to door knock for the appeal. We had help from 11-year-olds to 80-year-olds. Many of the WDHS staff also gave up a day on their weekends to help too, and of course members of our Development Council all pounded the pavement for this great cause,” he said.

Mr Fletcher himself is also a regular door-knocker.

“People can be a bit surprised to see me on their door step asking for donations, but we are all very well received. A number of people make donations as a way of saying thank you for the care received at the hospital. Others give because they understand the importance of new medical equipment. Some individuals give because they understand the vital role WDHS plays in our community,” he said.

Thanks to the Hospital Door Knock Appeal, WDHS has been able to purchase six single intravenous pumps needed to regulate the safe delivery of fluids and medication to patients; and three double channel intravenous pumps that allow safe delivery of more than one type of fluid and medication at the same time. The pumps will be used across all acute areas of the hospital.



Sandy and his family – L-R Jenny O'Brien, Morgan O'Brien, Ned Walker, Terry O'Brien, Sandy O'Brien, Jackie O'Brien, Minnie Walker - celebrate the Opening of the Kolor Lodge Redevelopment with The Hon. Hugh Delahunty MP

Western District Health Service (WDHS) Chief Executive Officer Jim Fletcher said "The works were part of the overall master plan upgrade for the Penshurst Campus and were made possible by the outstanding generosity of Mr Sandy O'Brien, a life time resident of Penshurst and a bequest from Ms Sheila Harrington who was a resident at Kolor Lodge for a number of years".

Mr Fletcher recounted Sandy's three visits to his office, the first to inform him that he had a farm stocked with cattle and equipment that he intended to leave to the Penshurst Hospital in his will. Sandy then decided however, that he would like to hand the property over while he was still alive, so he could see the money put to good use on upgrading the Hospital and provide some work for local trades. Sandy asked Mr Fletcher if he handed over his farm (stock and all) could he sell it and use the proceeds for the upgrade of the facilities.

Mr Fletcher said "I was a little surprised by the offer of handing over the farm - I don't think there would be too many Chief Executive Officers presented with such an extraordinary gift, but I advised Mr O'Brien as confidently as I could that I would be able to manage the situation.

## The fruits of Sandy and Sheila's gifts

The generosity of two outstanding long term Penshurst residents, Mr Sandy O'Brien and Ms Sheila Harrington bore fruit in the thousands with the Official Opening of the redevelopment of the 10 bed Kolor Lodge Hostel at Penshurst District Health Service.

The Opening was officiated by the Local Member for Lowan and Minister for Sport and Recreation The Hon. Hugh Delahunty MP.

The \$520,000 redevelopment included an upgrade to 10 bedrooms and ensuites, new floorcoverings and window furnishings, installation of overhead lifting equipment, widening of doorways, new and upgraded staff work stations, installation of air conditioning and a general facelift. The painting and carpeting of the Sheppard Community Health Centre was also completed as part of the project.

Fortunately on Sandy's second visit he told me that he had sold the property and assets to save me a few headaches and presented me with a very generous cheque," he said.

A third visit a short time later brought another cheque.

Mr Fletcher said: "After the third visit and having thanked Sandy again for his generosity, I told him not to worry about making an appointment or going to reception to see me in the future, just to make his way straight to my office at anytime!".

Mr Fletcher also recounted his contact with Ms Sheila Harrington who he described as a 'great scout' and they shared many enjoyable discussions about football and life in general.

"Sheila was always cheery and had a smile for everyone," he said.

Mr Fletcher said that the Kolor Lodge Redevelopment Opening was about celebrating the generosity of two outstanding local Penshurst individuals who loved their community.

"Their generosity will provide comfort and modern home like living for the current and future residents of Kolor Lodge for the next 20 plus years," he said.



Future nurses, Casterton Secondary College students, Remy Hurst and Liza Mutch practise their nursing skills with the blood pressure machine.

## Careers in Health Day

"Nursing's not just nursing anymore," was the remark from one of the students who attended the Western District Health Service (WDHS) annual Careers in Health Day.

Year 10 students from across the district attended the information day which guided them through the many different career options now available to young people choosing to specialize in health.

