



# mecwacare

A Diamond Jubilee History



“

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

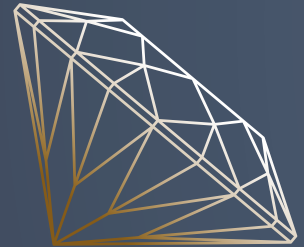
– Margaret Mead (1901-1978)

---

Used with permission

# mecwacare

A Diamond Jubilee History



Norman Marshall and  
Jo Dougherty



# Acknowledgements

mecwacare is grateful to the following people for their generous contribution to the 60th anniversary edition of this book:

Michele Lewis, Robin Syme AM, Linda Smart, Sue McInnes and Jo Dougherty.

We would also like to acknowledge those people who contributed to the 50th edition:

Michele Lewis, Robin Syme AM, Carolyn Burness, Judith Congalton, Sandra Hayes, Sue McInnes, Tony Pajvancic, Simon Price OAM, Janeen Smart, Elpi Vagas, Joy Waller-Ogden and Anne Wright.

And to those generous people who provided so much advice and support with the original 40th anniversary edition of this book:

Ted Armstrong, John Baldwin, Mary Barry, Leon Bates, Norma Bates, Nan Black, Haydn Blennerhassett, Anne Cornish, Doreen Crofts, Karin Dixon, Barry Fenton, Di Foster, Lesley Hay, Audrey Healy, Bert Healy, Nancy Hogan, Ian Jeffrey, Edith McCallum, Eric McGee, Graham McKern, Jan Martin, John Moline, Mary Moline, Nick Nikolitsis, Judith Oliver, Robin Pike, Nan Power, John Quine, Shirley Ramsay, Pat Reeve, Sheila Rateau, Jill Randall, Beth Rose, Helen Scott, Joe St Ellen, Ken Thompson, Peter Toynton, Joy Waller-Ogden and Leanne Wright.

The organisation would also like to thank the many individuals and organisations who support mecwacare through volunteering their valuable time, financial donations, gifts in kind and pro bono services. mecwacare relies on their generosity to keep providing the best care and services to its residents, clients and participants, and is eternally grateful to all its supporters.

And lastly, but by no means least, to the 1,700 dedicated staff and 450 tireless volunteers who strive every day to provide high-quality, safe and respectful care to 15,000 residents, clients and participants.

## About the authors

**Norman Marshall** was born in 1933, educated at Melbourne Grammar School and graduated with a Master of Arts (Melb) degree. During his career as a secondary school teacher, he became a part-time author writing histories for The Yooralla Hospital School for Handicapped Children, St George's Hospital, Kew; the Victorian Branch of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Australia, the accounting firm Touche Ross Australia and the Melbourne School of Nursing. While writing *MECWA Community Care – A History* in 1988, Norman delivered meals on wheels in Prahran as a mecwacare volunteer. Norman passed away in 2017 and is survived by his wife Sally, four children and nine grandchildren.

**Jo Dougherty** was born in Adelaide, South Australia. She completed her journalism cadetship at the Wimmera Mail-Times in Horsham, Victoria, which set her up for a successful career as a sports and news journalist for Australian Associated Press in Sydney and Melbourne, including covering the Sydney Olympic Games. Jo later returned to her newspaper roots as the editor of two papers in WA's Pilbara Region followed by Bundaberg, Queensland. After almost two decades in the media industry, she switched to the PR field where she was Public Affairs Manager for Bundaberg Hospital and the Communications Director at Eastern Health in Melbourne before joining mecwacare as the Senior Manager of Marketing, Communications and Fundraising. Jo is married to Mark and they have one daughter, Lara.

# Contents

iv	Our Purpose, Vision and Values
v	Foreword by Robin Syme AM
vi	Introduction
01	Chapter 1: First Steps
14	Chapter 2: MECWA House
29	Chapter 3: The Day Care Centre and Nursing Home
38	Chapter 4: New Directions
45	Chapter 5: MECWA Cares for Melbourne
53	Chapter 6: The Growth Agenda
81	Board of Directors

## Appendices

83	Founding Members of the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee
84	First Report of the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee
85	The Women's Group
86	Executive Committees and Boards of Management since 1959
98	Life Governors
98	Chief Executives

---

## Copyright:

MECWA ABN 59 004 927 244 trading as *mecwacare*. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmuted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recorded or otherwise without the prior written consent of the Chief Executive of *mecwacare*.

First printed as "MECWA Community Care – A History" in 1998. National Library of Australia Cataloguing – in Publication Data Bib ID: 1523116. It was updated in 2009 as "*mecwacare* – A Jubilee History".

# | Our Purpose, Vision and Values

## Our Purpose

Maximise the quality of life for people who are aged and disabled in the Victorian community.

## Our Vision

Caring together, creating choice, respecting lives.

## Our Values

We value interactions and relationships that are:

Caring

Accountable

Respectful

Ethical

We demonstrate these values through:

- Supportive and compassionate care and services
- Responsible and professional behaviours
- Tolerant and thoughtful communications
- Honest and fair partnerships

### Author's note

Until the name changed in 2007, *mecwacare* was widely known in the general community as MECWA.

MECWA was originally an acronym for the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Appeal, launched in 1970 by the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee, to raise funds to build affordable housing for aged persons in Malvern. This committee was founded in 1959 by a small group of concerned citizens to run a council-built elderly citizens' centre next to the Malvern Library, together with a meals-on-wheels service in Malvern.

With the success of the appeal and the construction of MECWA House in Warner Street, Malvern, the committee restructured itself as a company in 1972 under the name Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Association, retaining the familiar MECWA name. In 2007, the MECWA Board decided to change the organisation's name to *mecwacare* to emphasise more accurately, its commitment to offering the highest standards of care.

For these reasons, although this book is entitled *mecwacare – A Diamond Jubilee History*, the name MECWA is used throughout from 1970 to 2007.



As a former Chairman of the Board, I have had the privilege of seeing first-hand the care, compassion and dedication of *mecwacare* staff and volunteers who are willing to do whatever they can to support vulnerable people in their community.

Standing proud as a not-for-profit, charitable organisation with a clear vision, mission and values, MECWA (as it was formerly known) has now grown well beyond its traditional home base in the City of Malvern. It has met the challenges of the continually changing political and economic landscape, seized its opportunities and thrived in good times and bad. After 60 years of providing care to the community, it is now an exceptional leader in the aged care and disability services sector.

MECWA changed its name to *mecwacare* in 2007 to reflect the organisation's core value – caring for the community. I am pleased to say that *mecwacare* has never wavered from this core value throughout my long association with the organisation.

In 2009, the late Mr Noel Miller, a great *mecwacare* supporter, wrote on the occasion of *mecwacare*'s 50th anniversary that the organisation "has the promise of going from strength to strength in the years ahead". Fast forward 10 years and that promise has been well and truly met. *mecwacare* has added eight new residential aged care facilities, significantly expanded its home care and disability services and retirement living options. It has increased community housing and added two more opportunity shops.

Notwithstanding this extraordinary expansion, *mecwacare*'s essential culture remains intact. From the Chief Executive and Leadership team to the 1,700 dedicated staff and 450 selfless volunteers, the people of *mecwacare* can be relied on in times of need. It takes a very special person to care for others and I had the privilege of meeting many inspiring *mecwacare* people during my time on the *mecwacare* Board. When like-minded people come together through a common cause, just as they did 60 years ago, the result is a team that thrives.