Representatives from Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Podiatry, Physiotherapy, Social Services and of course general nursing spent the day with small groups of students demonstrating the jobs they do and talking to students about their possible career paths.

The Careers in Health Day is organised by WDHS Nurse Educator, Chris McGennisken to help students with the daunting task of selecting their VCE subjects and perhaps even choosing a profession or vocation to take them through their year 12 studies and onto further education.

Chris was really pleased with the turnout from the schools.

"We had students from Baimbridge College, The Hamilton & Alexandra College, Monivae College, and for the second year in a row Casterton Secondary College.

These students may be the health practitioners of the future. We need to ensure they have a greater understanding of the different opportunities in various health careers, and that they recognise the variety of health careers available. I believe health is a wonderful area and I hope many of these students have the opportunity to pursue careers in this field," she said.





Delta Dogs Volunteer Stan Dean, HARP Chronic Care Nurse Janine Enright, Director, Primary and Preventative Health, Rosie Rowe, vet Kristabel Lewis and Planned Activity Group (PAG) clients Cliff Everett & Joan King enjoy a pat of Delta Dogs Jill and Tessa at a recent celebration to kick off the program.

It's very relaxing – I even find patting my own dog exceptionally calming," he said.

To be approved as a volunteer Delta Dog, all animals must be vet checked and temperament tested in Geelong by the Delta Society.

"The Delta dogs' testing assesses the dogs for obedience and temperament and ensures they are healthy. The dogs are exposed to all sorts of weird and wonderful noises to assess their reactions," Mr Dean said.

Dr Kristabel Lewis from Hamilton Animal Health is supporting the program by providing free vet checks and samples to Gribbles Pathology every three months, for participating dogs.

"I'm really pleased to be involved - dogs going into the Health Service need to be vet checked, have three monthly lab testing to minimise the risk of infection and regular preventative health care and we are very happy to assist to reduce the cost for the volunteer dog owners" she said.

Mr Dean will head the volunteer pet therapy team in Hamilton and ensure that the paperwork and vet checks are kept up to date. His two dogs Tessa and Jill will also be regular visitors at the Hamilton Hospital and in Primary and Preventative Health.

Head of Primary and Preventative Health, Rosie Rowe is excited by the potential benefits of the Delta Dogs pet therapy and has commended her staff for making it happen at the local level.

"This program started when our staff had a conversation about how we could use dogs in our services and in 3 or 4 weeks it was all lined up," Ms Rowe said.

The next step will be to get enough volunteers on board so that the program can be extended into acute services and The Birches and the Grange.

***Do you have a dog with a good temperament?***

***Do you have an hour or two to spare every week?***

***Are you interested in giving your time to volunteer in your local community?***

***Do you love talking with people about your dog?***

***If you think your pooch is suitable to become a WDHS Delta Dogs volunteer, you can find out more by contacting Stan Dean on 0423 071 440 or by visiting the Delta Dogs website: [www.deltasociety.com](http://www.deltasociety.com)***

## New canine volunteers

Four legged friends will be a feature of our aged care facilities, activity groups and wards thanks to a new therapy program introduced at Western District Health Service (WDHS).

The new program - a partnership between WDHS, The Delta Dogs Society and Hamilton Animal Health - will involve volunteer handlers and their dogs initially visiting clients in the Planned Activity Group (PAG's) with plans to extend the service into acute areas of the hospital and to The Birches and Grange aged care facilities.

WDHS is one of 550 health services and aged care providers nationally who receive regular visits from volunteers through the Delta Dogs program.

The dogs are not only much loved by clients, patients and staff, but research has shown that interaction with dogs lowers blood pressure, increases endorphin release and generally makes people feel good. Having the dogs visit also reduces the feeling of being in a sterile environment and gives clients something different to look forward to.

Stan Dean is the first local volunteer to take his Labrador Tessa and Collie Jill through the Delta Dog Therapy program, which supports volunteers and their special dogs to make regular visits to health care facilities.

Stan believes that "the program gives people who've had dogs for yonks the chance to interact with them and provides an opportunity for companionship.

## HBH Auxiliary Ladies Annual Donation

Thanks to another busy year of fundraising, the Hamilton Base Hospital Ladies Auxiliary have again chipped in to purchase vital equipment for the Hamilton Base Hospital Operating Theatre.

Through various fundraising activities, including raffles, bake sales and a Spring Luncheon, these amazing ladies raised a total of \$6,000 to purchase a flexible laparoscopic retractor and an orthopaedic set.

The retractor is used for laparoscopic surgery and allows the surgeon to lift organs and tissue to increase vision while performing an operation. The orthopaedic set allows Operating Theatre staff to do more procedures in orthopaedics back to back.



Members of the Hamilton Base Hospital Ladies Auxiliary take time out to discover how equipment purchased with their annual donation is used



Staff at The Grange Residential Aged Care Facility celebrate 'Aged Care - Making a Difference Day'

## Aged care – making a difference

With the ageing population in Australia projected to quadruple over the next 40 years, the importance of recognising and developing staff who work in our aged care facilities has never been greater.

As part of 'Aged Care: Making a Difference Day', Western District Health Service (WDHS) celebrated the contribution of its Aged Care staff recently, through the presentation of special

cakes at a series of morning teas and other events at the Grange, Birches, Penshurst and Coleraine aged care facilities.

The cakes were to thank aged care staff members for their motivation, skill and commitment in 'making a difference' to the lives of people living in residential aged care.

The Birches Leisure Lifestyle Co-ordinator Margi Bilston said:

"It's a real privilege to work in the aged care sector – we have a strong team and it's really important to be able to get together and celebrate the fact that we are aged care specialists.

It's a very satisfying career - we develop some lovely personal relationships through our work, not only with our residents, but also with their families and the wider community. We also recognise the importance of continuing to improve and develop the culture of care – as many of us will also require these services into the future!" Ms Bilston said.

Although staff agree that meeting the needs of the ageing baby boomer population is a very satisfying occupation, it can also be quite heartbreaking and difficult at times. Staff care for people suffering from a full range of illnesses and regularly have to cope with the deaths of people they know well and have grown quite close to.

WDHS Chief Executive Officer, Jim Fletcher said:

"We have some fantastic services and amenities, but our people are the backbone of our aged care facilities and we are very fortunate to have a wonderful group of staff in our organisation, who are dedicated to ensuring that our residents are cared for and their lives are as fulfilling as they possibly can be".

## Cinema fundraiser

New dads are assured of a better night's sleep when their partners are in hospital, thanks to a new single fold away sofa bed purchased for the Midwifery Unit. The bed was purchased with funds raised from a very successful and popular film night organised by Sheba Gurm from Baimbridge College.

WDHS Maternity Services Program Coordinator Sonia Shaw, Baimbridge College's Marley Meade and Sheba Gurm and Midwife Jenny Sutherland look on as new parents John & Jessica Skermer and baby Chloe, try out the sofa bed purchased with funds from the Cinema Fundraiser



## OT Department celebrates

Western District Health Service (WDHS) regularly celebrates its various departments by acknowledging the work they do with a morning tea or other festivity. These days are recognised as a time to dress up, decorate the wards and have a bit of fun.

Recently Occupational Therapy (OT) staff celebrated National Occupational Therapy Week with their colleagues by hosting a

Professional Journal Review on Clinical Evidence Based Practice, followed by a Green Afternoon Tea.

Chief Occupational Therapist Fran Patterson said:

"Occupational Therapy covers a wide range of areas used by many people both in the hospital and out in the community. It is aimed at restoring and maintaining independence for people at home, at work and during their leisure activities".

OT Services at WDHS include assisting inpatients to travel home safely, and teaching daily activities such as cooking and showering. This is aimed to maximize patient's independence and to provide them with rehabilitation services.

Outpatients and ambulatory care clients are assisted with hand therapy, Activities of Daily Living (ADL) skills, provision of equipment and assistance with returning to, or remaining at work. The service includes home visits.

OT plays an important role in aged care, where activities are introduced to maintain active living skills and independence. The residential aged care Planned Activity Group (PAG) also provides stimulation and opportunities for friendships and respite services for carers.