In recent years there has been a major shift in what consumers want and need from providers. There is no one size fits all and no one roadmap to navigate the journey. Care plans must be tailored to the individual to ensure they remain independent and live the way they want to live. *mecwacare* places a special focus on assisting people to remain present and active in their local community so that they retain their identity and dignity.

In 1959, *mecwacare* began as a group of volunteers concerned about the ageing citizens of Malvern. In 2019, it is maximising the quality of life for 15,000 people who are aged and living with a disability across Victoria. Its capacity to support others has evolved from a local concern into state-wide best-practice in aged and disability care.

*mecwacare* has a great history of helping people. It has shown extraordinary growth in its history to date and has a very exciting future. There are no limits on the growth prospects of a charitable organisation providing best practice in aged and disability care, with a genuine passion for caring ingrained in its people.

Put simply, *mecwacare* changes lives. I am very proud to be associated with this organisation with its uplifting history and exciting future.

Robin Syme AM

# Introduction



**mecwacare has been providing care to Victorians for 60 years. From humble beginnings as a small group of volunteers concerned about the citizens of Malvern to a Victoria-wide aged care and disability services provider, I think it gives our residents, clients, participants and their families great comfort knowing mecwacare has been around for such a long time. We are deeply grateful for the generous time and effort of all those involved in caring for the community since 1959.**

This book was originally written by Norman Marshall to commemorate mecwacare's 40th anniversary in 1999. Norman kindly updated and revised it on the occasion of our 50th anniversary in 2009 and Jo Dougherty has chronicled the organisation's progress over the past 10 years. We are very grateful to both Norman and Jo for their assistance.

In 1959, the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee was established to provide accommodation and care for vulnerable older people in the community. With the opening of an elderly citizens' centre in the south-east corner of the Malvern Cricket Ground, a meals-on-wheels service soon followed – meals were 30 pence. In 1964, mecwacare opened its first opportunity shop in Wattletree Road, Malvern, which is still there today. MECWA House, our first aged care facility, opened in Warner Street, Malvern in 1973.

Since then, mecwacare has moved from Malvern to all 31 local government areas in metropolitan Melbourne and across a substantial area of regional Victoria.

In the last decade alone, mecwacare has opened nine new residential aged care facilities, expanded home care services across Melbourne and

regional Victoria, enhanced our community-based activities, added two more opportunity shops (taking the total to five) and expanded community housing units in three locations.

This strong growth agenda ensures people have more choice when it comes to their care, particularly those who prefer support from a not-for-profit provider such as mecwacare. We operate in a rapidly-changing environment, where service responsibility has shifted from state to federal government and consumer-directed care is at the forefront. We have structured our services to respond effectively to these changes and will continue our preparedness for future changes and reforms.

As part of our Diamond Jubilee celebrations, mecwacare is delighted to open a new boutique residential aged care facility in Caulfield, aptly named Jubilee House. This centre will provide another quality aged care facility for people seeking first-class residential services.

On the following pages, you will read many stories of unwavering support, generosity and kindness demonstrated by Board members, staff, volunteers and friends, whether for several months, years or in some cases, decades. mecwacare is proudly a not-for-profit, values-driven organisation where the true spirit of community caring remains at the core of everything we do. mecwacare strives to balance clinical care and lifestyle choices and are continuously looking at ways to improve.

We are pleased to share this special occasion with you. On behalf of all of us at mecwacare, I hope you enjoy reading mecwacare – *A Diamond Jubilee History* and that it inspires you to continue supporting our work for many years to come.

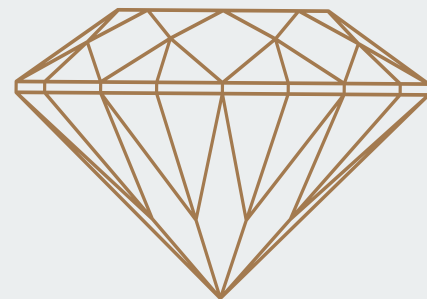
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele Lewis".

**Michele Lewis**  
Chief Executive



## Chapter 1:

# First Steps



**The first Saturday night dance for 1954 was coming to an end. Girls in ballerinas, young men in suits—many with their hair still neatly in place thanks to brylcream—waited for the band to play the last number. Minutes later, as the strains of ‘Goodnight Sweetheart’ died away, crowds of young people streamed through the exits of the Malvern Town Hall onto Glenferrie Road heading for tram or car to take them home.**

Since the Second World War the dances had been a wonderful money spinner for the local Returned Soldiers League (RSL) but this year they were being run by a group of Malvern City Councillors determined to divert the profits into a community project dear to their hearts. Their leader was Jack Jenkins who two years earlier had listened attentively to an innovative report by Town Clerk Dudley Lucas on the possibility of using council property for fundraising purposes. According to Lucas, over £39,000 had been raised between 1945 and 1952 by the City of Heidelberg from the proceeds of Town Hall dances and deposited in a Civic Fund earmarked for a variety of community projects such as youth centres and elderly citizens' welfare.

Writing about his proposal many years later Lucas stated: "... the report did not receive any enthusiasm in response from the majority of councillors who felt it would be taking on another responsibility. Only one (Cr Jack Jenkins) saw the possibilities and was keen to enter into such a venture." Determined not to let the matter lapse, Jenkins persuaded the Council in 1953 to terminate the letting of the Malvern Town Hall to the RSL after undertaking to conduct the dances himself.

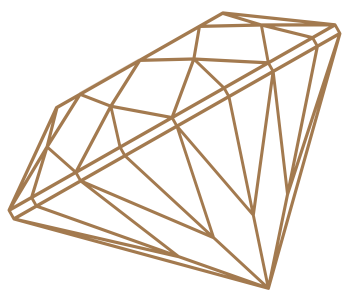
The Council agreed to the setting up of a City of Malvern Civic Fund to collect the monies raised by the dances. Although elderly citizens' welfare was not specifically mentioned as an object of the Fund's organising committee (of which Lucas was Secretary and Jenkins one of the four Council representatives), it was always an unstated first priority.<sup>1</sup>

During the full employment era of the 1950s, concerns for the welfare of the elderly loomed much larger in the eyes of a community not faced with the competing issue of youth unemployment.

In retrospect, Australia's elderly of the 1950s and 1960s had experienced, to say the least, more than their share of life's misfortunes. Born in the last decade of the 19th century, they had survived two world wars and the worst depression since their childhood days of the 1890s. As Robert Fitzgerald, former President of the Australian Council of Social Services, pointed out: "The 1950s and 1960s had their good points, but they were also decades of widespread poverty and disadvantage, particularly for Aboriginal people and older people... Charity, rather than rights, was the order of the day."<sup>2</sup>

In the midst of the Second World War, the Beveridge Report had come out in England advocating a much more active role for governments in assisting the needy in the community. In 1951 the Old Peoples Welfare Council was constituted in Victoria and began lobbying the State Government and local bodies to assist the setting up of elderly citizens' clubs and associated services, in particular meals-on-wheels.

By the mid 1950s, many of Melbourne's municipal councils were financially involved in supporting elderly citizens' clubs which were meeting places for social activities and a focus for services to the elderly, such as meals-on-meals. One of the earliest of these was the South Melbourne Elderly Citizens' Club which, three years after its formation, pioneered Australia's first meals-on-wheels service in 1952. The establishment of elderly citizens' clubs accelerated after 1955 following the decision of the Victorian government to subsidise their capital and current expenditure. Ewen Cameron, the Health Minister, noted that by June 30, 1959 there were 53 elderly citizens' clubs operating in Victoria, nine of which were providing meals-on-wheels services.