OT also continues to assist various support groups for people with long term illnesses or conditions and their carers. They include the Respiratory Support Group and Carer Support Group.

# Taking the pain out of accessing specialists

For locals experiencing chronic pain, getting an appointment to see a pain specialist in the past has involved a trip to Melbourne or a regional centre such as Geelong or Ballarat, where the waiting periods can range from 9 – 18 months. Thanks to a new Telehealth video conferencing clinic set up in a partnership between Hamilton Medical Group, the Western District Health Service (WDHS) Hospital Admission Risk Program (HARP) and The Royal Melbourne Hospital, chronic pain sufferers can now engage with a specialist without having to travel long distances and waiting periods have been dramatically reduced to one month.

The new telehealth video conferencing clinic has not only improved access, but has also significantly improved patient care and follow up and enhanced GP knowledge and relationships with specialists.

The monthly clinic is located at Hamilton Medical Group and is led by Janine Enright, HARP Chronic Care Nurse. The GP initially provides referrals to the pain specialist and HARP, where the team conducts a nursing (pain) assessment and a psychological assessment, which is carried out by Angela O'Brien, HARP Psychologist. Ms Enright then co-ordinates the Telehealth appointment, providing the specialist with scans, test results and a written report. She then attends the clinic with the client to provide further support and is often also involved in follow up appointments with the GP.

Janine Enright says the new service has significantly improved the model of care for chronic pain sufferers.

“The HARP team is on hand throughout the various stages to provide consistency and support to the client, specialist and the GP,” she said.

HARP Psychologist Angela O'Brien agrees that the model gives patients a more complete care package.

“The model of care in chronic pain management takes into account all aspects of the client's functioning. The role of the HARP Psychologist is to assist the client to identify the emotional and social impact of their pain and support them to address these issues”.

Dr Malcolm Hogg, Head of the Pain Management Services at The Royal Melbourne Hospital and President of the Australian Pain Society sees Telehealth as a way of adding to his service. He would like to see more co-operation and support at all levels for Telehealth initiatives, from community care to GP's, state hospitals and federally.

As a service add-on, Dr Hogg used a recent example to illustrate how Telehealth works to create better outcomes for his patients.

“I recently had a patient who had a major operation at Royal Melbourne Hospital, with significant post-operative pain requiring a complicated mix of medications. I was able to provide follow-up to check on her recovery via Telehealth, without her having to travel back to Melbourne,” he said.

He also believes that having the HARP team on the ground to facilitate the Telehealth appointments and follow up is important.

“The video conferencing communication medium means it's difficult to judge non-verbal responses, so it is great to have the nurse on hand to pick up on any non-verbal cues. The HARP nurse also does much of the administrative

groundwork, providing me with a detailed assessment prior to the consultation, enhancing the quality of service and reducing my time commitments. The nurse is also able to organise any post assessment recommendations with the client and GP,” he said.

As there is often a lot to take in during a medical appointment, patients sometimes forget details or may not fully understand what has been discussed, and are reticent to ask questions. For clients attending the clinic, the HARP nurse can help communicate patient needs and provide further clarification and support.

Telehealth pain client Michael Riddle said:

“It is extremely good to have someone on your side. I don't have to worry as much, I have got someone backing me up, behind me, like an army, it's such a relief”.

The benefits for clients of not having to travel long distances to visit the specialist are also significant. In some cases patients just aren't able to travel due to their condition. It is estimated that the Telehealth Pain Clinic has collectively saved clients between 14,000-24,000km of travel equating to around \$9,000-\$16,000 since it began late last year.

Peter Teal, who experiences movement pain, due to a hip problem, has attended one previous Telehealth clinic and says travelling to a specialist is just not an option at the moment.

“With my hip the way it is, I just don't think I would be able to make the four hour trip to the specialist in Melbourne,” Mr Teal said.

Dr Dale Ford initially approached Janine Enright about setting up the Telehealth Clinic to improve pain management for his clients. Prior to the Telehealth Clinic, GPs found it very difficult to access specialist pain services for their patients. With increasing regulatory control of pain management drugs such as opiates, improving access to specialists is also about providing better support for GP's.