Typical of these was the Kew Elderly Citizens' Club established in 'Southesk' in 1956 after a Council-funded study of the needs of the elderly. In neighbouring Caulfield a meals-on-wheels service run by volunteers with Council assistance had commenced in 1957. In Canterbury meals-on wheels had commenced in 1956 from the Holeproof factory in Balwyn, followed three years later by the opening of a Senior Citizens' Club in Rochester Road.

The absence of corresponding facilities in Malvern is all the more surprising in the light of statistics quoted by Bertram Hutchinson in his survey of the needs of the elderly in Victoria published in 1954. Admittedly, out of date – the figures were based on the 1947 Commonwealth census, and distorted somewhat by the disproportionately high number of nursing homes in Malvern. They nevertheless showed that Malvern had the highest percentage of people (11.8%) over 65 in Melbourne Local Government areas.<sup>3</sup> The figure for Malvern women was 14.1%, the highest for any group over 65.

The Council dances, run by Jenkins assisted by a few fellow councillors and their wives, started in January 1954 and were an instant financial success, £559 being raised in the first two months. Buoyed by these figures, Jenkins and Lucas through the medium of the Civic Fund, began badgering the Council to set aside land for an elderly citizen's centre. To bolster their case they drew up a constitution for a "Malvern Elderly Citizens' Association". Their pressure bore fruit in November 1954 when Council agreed to set aside the southeast corner of the Malvern Cricket Ground for an elderly citizens' centre.

With over £6,000 raised by mid-1955, the dances were turning out to be a financial bonanza. Ironically, MECWA's first steps were taken by bodgies and widgies (a fashion trend in the 1950s) dancing and jiving to the strains of Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag". The following year, however, disaster struck. According to Lucas: "A stupid lad trying to make himself a big shot accosted another young fellow in the entrance to the hall balcony, culminating in a knife stab in the fellow's leg."

The adverse publicity precipitated a drastic fall in attendances resulting in the closure of the dance in September 1956. By this time, however the Civic Fund had benefitted to the tune of nearly £10,000. With adequate funds in hand, the Civic Fund at last received Council approval in July 1957 to proceed with the construction of an Elderly Citizens' Centre. After the usual delays over assessing various tenders, the Civic Fund on March 21, 1958 accepted a revised tender from Simmie & Co (who also built the Malvern Library) for £8,123.<sup>4</sup> Hidden away in the City of Stonnington archives is the following sad little letter, written on June 5, 1958 by a Mrs H.G. Holloway living in Barwon Heads.

“

*Quite recently I heard a home for aged was to be built in Malvern. Could you give me particulars or direct me to whom I should apply. I am down here away from friends and relatives with little transport. I dearly love the city and would be most appreciative if you could help me.*

—

Lucas' reply was a reminder of how far Malvern was lagging behind its neighbours in caring for the elderly.

“

*I have to advise that the Elderly Citizens' Centre, at present under construction in Malvern, is designed as a meeting place for Elderly People during the day-time. It is not anticipated that any hostel or sleeping quarters will be provided.*

—

While the elderly citizens' centre referred to in Lucas's letter brought Malvern into line with its neighbours, it owed little to the Council which was pushed into the project by its public spirited Town Clerk and a small group of councillors determined the Council should not shirk its responsibilities to the elderly.



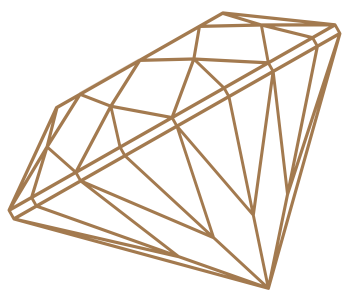
Looking east down High Street from the Malvern Town Hall in the early 1960s. The recently constructed Elderly Citizens' Centre fronts onto the cricket oval with cars parked outside ready to deliver meals-on-wheels.

With construction underway Lucas turned his attention to mobilising community support for running the centre on its completion. In October 1958 he wrote to all the churches and service organisations inviting them to send delegates to a meeting on November 13, chaired by the Mayor Cr Hayes, to “form an Association to take over the management of the Elderly Citizen’s Centre at present being built in the Malvern Cricket Ground”. Unfortunately, records of this important meeting have not survived apart from scattered references to it being well attended and the appointment of a Provisional Committee<sup>5</sup> to draw up a constitution for the management of the new centre.

The speed with which the constitution was drawn up – it was ready before Christmas for approval by the Hospitals and Charities Commission – suggests that it was largely the work of Dudley Lucas.<sup>6</sup> This impression is reinforced by Lucas’ later statement that he insisted on a clause restricting each organisation to a maximum of four delegates on the general committee to avoid stacking. Six years later when Nunawading was seeking advice on constituting their own Club, Lucas wrote advising “not on any account make membership of the General Committee open to anyone who wishes to join, as you will find in a short time that the elderly citizens themselves, have swamped the Committee and troubles will ensue.” The following February the constitution was ratified by a less well attended meeting of the November delegates by which time the Centre had been completed.

The constitution created the Malvern Elderly Citizens’ Welfare Committee (the word Association not replacing Committee until the change to a company limited by guarantee in 1972) and comprised delegates from local churches and service organisations. The stated constitutional objectives were sufficiently wide ranging to give ample scope to an energetic Committee. In addition to “establishing and maintaining a club or clubs”, the Committee was empowered to “establish and maintain a meals-on-wheels service”, “to organise a visiting service”, and lastly “to establish and maintain hostels for the accommodation and care of elderly or elderly-infirm people”. Executive power was vested in an Executive Committee of 12 comprising four Council nominees and the remainder elected by the Welfare Committee.

The constitution settled and the club house finished, all that remained was for Lucas to call the first meeting of the Welfare Committee. Accordingly on July 3 he sent a copy of the constitution to the churches and service organisations accompanied by a letter requesting them to appoint delegates to the Committee. The letter referred to the role of the Ladies Auxiliary “in the manning and running of the Senior Citizen’s Club” with a request for names of “ladies of your organisation ... willing to assist at the Senior Citizens’ Centre.”



The inaugural meeting finally took place on November 5, 1959 by which time the Centre had lain idle for over nine months apart from workmen coming back to fix some minor cracks in the building. Of the 62 people attending the meeting in the Lecture Room of the Malvern Town Hall, 33 were delegates from local church bodies. In fact, the church influence was probably much higher than the figures indicated because many of the delegates from non-church organisations were more than likely regular church goers. For example, Mary Moline, who represented the Malvern branch of the Children's Hospital Auxiliary, was a communicant of St George's Church, Glenferrie Road.

The most urgent task facing the meeting was the election of an Executive Committee to get on with the job of opening the Centre as quickly as possible before Christmas. Just as urgent was the need to convene a meeting of the Ladies Auxiliary. This task was entrusted to the Mayor's wife, Mrs E.V. Johnson, thus starting the tradition of Malvern Mayoresses taking on the presidency of the Ladies Auxiliary. The Auxiliary duly met on November 25 and settled on December 9 as the date for the official opening of the Centre.

Meantime the Executive Committee had held its first meeting on November 10 in the new Club rooms at which the first office bearers were elected<sup>7</sup> and a club membership fee of 2/6 pence per annum settled on. The Centre was officially opened by Cr John Johnson who, according to Lucas, handed over a Council cheque for £250 with the comment: "Here is a cheque from the Council. It is no good approaching it for more money, you won't get it". The Council, according to Lucas, was lukewarm about the project, many of the older Councillors taking the view that "we had to provide for ourselves and so should they". In the years ahead the Committee was to play a crucial role in educating public opinion and the Council about community responsibilities towards its elderly citizens.