“There has been a large gap in getting access to expert pain advice in the region. Thanks to Janine and Dr Hogg, the Telehealth Pain Clinic is now used by a number of GP's at the Medical Group to provide specialist advice on pain management for their clients,” Dr Ford said.



Hamilton Medical Group GP Dr Dale Ford, with client Peter Teal and HARP Chronic Care Nurse Janine Enright in a Telehealth consult with Pain Specialist Dr Malcolm Hogg



Course participants enjoying a sightseeing trip at Wannon Falls

## NCFH creating healthy & sustainable lifestyles

Life in the country is often romantically linked to notions of a healthier lifestyle, but research shows that the quintessential Aussie farmer, their families and communities face significantly poorer health outcomes than people living in our towns and urban areas. An ageing and diminishing agricultural workforce, financial pressures, climate variability and natural disasters are impacting significantly on the health and wellbeing of those living and working on the land.

In order to improve our understanding of the factors contributing to poor health among our farmers, a new online unit was offered earlier this year to health professionals and others working in the agricultural sector. The unit aimed to look at the environmental, social and policy level determinants of health and wellbeing in rural communities.

In a partnership between Deakin University and the National Centre for Farmer Health, the Healthy and Sustainable Agricultural Communities unit was offered as part of the Graduate Certificate of Agricultural Health & Medicine. The unit covered the effects of limited access to essential health services, lower health knowledge, higher rates of workplace injury and lifestyle diseases in rural areas. It also investigated the impact of reduced access to wellbeing initiatives in agricultural

communities and the issue of under-representation in the broader health policy context.

The first unit in the Graduate Certificate in Agricultural Health & Medicine was completed by students during July and attracted students from as far away as Alice Springs, Perth and Queensland.

Jeanne Dekker, a practice nurse who lives and works on a dairy farm in South Gippsland completed the Agricultural Health & Medicine Unit.

Ms Dekker said “One of the key learning’s from this unit was that the average age of workers in agriculture is 52 and there are not many younger farmers coming up through the ranks to replace this ageing workforce.

There are certain underlying chronic conditions that present around this age group, including heart disease, diabetes and cancer. There are also health issues related to stress and occupational health and safety; pesticide exposure, skin cancers and hearing loss,” she said.

Mental health has been identified as a big issue in many communities, as well as coping with stress. “In my own dairy business I have learnt to focus on the things I can work on – not the high dollar or the weather, only the things I can influence,” Ms Dekker said.

The course illustrated that farmers, like other business operators cannot be expected to sustain their businesses without a healthy, happy workforce; a philosophy which needs to be encouraged in the agricultural sector. ‘Wellbeing’ and taking time out were demonstrated as being important factors in agribusiness planning.

## ‘Top Teeth’ for pre-schoolers



A kindergarten student receives treatment through the ‘Top Teeth Project’

Abbie Cameron from Western District Health Service’s (WDHS) Primary and Preventative Health Division, has been working with Mitchell Park and Church Hill kindergartens as part of the ‘Top Teeth’ project. The project aims to raise oral health awareness and increase access to dental services for pre-schoolers. Oral Health education sessions are provided to reinforce the importance of drinking water, brushing twice a day and having regular dental check-ups.

The WDHS dentist visited the kindergartens and screened for children that needed dental treatment. Having met the dentist, children and their families felt comfortable to access follow-up treatment at the WDHS dental clinic.

In total 46 children were screened, with 39% needing treatment. Over 65% of the children accessed the dental clinic via the program and 70% of these children were new clients to the clinic. Ninety percent remained engaged and completed their treatment, which is a very positive outcome.

“Our thanks to Perpetual Trustees for funding this valuable service. WDHS will continue to work with local kindergartens as a result of the success of this project,” said Abbie Cameron.

# Charity House on track

Over 150 tradies and businesses have chipped in to lend a hand on the Watermark Charity House project, as the building reaches lock up stage. With the framing and roofing complete, a generous team of bricklayers joined forces recently to finish the limestone exterior block work and a group of local plasterers also combined to transform the interior walls and ceilings.

The support for the project so far has been exceptional, with many local tradies donating their time and skills and some businesses providing a number of men over several days and even weeks to complete designated jobs on site.