Among those present on December 9 was a reporter from the *Malvern Advertiser* who described the new premises in these glowing terms:

“

*The building has many features new to structures of this nature. The large club room with its plate glass windows overlooking the Malvern Cricket Ground gives the room an air of even more spaciousness and on those nice sunny days a real "out-of-doors" feeling.*

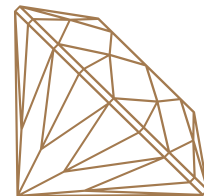
*At the eastern end is a feature wall papered with the design of the 1900s and "bicycle built for two" motif. The lighting is modern and well thought out, whilst the warmth for the colder periods of the year is obtained from under floor heating units thermostatically controlled from within the room. The room is furnished with laminex topped tables and comfortable steel framed chairs.*

*The kitchen is designed to cater for the needs of the Centre and is equipped with an electric stove, refrigerator, urn, etc.*

In the months ahead the Welfare Committee, which had no part in the design of the building, formed a more jaundiced view of the Centre which, apart from being unduly cramped for popular activities such as indoor bowls, required expensive alterations to cope with services such as meals-on-wheels.

Nonetheless, December 16, the first day the Club rooms were opened to its members, was noted as "a huge success" with 120 people in attendance. A week later the Ladies Auxiliary organised a Christmas Party, the first of many in the years ahead. The original intention was for the Centre to open one day a week until March, but such was its popularity, that by February the rooms were open twice a week on Wednesday and Thursday and by April every weekday. By then club membership had grown to 63.





Volunteers from the Ladies Auxiliary were responsible for the day-to-day running of the Centre. They cooked midday meals (price 2/6 pence) and were available to assist members in any way they could. The club members elected their own Social Committee which organised activities like crazy whist and euchre card nights, visiting speakers and bus outings. A piano was donated by Councillor Morgan.

The minimum age limit for membership was set at 60 years and a move to waive the residency requirement in the constitution to admit people living outside Malvern as associate members was defeated on the grounds that “over 12% of the population is over 60” and Malvern had ‘higher rates than any other district’.

With club membership up to 110 by May 1960 it was found that a bigger stove was needed to cook the popular midday meals on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Money was needed for more crockery, towels, additional chairs (50 secondhand chairs were bought from the

Department of Supply for 15 shillings each), and bookshelves to equip the new Centre.

More volunteers were needed—a recurring theme in the years ahead. Not for the first time the Committee learnt that each step forward was accompanied by worrying financial implications.

From its inception, Committee members like Mary Moline and Vera Strachan, the Council social worker, saw the Malvern Centre as just a first step assisting Malvern’s elderly. As a voluntary driver for the Red Cross Mary Moline had seen for herself the value of meals-on-wheels when the Red Cross introduced this service in South Melbourne. Since its formation in 1951, the Old Peoples Welfare Council of Victoria had been a strong advocate of the establishment of Elderly Citizens’ Clubs from which radiated a variety of services for the elderly. Booklets were published on how to set up Elderly Citizens’ Clubs, organise meals-on-wheels, and establish a system of “Friendly Visiting” for the lonely elderly or “shut ins” as they were known.



LEFT: Committee Member Mary Moline.

RIGHT: Vice-Regal visit to the Malvern Elderly Citizens’ Centre on January 30, 1964. Fourth from the right is Sir Rohan Delacombe talking to May Armstrong (holding bag), President of the Ladies Auxiliary. On the right is Sir Giles Chippendall, President of the Old People’s Welfare Council (Victoria). Stacked in the foreground are the meals-on-wheels units.



Sir Rohan Delacombe lunching at the Malvern Centre after viewing the meals-on-wheels operation. Left to right: (clockwise around the table): Sir Giles Chippendall, Mrs. E.V. Johnson (Malvern's Lady Mayoress), Sir Rohan Delacombe, Mayor E (Ernie) Johnson, Lady Delacombe, May Armstrong (end of table), Mrs Martin (Secretary of the Elderly Citizens' Social Club), Mr Clarke (President of the Social Club), Mrs Prior (Treasurer of the Social Club), Mr Cornish (Vice-President of the Social Club).

As early as its second meeting, the Executive Committee invited Beryl Yeoman<sup>8</sup> from the Health Department, to give information on services which could grow from the establishment of the Centre. After enumerating services such as meals-on-wheels, foot clinics, visiting in the home, and handcraft, she outlined the procedure for obtaining a State government subsidy equal to four fifths of their operating costs which could include a meals-on-wheels service.

In June 1960, the decision was taken to start a meals-on-wheels service. A modest start was made in July with the first meals being delivered by Mary Moline and Vera Strachan, the latter also screening applicants for meals-on-wheels recommendations from doctors, district nurses or clergymen. There was no means test, but applicants had to be over 60 years of age and pay 2/6 pence for the meal.

The food was prepared and cooked by volunteers from the Ladies Auxiliary. Each meal of meat, vegetables and sweets was transferred into three triangular shaped containers sitting in one of five bowls stacked one on top of each other in an aluminium insulated food unit, not unlike a large bucket. The unit was filled with hot water in the morning in order to keep meals hot. Each unit and its components cost about £26 and was purchased from an Abbotsford firm, the Crusader Plate Company, whose equipment was widely used around Melbourne.

Soup, often provided in other municipalities and ladled out of a separate container, was considered unnecessary as it was considered easy for recipients to prepare.

The three food containers were left with the recipient and collected the next day by the volunteer with a fresh meal. The used containers were later laboriously cleaned by volunteers at the Centre. The service tapped into a long felt need. By December two drivers were delivering meals three times a week using four Crusader units. Within six months they were delivered daily.

As the service expanded, costs rose alarmingly. To assist the hard-pressed volunteers, a part-time cook had been employed in September 1960 whose duties became full time by the new year. Although donations covered the cost of three additional Crusader units, there seemed to be an endless list of things money had to be spent on such as a new Hot Box for the midday meals, a new fan, additional blinds for the kitchen, and so on. The most pressing need—a new pantry was financed by a grant of £1,700 from the Civic Fund. More ominously, as the year came to an end, it was becoming apparent that a full-time person would have to be appointed to coordinate the work of the volunteers and establish proper records to assist the process of screening applicants for assistance.





Keith Jeffrey.



Left to right: Ted Armstrong (Mayor of Malvern, 1961-1963), May Armstrong, and Dudley Lucas at a Mayoral function.

In March 1962 the Welfare Committee sponsored a Conference to consider ways in which the Centre could expand its services. Guest speakers were invited from the Red Cross, the Victorian Employers Federation, the Peter MacCallum Institute and the Old People's Welfare Council. Papers on four topics: friendly visiting, handcrafts and hobbies, an information and employment bureau, and housing, prepared in advance by Committee volunteers, were submitted for detailed discussion.

Predictably, there was widespread agreement on the need to expand services, the only exception being the discussion group on housing. Remarkably, it reported that "no problem really exists", apart from temporary housing for "those just out of hospital, and for those undergoing psychiatric treatment". "Letters were sent to every church in Malvern" and "not one reply indicated that they really wanted to be upset with the housing problem". In discussion, however, less complacent views were voiced on this issue which was to loom so largely in the years ahead.

Confusingly, the group concluded: "There is no hope of support from the Council, as the problem is too big." The immediate outcome of the Conference was to stiffen the Executive Committee's resolve to appoint a full-time paid supervisor at the Centre. Summing up, Keith Jeffrey, pointed out that all speakers were agreed on the need for someone to take full-time responsibility for supervising the Centre's expanding activities. Since July 1, 1960 the Centre had been receiving an annual State government maintenance subsidy of £800 (equal to four fifths of net operating costs) paid through the Malvern

Council. As this was the maximum entitlement, the Committee decided to approach the Council for a special grant to cover the supervisor's salary. The only alternative was to increase the price of meals-on-wheels, a course no one was prepared to accept.

After Council had rebuffed a first approach made before the Conference, the Welfare Committee, led by Keith Jeffrey, resolved to take sterner action. A petition was drawn up and was forwarded with an impressive number of signatures to the Council. In November the petition bore fruit with the Council agreeing to pay a grant of £800 per annum towards the cost of a supervisor.

The first appointee, Mrs Pritchard, took up her duties on February 11, 1963 on a salary of £700 per annum and proved an immediate success notwithstanding the resignation of the cook who, according to the minuted Ladies Auxiliary report, was "unable to accept supervision". Two months later the Ladies Auxiliary was immeasurably strengthened when May Armstrong, wife of Malvern's Mayor, Ted Armstrong, was elected President on the retirement of Mrs Brenton. For the next 22 years, May Armstrong made an unforgettable contribution to the expansion of MECWA's services to Malvern's elderly.<sup>9</sup>

The funding issue underlined the importance of obtaining, in the words of Mary Moline<sup>10</sup>, 'a large and steady flow of money', to expand the range of services to Malvern's elderly. The Welfare Committee realised it could no longer lead a hand-to-mouth existence relying on jumble sales, fashion parades, bequests, and the generosity of service organisations including Malvern Rotary.



LEFT: Malvern Opportunity Shop soon after opening in 1964.



RIGHT: Malvern Opportunity Shop volunteers in 1998 when the shop's profit reached \$1 million since commencement. Left to right: Nita Fone, Joy Graham, Margaret Robertson, Olive Bricknell, Alwyn Eilenberg, Edna Shands and Jean Drummond.

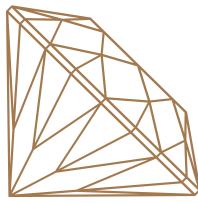
Keith Jeffrey probably belongs the credit for hitting on the idea of an opportunity shop. Owner of a successful book shop in Glenferrie Road which still operates today, and a member of both the Malvern Traders Association and Rotary, he first learnt of the existence of a possible site early in 1962. The site in question was an old shop used for storage at 136 Wattleree Road on the west corner of the newly completed car park just up from Glenferrie Road. The owner had let it fall into such a state of disrepair that it was marked down for demolition by the Council. Complicated negotiations were entered into between the Council, Mrs Minnie Dick (the owner), and the Committee as a result of which Mrs Dick agreed to a lease commencing on April 1, 1964 under which, in return for the payment of a peppercorn rent of £5 a week, MECWA undertook to keep the premises in good order and not to close for longer than two weeks at any time.

The shop was in a shocking state with practically no roof, broken windows, an earth floor, no electricity or water, and was full of junk. The restoration work was taken in hand by Ted Armstrong, an experienced builder, who organised a team of tradesmen, many of whom were Malvern Rotary members<sup>11</sup>, to donate their services at cost. Interior fittings were purchased second hand, carted and stored by J. Wilson. A car raffle organised by Rotary raised £300 to assist paying the final bill which came in at £670—well under the original quote of £1,200.

The shop was opened for business on May 14, 1964 staffed by a committee organised a year earlier by Mary Moline before legal delays postponed gaining possession of the premises. In 1969 extensive improvements costing \$1,140 were made by possible by the generosity of Cr Bert Healy who undertook to carry out the work at cost.

The shop was an immediate success, raising £1,000 in its first three-and-a-half months of operations—a figure closely resembling the proceeds of Jack Jenkins' dances a decade earlier. By 1967 annual gross takings had topped \$10,000, over 90% of which was profit thanks to voluntary labour. Each month, the Executive Committee received a financial statement from the Shop together with a cheque for all monies received less running expenses. The Shop owed much to the sense of common purpose engendered by its first President Mary Moline.

A Shop Committee, mainly volunteer helpers, met each month enabling members to discuss any matter which they considered important. As the volunteers only got to know those helpers who came on their rostered day, it was decided early on to close the shop on a special day once a year so that all the volunteers could meet and socialise. In the early years these gatherings took the form of picnics at the Mt Martha home of Mrs A. Cullen who succeeded Mary Moline as President of the Shop Committee.



The dedication of the volunteers, some of whom were still serving 30 years later, has been remarkable. One volunteer, Mrs Munro, despite moving to Croydon, still came in on Tuesdays to assist in the shop, often returning home by train with clothes for washing and mending. Margaret Watson, who took over from Del Paget the job of mending jewellery, for over 35 years has rethreaded beads and cannibalised leftover jewellery to design new pieces. "Many of our helpers in those days", Mary Moline recalls, "more or less drifted into helping out. They would come into the shop for a look, get chatting, and decide to give a hand. In those days most ladies brought their aprons – they were necessary!

"At this time often, when quality goods came in, good merchandise went out far too cheaply, not infrequently to dealers. Half a dozen amber beads, 10 jet beads and a broken crystal necklace could be made into a very attractive necklace, for instance, and I have actually seen one I made up for MECWA in Catanach's, an established Melbourne jewellers... All the ladies gave of their best, but some who stick in the memory are ... the most charming Mrs Coffey, Mrs Vivash who washed and ironed all the linen and did the windows so artistically, Mrs Niven and her energy, and Mrs Wilson who, like me, was more of an outworker (who) knitted so beautifully. "Margaret Watson also raised money by restringing necklaces for MECWA ladies, one of whom after a particularly exacting job, donated five cents!"

Maximum value was extracted from the medley of merchandise deposited each day in the crowded back of the shop. Garments not fit for resale were sold as rag waste but not before their buttons had been stripped off for recarding. Metal goods beyond repair were sold as metal scrap. Damaged electrical goods were restored to working order by Cr Ernie Johnson, owner of Malvern Appliance Centre. Laundry bills were kept to a minimum by volunteers putting clothes through their own washing machines at home. Petty theft and pilfering were constant problems,

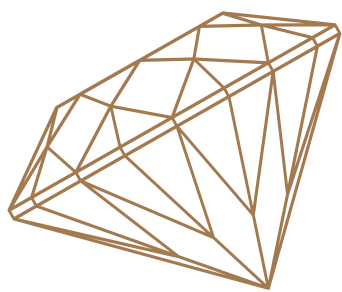
and one year a major burglary occurred just in time to ruin the shop's annual Antiques Week. If occasional errors were made such as inadvertently selling an \$80 jade and amber bracelet for \$8, the shop nonetheless put the Committee's finances for the first time on a sound footing and paved the way for the big changes in the 1970s.

The expansion of the meals-on-wheels service was the Welfare Committee's most notable achievement in the 1960s. For the year ending 30 September 1963, the first year for which precise figures are available, an average of 230 meals were delivered weekly. Over the next six years the numbers rose inexorably: 280 in 1964, 394 in 1965, 417 in 1966, 420 in 1967, 500 in 1968, and 555 in 1969.