“The support has been amazing – we can’t thank everyone enough for their efforts and the contributions of not only construction materials, but fixtures, food for the workers and many other items from local businesses and companies further afield,” Charity House Committee Chair Hugh Macdonald said.

“We’ve still got a fair way to go and our main focus in the next couple of months will be fitting out the interior, so we’ll be looking for assistance from carpet layers, tilers, painters, cabinetmakers and a whole range of other trades to keep the momentum going.

At the same time we’ll be pushing on with the landscaping so that the garden is as impressive as the house itself on auction day,” Mr Macdonald said.

Lending a hand has led to permanent employment for one young local, who spent several days on site as part of Westvic Staffing Solutions Work Experience Program. Jamal Broadwood has taken up a position at Walkers Frames and Trusses, after builder Peter Smith and Project Manager Rod Papworth were impressed by his work ethic and enthusiasm on site.

“It’s a great opportunity for volunteers with an interest in working in the building industry to get some experience and potentially some work out of it.

I was really pleased to be able to offer the job to Jamal after



Putting in a fantastic team effort from AA & KA Jones Builders were Trent Riddle, Nick Sherlock and Kedar Giles, pictured with Charity House Co-Project Manager, Rod Papworth

seeing how well he worked on site,” Charity House Co-Project Manager and Manager of Walkers Frames and Trusses, Rod Papworth said.

When finished early next year, the Charity House will be auctioned to raise funds for the upgrade of equipment in the Hamilton Base Hospital Emergency, ICU and Theatre units. A surgical tower for Operating Theatre 2 is the first piece of equipment to be confirmed for purchase with the funds raised from the sale.

The new tower will enhance capacity and access to laparoscopic and keyhole surgical procedures, that can currently only be carried out in Theatre 1, which was overhauled and digitised with funds raised at the very successful 2010 Top of The Town Charity Ball.

The further expansion of the digital theatre system into Theatre 2 will provide specialist clinical staff with state of the art equipment to provide high definition imagery and be a further draw card to attract specialist medical and nursing staff to the region.

## The Watermark Charity House Committee & WDHS thank the following individuals and businesses for their support:

2 Blues	Carter’s Transport	Grampians Mini Diggers	Nathan Manley Plumbing	Steel & Tippett Building
AA & KA Jones Builders	CFA	Grangeburn Office & IT	Steven Natrass	Designers
ACE Radio	Coates Hire	Hamilton Bobcat & Backhoe	Neville Groves Plumber &	Stramit Building Products
Active Electrical Distributors	Laird Colliton	Service	Gasfitter	Stratmann & Co Lawyers
Aldi	Comfort Inn Botanical	Hamilton Bobcat Contracting	Nicholson Construction	Tapper Builders
All About Fencing	Country French Hot Bread	Hamilton District Skills Centre	Nigel Fry Plumbing	Robert Templeton
Allan Myers	Cowland Electrical	Hamilton Farm Supplies	Noel’s Machinery	The Commercial Hotel
Allsons Transport	Craig Collins Building	Hamilton Hire	Norm Kenny Contracting	The Roxburgh
Alan Ames	Craig Sigley Bricklaying	Hamilton Rotary Club Inc	Service	Walker Earthworks
AWM Electrical & Data	Creek Electrical	Hamilton Spectator	Parfrey Plumbing Pty Ltd	Walkers Engineering
Suppliers	Dale Hutchins	Hamilton Steel	Paslode	Walkers Frames & Trusses staff
Bakers Delight	Damien Vaughan Joinery	Hammonds Paints	Permewans Home Hardware	Wannon Security
Baltica Blue Projects & Design	David Rowe Sign Design	Geoff Handbury AO	Peter Graham Plumbing	Wannon Water
Bandicoot Bobcats	DB’s Timeless Stonework	Hanson	Phillips & Keen Bricklayers	Warrnambool Timber
Barry Raymond Plumbing	DK & TN Dark Bobcat Hire	Kevin Harris	Plastamasta Knauf Hamilton	Industries
DW & SM Bensch	Donehue Builders	Tremayne Hayes	Portland Aluminium & Glass	Warrnambool Window Systems
BJ & SK Warburton	RD & BR Duncan	Haymes Paint	David & Sally Powling	Wayne Rhook
Bluescope Distribution Ballarat	Eco Pure Waste Management	Gerald Hicks	R&E Scott	Western Van Lines
Bluescope Distribution Portland	Elders Insurance	Iluka Resources	Ray White Staircases	Westvic Staffing Solutions
BM & SJ Kamp Concreting	ERA Nurseries	Ivory Print	Reece Plumbing	Wilsmore Nelson Group
Bob Bray	Finchett’s Plumbing	James Hardie	Don Riddle	WR & AL Steele
Boral	Fitzsimmons Concreting	Just Lift	Roger Smith	
Boundary Metals	Fletcher Insulation	Kerr & Co	Rural Steel	
Brayley & Hayes	Jim & Brenda Fletcher	Landscape Creations	Russell Anderson Plumbing	
Browns TV Antenna Service	Fox Refrigeration	Lawrence & Hanson	Schultz Concreting	
Bruhn Limestone	Andrew Gellert	LK Earthmovers	Selkirk Bricks	
C&J Engineering Supplies	GI & JM Frost	Low Consulting	State Emergency Service (SES)	
Carolyn & Craig Collins	Gorrie & Slater Pty Ltd	Max Murray Builder Pty Ltd	Southern Grampians Shire	
Carter Holt Harvey	GR & RA Earll Builders	MITek	Council	