The service owed everything to the Ladies Auxiliary and in particular its hard working committee of people like Lorna Jack, May Armstrong, and Dorothy Williams. Preparing the meals-on-wheels rosters was the responsibility of Dorothy Williams who had to ensure there were sufficient drivers for the seven routes or rounds into which Malvern was divided by 1966. As many of the volunteers drove for only one day a fortnight, a large number of volunteers was required to keep the service going 52 weeks a year, including the difficult times of Easter and Christmas.

Resort was constantly made to advertisements in local newspapers for more volunteers. A few came from the Red Cross or local community groups such as the Lloyd Street School Mothers' Club but most were drawn from Malvern's 27 churches with which Mary Moline and May Armstrong were in constant contact. The practice was for a church or community group to be rostered for a particular day on which the volunteer ladies would turn up for kitchen duty peeling potatoes or for delivering meals.





To cope with the increased activity the kitchen was extended a second time in 1965, with funds which came largely from the Opportunity Shop. While work was in progress, meals were cooked in the Town Hall kitchen. As well as extra storage space, the new kitchen provided rear access from the Centre through which meals could be taken to waiting cars without volunteers having to negotiate several doorways. That year the price of a meal was increased to 30 cents and three years later raised again to 35 cents. By then the Centre was employing a superintendent, a cook, two kitchen hands and a cleaner.

As well as meals-on-wheels, the kitchen was also providing over 100 midday meals a week. In mid 1968, the Ladies Auxiliary reported that a total of 25,466 meals had been served in the previous nine months, 18,708 meals-on-wheels and 6,788 midday meals. The Auxiliary minutes for May that year reflect concern about the adequacy of the Malvern centre's facilities. "A ninth round is now functioning. This meant new containers which have been purchased with Mr Crofts permission. One wonders how many more meals this centre can cope with. Apart from cooking, which does not appear to cause worry, we are limited for storage of cans."

Another feature of the centre causing concern was the length of the main club room. To obtain sufficient length, bowlers found it necessary to stand close to each end wall. As a result, onlookers and others present were confined to the narrow sides while games were in progress. Accordingly, it was decided to extend the main room in 1969 by 20 feet thus not only satisfying the bowlers but providing an extra room which could be used for craft lessons by installing an accordion door between the addition and the main room. At this time craft lessons were being conducted by volunteers once a week, a source of concern to the Executive committee which would have preferred more regular classes.

## SENIOR CITIZENS "TURN ON" A PARTY

By Norma Sturock

*Chadstone Progress, September 30, 1970*

Who ever said only the young know how to put on a party? The Senior Citizens' Club in East Malvern know s all about putting on a party.

It was their second birthday and the women put on their best hats and the men their best suits. The Methodist Church Hall in Darling Road was full of the members ranging from a good sprinkling in the 60s and 70s to a few sprightly 80-year-olds, and the very oldest member of all, 97-year-old Miss Grigg.

Flowers were on the freshly laundered table cloths, and music was in the air.

The National Anthem was given a rousing rendition and the sentimental old favourites sung by the seven member choral group obviously roused many memories.

Mr Noel Garnet of Forster Avenue East Malvern enjoys every minute presiding over this thriving two year old club. A retired civil servant, he knows the members well and how to keep them amused.

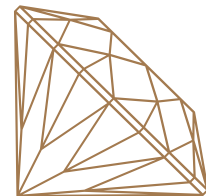
The big moment came when he announced that a poem, specially composed for the East Malvern Senior Citizens' Club, was to be presented that afternoon. Written by Mrs Grace Burford of Carnegie, the poem is called "The Understanding Years". Mrs Burford's poems are often heard on Station 3LO, in the breakfast session, and some of them are being used in a book the session is now compiling. Although a guest at the party, Mrs Burford was too shy to present her framed tribute to the club. So, Mrs Garnet took her place and presented the poem to her husband.

An 85-year-old member, Mrs ("Auntie") Ethel Howard, who has been a gifted elocutionist for more than half a century, recited the charming poem.

The birthday cake, made and decorated by club members, Mesdames Woollard and Ward, was cut for afternoon tea by 97 year old Miss Grigg.

A special table was set up in an adjoining room by members of the club's craft group, to show *Chadstone Progress*, the extent of members' handiwork. They had everything, from aprons and stuffed toys to tea cosies and pin cushions – all for sale at their street stall in Waverley Road on November 6. The ten members of the craft group meet at Mrs Woollard's home in Hughes Street every Monday, and last year their efforts raised \$200. Like all others members of the East Malvern Senior Citizen's Club, they are actively supporting the present MECWA appeal for \$200,000. This appeal is going to help build clubrooms of their own for the East Malvern senior citizens.

And though they're happy and welcome at the Methodist Hall, everyone agrees there is no place quite as good as yours own.



The push for more elderly citizens' clubs was probably inevitable as Malvern's centre of gravity shifted steadily eastwards from the Town hall with the spread of suburbia in the 1960s. By the mid 1960s there were three Elderly Citizens' Clubs operating in the neighbouring suburb of Caulfield, and two each in Prahran and Camberwell. First off the rank was a small group of nine elderly citizens in Chadstone who in April 1968 established the Chadstone Senior Citizens' Club following a meeting in the home of Mr and Mrs L. Shugg.

Weekly Tuesday meetings commenced in the Methodist Hall in Alma Street and a few months later the Club came under the auspices of the Welfare Committee which recognised its by-laws in July 1968. Because the Church Hall was too short for indoor bowls, the club soon moved to the Recreation and Civic Hall at the rear of the Bowling Club in Chadstone Road. Although a step forward, the Chadstone members never deviated from the view that they should aim for their own club premises.

Within a few months of the formation of the Chadstone Club, moves to establish an East Malvern Club were initiated when the East Malvern Inter-Church Council became concerned about the lack of facilities for local elderly people. A particularly strong advocate of clubs for the elderly was the Council's honorary treasurer Joy Waller who had witnessed the support and comfort her mother had derived from her membership of Balwyn's Evergreen Club after the death of her father. The Council's Chairman, the Rev Fairbank, and Joy Waller contacted the Welfare Committee which gave its support for advertising a preliminary meeting of interested persons.

The approach met with a ready response from a Committee which had been discussing the need for a second club for two years. On September 16, 1968, 68 people crowded into the Waller home to attend a meeting presided over by Lee Crofts at which it was decided to form an East Malvern Senior Citizens' Club.

The initial success of the Club – its membership increased from 59 to 172 within six months – created its own problems. Lacking their own club rooms, the members had to be content with meeting once a week in the Methodist Church Hall in Darling Road. The lack of facilities, including storage space for craft work, and the frustration of being unable to meet more than one day a week, soon convinced Lee Crofts' Committee that permanent club rooms would have to be acquired if the club was to survive in the long term. Although the same problem confronted the Chadstone Club, the Welfare Committee tended to accord it a lower priority because of its smaller and younger membership.

The establishment of the East Malvern Club was followed a year later by the opening of a second opportunity shop at 299 Waverley Road, East Malvern. Impressed with the success of the Malvern shop, Joy Waller persuaded the Executive Committee of which she had recently become a member to start up a second shop in East Malvern. While Ted Armstrong hunted around for a suitable site, Joy Waller, at the suggestion of Lee Crofts, approached the Lloyd Street Central School Mother's Club for volunteers to form a Shop Committee. The timing was fortunate as many of the mothers were looking for new scope for their activities as their children began to move on to secondary education.

The Shop Committee held its first meeting on September 10, 1969<sup>12</sup> and set a cracking pace. It decided at once to lease the delicatessen shop at 299 Waverley Road with its proximity to the tram stop in preference to two other shops near the East Malvern station. The lease was negotiated by Ted Armstrong<sup>13</sup> who prudently ensured it contained a clause giving an option to buy on renewal. Although not in the deplorable condition of the Malvern shop, the building required extensive alterations before opening for business. The committee members' husbands led by Malvern Mayor Bert Healy formed a working group which set to work painting the shop, fitting it out with shelves,<sup>14</sup> and covering over a huge hole in the floor exposed by the removal of a refrigeration unit.

# Senior Citizens East Malvern OPPORTUNITY SHOP

will be **OPENING** on **31st OCTOBER**  
at **299 Waverley Road.**

*WE urgently need YOUR SUPPORT  
help stock our Shop for the  
**GRAND OPENING***

Outgrown or unwanted CLOTHING,  
Pieces of JEWELLERY, real or costume,  
PLATE, SILVER, PEWTER, COPPER, BRASS,  
ORNAMENTS of any sort, CHINA, CUTLERY,  
RUGS, RADIO'S, RECORDS, GAMES, TOYS,  
TOOLS, APPLIANCES, FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS,  
Unwanted PICTURES, abandoned BRIC-A-BRAC,  
NAPERY, NICK-NACKS, NOVELS or other BOOKS,  
Impossible to house them all?  
These things you do no longer need?

YOU MAY NOT WANT THEM — WE DO!

**Phone: Mrs. Paxman - 211 2300, Mrs. Tillerd - 50 6**  
**Mrs. Read - 25 7273**

**Sponsored by**  
**The Malvern Elderly Citizens Welfare Committee**



● **FOUR** enthusiastic workers for the East Malvern Opportunity Shop prepare to open for the day, at 299 Waverley Rd. Kneeling at the bookcase is roster secretary Mrs. A. Jordan, and from left are the Shop Committee president Mrs. Val Miles, secretary Mrs. Joy Waller and treasurer Mrs. H. Craig.

The shop opened on October 31, 1969, taking \$147 on its first day to the delight of Shop President Val Miles and her co-workers. There were a few hiccups. A young mother with a toddler in her arms found her red and white pusher had been sold while her back was turned. A similar incident had occurred at the Wattletree Road Shop when a distraught workman found that his tools had been sold. Although takings declined somewhat after the novelty of the first few weeks wore off, the shop quickly established itself as an invaluable money spinner. In the eight months to June 1970, gross takings totalled \$5,640 of which \$4,450 was remitted to the Welfare Committee.

The corresponding figures for its first full financial year of operations—1970/71—were \$10,022 gross takings, of which \$9,165 went to the Committee. To help cover the rent of \$34 per week, the upstairs rooms were, for a number of years, rented out until eventually being taken over for storage and committee meetings. Although benefitting considerably from advice given to them by Mrs Cullen and Mrs Coffey of the Malvern Shop, the Waverley Road committee were a younger group who quickly established their own routines.

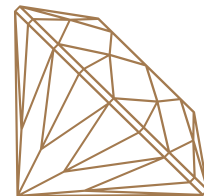
At first committee members took turns in the all important task of 'dressing' the shop windows each Saturday for weekend viewing. Later this was undertaken by Dorothy Kennett and Phyl Beddoe with such flair that on Tuesday mornings (Mondays were reserved for pricing and stocktaking), there were long queues waiting

for the shop to open. Such was their dedication they regularly took various items home during the week to wash and iron, in order to have a 'fresh window'.

Remembering those early years, Joy Waller says: "We all scrounged round at home to see what we had in the way of wedding presents that we'd never used ... and so that formed the basis. It wasn't just old clothes because that wouldn't entice people to come into a shop. But the idea behind it was that it was a good way of recycling clothing because personally I was in very poor circumstances and struggling to clothe my children myself. I was given clothes handed to me by others in the church group and I was handing them on again and it just seemed to me that there was a way of raising money because sometimes you got something handed to you that you didn't really want. And it is far better if you can go to a shop and choose what you want and pay something for it ... They were doing so well at Malvern it just seemed like a great idea."

Clubs, meals-on-wheels, friendly visiting, the opening of two opportunity shops – all were notable achievements since the inaugural meeting in the Malvern Town Hall in 1959. For some, however, these were but parts of a bigger picture, significant pieces of which were still missing. Looming largest was housing for the elderly, an issue with which the Committee became increasingly preoccupied at the end of the 1960s. 🏠

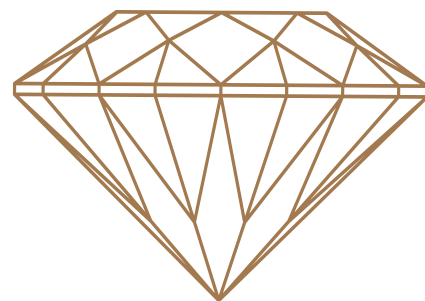




1. The other Councillors were the Mayor J. Johnson, W. Wilson, S.E. Stevens, R.W. Sylvester
2. Herald Sun, June 20, 1998
3. Bertram Hutchinson, Old People in a Modern Australian Community, MJP, 1954. Page 51
4. Present at the meeting were the Mayor, councillors Johnson, King, Stevens and Hayes, the Town Clerk, The Deputy Town Clerk, and the architect Stuart Handasyde. Ironically, Jenkins was no longer a councillor.
5. The only record of this committee is the list of members invited to a meeting on February 26, 1959. They were:
  - Captain Gudgeon
  - Mr F.J. Hopkins
  - Mr A. Cant
  - Mrs E. Bloom and friend
  - Mr J. Sullivan
  - Rev'd and Mrs W.J. Roberts
  - Mr W.A. McKean
  - Mrs H.R. Power
6. The 1958 document differs on a number of significant points from the MECWA constitution of 1954 which allocated two ex officio places on the Executive Committee to the Civic Fund, imposed no quotas on delegates, and makes no mention of meals-on-wheels as an objective.
7. Attending its first meeting held on November 10 in the new Centre were:
  - Cr S.E. Stevens (elected Chairman pro tem)
  - Cr E.V. Johnson
  - Vera Strachan (Social Worker with the Malvern Council)
  - George Bracher (Assistant Treasurer)
  - Mrs Mary Moline (Secretary)
  - Lt. Col. Inglis
  - W.H. Clarke
  - F.J. Hopkins (succeeded Stevens as Chairman)
  - Mr Lester Shaw
  - Mr Sullivan
8. Adviser Community Welfare Services, Health Department of Victoria, and later a member of the Executive Committee of the Old Persons Welfare Council of Victoria.
9. Elected in December 1964 were Mrs May Armstrong (President), Mrs Lorna Jack (Secretary), Mrs Irwin (Treasurer), Mrs Dorothy Williams (Driver Roster Secretary).
10. The following account of the establishment of the first opportunity shop is based on a description by Mary Moline in the MECWA archives.
11. Among the volunteers were Sid Spindler, later a federal M.P., Lee Crofts, later chairman of MECWA, and Ernie Johnson who did much of the electrical work.
12. The first committee comprised:  
Val Miles (President), Connie Tapp (Secretary), Nan Tilleard (Assistant Secretary), Joy Waller (Treasurer), Joy Jordan (Roster Secretary), Ann Read (Publicity Officer), Mrs Woollard (Mending Department), Val Love, Shirley Haynes, Sybil Moore, (Pricing) Bernice Paxman (Collection), Laurel Merriman (Keys), Mrs F.G. Tuddenham (General), Nan Power (Representative from MECWC).
13. In October 1970 the Welfare Committee exercised its option to buy the shop outright.
14. All the fittings were donated by Bert Healy.