WATERMARK  
CHARITY HOUSE™

# Employee of the Month



April – Denise Munro  
Ward Clerk, the Grange Residential  
Aged Care Facility



May – Eileen Robertson  
Personal Services Assistant, Surgical Unit



June – Alexandra Augustinus  
Graduate Nurse



June – Janine Enright  
HARP Chronic Care Co-ordinator



July – Mark Stevenson  
Infection Control Manager



August – Ruth Ikobe  
Nurse Unit Manager, Surgical Unit



September – Jeanette Membrey  
Transfusion Trainer

## Ninth Gold Medal for Western District Health Service



*Western District Health Service (WDHS) was presented with its ninth gold award in 11 years at the 2013 Australasian Reporting Awards (ARA) Presentation Dinner in June.*

WDHS Community Liaison Manager, Lachy Patterson accepted the Health Service's Gold Award for its 2012 Annual Report

# Charlie Watt Volunteer of the Month



**Milton Thomas** – Hamilton Community Transport Volunteer Driver

*Volunteer of the Month for April*



**Muriel Bailey** – Hospital Opportunity Shop Volunteer

*Volunteer of the Month for May*



**Trevor Rentsch** – Peshurst Hospital Door Knock Appeal Volunteer

*Volunteer of the Month for June*



**Roma Tully** – Hamilton Base Hospital Auxiliary and Aged Care Volunteer

*Volunteer of the Month for July*



**Tony Auden** – Peshurst Campus Volunteer Gardener

*Volunteer of the Month for August*



**Marie Kinnane** – Coleraine Campus Aged Care Volunteer

*Volunteer of the Month for September*

## Hospital Op Shop wins Members of Parliament Volunteer Award



L-R Guest speaker and Ararat volunteering legend Russell Rachinger, with South West Community Transport Manager Becky Morton, Op Shop Volunteers Muriel Bailey & Julie Waldron and Federal Member for Wannan, Dan Tehan.

During August the volunteers who run the Western District Health Service (WDHS) Hospital Opportunity Shop received well deserved recognition for their outstanding work. The team was

awarded the prestigious Group Volunteer Award for 2013 at the Members of Parliament Volunteer Awards, held in Ararat and hosted by Federal Member for Wannan, Dan Tehan MP.

The shop's volunteers were nominated by WDHS Volunteer Co-ordinator, Jeanette Ryan, who explained why they were so deserving of the award.

"The Op Shop has been raising money for WDHS for the past 75 years. The volunteers not only sell used goods but are required to unpack, sort, wash and iron stacks of clothing and household goods donated by the public.

Since the Op Shop commenced trading in December 1938, this hard working and dedicated team of volunteers have raised just under \$500,000. This is an extraordinary amount to be raised solely by volunteers - particularly given many of the items for sale in the shop are priced as low as 50c. Their contribution is a huge benefit to the community because all funds raised go towards the purchase of vital medical equipment for the Hamilton Base Hospital," she said.

The shop, located in Brown Street Hamilton, is operated by a relatively small team of 19 volunteers, Monday to Friday from 10:00am to 4:00pm, equating to 450 volunteer hours per month.



Grange Aged Residential Care resident Frances Burgess enjoys the company of Ollie the snake during Jamie and Kim's Mobile Zoo visit.

## Grange has some very special visitors

Residents of Western District Health Service (WDHS), Grange Aged Residential Care Facility had some very special visitors when Jamie and Kim's Mobile Zoo visited from Ararat.

The residents were treated to a wonderful interactive display of snakes, kangaroos, tree frogs, lizards, turtles, bettongs and a dingo. A real crowd pleaser was Tahni the wombat, who stole the hearts of quite a few staff and residents.

As part of the visit residents were able to pat, and for those brave enough, even hold the animals, including a seven foot Black Headed Python named Ollie.

Carol Holmes, Lifestyle Co-ordinator at the Grange was delighted by the turn out of residents to see the animals.

"Experiences like this are so important for our residents, particularly those who are not ambulate. Many of them had never seen a bettong and certainly never touched a snake. It was wonderful to see the look on their faces as each different animal was introduced to them," she said.

# New Staff



## Steve Laidlaw – Community Liaison Manager

During September Steve Laidlaw was appointed the new Community Liaison Manager at WDHS. Steve holds a Bachelor of Laws and has had a diverse career working in the region. Having been raised locally on a farm, he has worked in the agricultural and forestry industries and practised law. More recently his corporate legal administration and consultancy roles have involved governance and community consultation work, which has led to appointments on various committees of management.



## Jemma Blakeney – Lifestyle & Leisure Co-ordinator, Penshurst Campus

Jemma Blakeney holds a Certificate IV in Lifestyle and Health and has been appointed as a Lifestyle Coordinator at Penshurst District Health Service. Jemma gained experience as a Personal Care Assistant and as a Lifestyle Coordinator in a dementia unit in Melbourne before joining WDHS.



## Georgia Gutjahr – Registered Nurse

Georgia Gutjahr has relocated from Melbourne and is employed at the Merino Community Health Centre as a Community Nurse. Georgia holds a Registered Nurse Division 1 qualification and has gained her work experience at metropolitan medical clinics in Melbourne.



## Danielle Creek – Dietician

Danielle recently returned to her home town, Hamilton to join WDHS as a dietician. Danielle holds a Bachelor of Health Science (Nutrition & Dietetics) and was previously employed by Central Gippsland Health Service in a mixed caseload role, where she also completed a qualification in clinical education. Danielle has worked across diverse areas including general medical, surgical, intensive care wards, paediatrics, oncology and dialysis, outpatient clinics, aged care and has conducted supermarket tours for community groups and supervised dietetic students.



## Carolyn Roe – Nurse Unit Manager, Grange Residential Aged Care Facility

Carolyn Roe has been appointed the new Manager at the Grange Residential Aged Care Facility. Carolyn's qualifications include a Bachelor of Nursing, Diploma of Nursing Science, Diploma Social Science Counselling, Advanced Diploma OH&S, and Certificates IV in Frontline Management and Workplace Assessment & Training. Carolyn has had a diverse career in South Australia where she has worked in a similar role in aged care, was a project manager and local educator with the Royal District Nursing Service (SA) and has been a state manager for a community organisation.

## Annual WDHS Christmas Appeal

I would like my donation to go towards:

- An operating drill for neurosurgery at an estimated cost of \$35,000
- Coleraine Campus
- Penshurst Campus

Donation amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- Cheque (make cheques payable to Western District Health Service)
- Visa  Mastercard

Card No.  CCV

Expiry date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward your donation to:

Community Liaison Department, Western District Health Service  
PO Box 283  
Hamilton 3300

**ALL DONATIONS OVER \$2 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE**