## Chapter 2:

# MECWA House



Reporting on "the outstanding achievements of the last year", Lee Crofts told the 1971 Annual Meeting: "What were to many, perhaps only dreams a year or two ago will soon become reality". Lee was referring to the MECWA appeal of 1970 which transformed forever the scope and character of MECWA's activities. The very name MECWA was coined during the appeal and stood for Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Appeal, 'appeal' being changed to 'association' when the committee was transformed into a company.

There are few people to whom MECWA owes a greater debt than Lee Crofts who was the driving force behind the 1970 Appeal. Born in England he was sent as a young man by Shell to Australia in 1934, later serving with the ill-fated 8th division in Malaya (ending up in Changi). After the war he made his reputation in the company as manager in charge of the setting up of the shell refinery at Geelong in 1949. His first involvement was a volunteer helping Ted Armstrong install shelves in the Opportunity Shop in Wattletree Road in 1964. Coming onto the Welfare Committee as a

delegate from St John Church of England, Finch Street, Malvern, he brought with him a wealth of business experience. Public spirited – he was later president of the environmental group Friends of Gardiner's Creek Valley – and a born leader, his talents were soon recognized by the Welfare Committee which elected him chairman in 1967, a position he held until 1973.

The Committee which Lee joined in 1964 was already starting to turn its attention, albeit fitfully, to the question of housing for the elderly. A Housing sub-committee formed that year identified the need for respite care and recommended an approach to church organisations for assistance. The following year A.S. Colliver, Director of the Presbyterian Social Services Department, was invited to the Annual Meeting to speak about housing. He urged his audience to become 'instigators for community effort in seeking government action, for example, a subsidy for accommodation for the frail elderly' and suggested undertaking a census of the needs of Malvern's elderly.



LEFT: Lee Crofts.

RIGHT: Bert Healy (centre) lunching at the Malvern Centre during his term as Mayor of Malvern, 1969-1970. Far right is Town Clerk, Dudley Lucas.

Following up Colliver's suggestions, letters were sent to State and Federal parliamentarians urging increased funding for housing for the elderly. In August 1966 a deputation led by Lee Crofts and Ernie Johnson, Welfare Committee Chairman, approached the Council to discuss the possibility of a survey of the needs of Malvern's elderly. Both were strong advocates of housing for the elderly, particularly Lee Crofts, a convert to the views of Father Tucker, of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, widely known for his interest in housing for the elderly. According to Doreen Crofts, Lee first became interested in housing for the elderly after a public meeting in the Malvern Town Hall, at which Father Tucker challenged those present to take action.

Lee and his wife Doreen were so impressed that they invited Father Tucker to their home to discuss the matter further. With the Town Clerk, Dudley Lucas, again lending his support, the Council agreed to help pay the cost of a survey of Malvern's elderly along the lines of a similar survey in Oakleigh. The project was undertaken over the Christmas holidays by Monash University students supervised by Professor Roberts who surveyed an area bounded by Wattletree Road, Finch Street, Belgrave Road, and Dandenong Road.

The results made available early in 1967 revealed a far more serious situation than anyone had realised. The survey showed that over 20% of Malvern's population were senior citizens over 60 years of age, representing 11,000 residents. Although only a minority were in need, there was clearly a much greater demand for accommodation than had previously been realised. Especially urgent was the demand for units for the more frail but ambulatory elderly rather than for the full active elderly. Armed with these statistics, sympathetic councillors such as Bert Healy, Ted Armstrong, Colin Cameron and Ernie Johnson<sup>1</sup> were in a much stronger position to swing support behind housing schemes for the elderly.

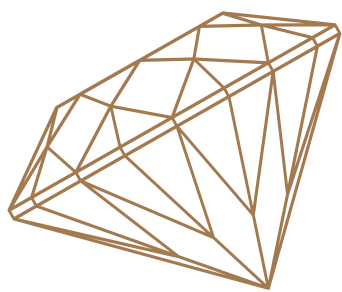
With Mary Moline and others constantly reminding the committee of progress in other suburbs such as Canterbury where housing units for the elderly were being constructed, the momentum to take action steadily grew stronger. In 1963 the Canterbury Citizens' Welfare Committee opened 11 independent living units in Faversham Road followed two years later by 17 units in Chaucer Crescent and 14 units in Middlesex Road.

Further impetus came from Father Tucker who told the MECWA 1967 Annual Meeting: "For many lonely and worried, frail old people in Melbourne suitable housing or accommodation was the prime need, and this applied to people of means as well as pensioners. The ideal home for such people is one specially built and designed for their physical, emotional and social needs."

For a period Lee Crofts and his Committee flirted with the idea of combining with the Salvation Army and the Brotherhood of St Laurence until finally in 1969 the decision was taken to go it alone and launch a public appeal for housing for Malvern's elderly citizens. By July the basic outlines of the appeal were in place. The Housing Auxiliary<sup>2</sup> given the task of making recommendations, came up with an ambitious project. The centerpiece of the appeal was to be a housing complex accommodating 60 persons, 15 in self-contained units and another 45 (later increased to 48) in hostel accommodation. The total cost, exclusive of land was estimated at \$420,000, \$260,000 of which was to be funded from a two-for-one Commonwealth subsidy under the Aged Person's Homes Act and another \$103,000 from 'ingoings' by residents.

The shortfall of \$57,000, to be collected from the public, was revised upwards in the months ahead as more detailed costings became available and the scope of the appeal was widened to encompass the construction of club premises for the East Malvern and Chadstone Clubs. The Hospitals and Charities Commission, after some arm twisting by Dudley Lucas, gave permission for the appeal to be held in the period from September 1970 to June 1971.





A prestigious Appeal Committee was formed in March 1970 to organise and promote fundraising. Heading the list as Patron-in-Chief was the Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan Delacombe, followed by two other patrons, Haverbrack venue resident and former Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, and the Mayor of Malvern. Sir Reginald Sholl, a founding delegate from St George's Anglican Church, accepted the position of Appeal Chairman.

Prominent committee members included K.B. Myer, Dame Ella McKnight, sharebroker Sam Wood, and Victorian Minister of Education, Lindsay Thompson. Secretary and Treasurer respectively were Dudley Lucas and Mary Moline on whom fell much of the day-to-day responsibility for running the Appeal.

The latter was responsible for organising the Women's Group, which succeeded in raising more than \$12,000 over a period of 12 months. Professional fundraiser Iris Clark was hired to assist the Appeal Committee.

The public launching of the Appeal doorknock arranged for Thursday, September 10, 1970 in the Malvern Town Hall got off to a shaky start when at the last moment Sir Robert Menzies was too ill to speak. Claudia Wright, the journalist

reporting for the *Herald* that night, recounted the scene with relish:

“

*Iris, whose eyes are roaming the party people like mine-sweepers, is telling us she is shattered that Sir Robert Menzies couldn't open the appeal tonight. He is ill so they asked John Rossiter, Minister for Health. Mr Rossiter, the Gary Cooper of the Bolte government is, as Iris points out, getting fired to make his speech. He is holding a glass of firewater.*

Rossiter told his audience that the aim of the Appeal was to raise \$200,000 which, with government subsidies, on a two-for-one basis, would fund the construction of residential accommodation for the needy elderly as well as new club facilities for the East Malvern and Chadstone Clubs and urged everyone to support the doorknock appeal scheduled for October 18.

For those aware of the shoals ahead, Rossiter's speech must have sounded more like a wish list than an attainable program. Advance publicity in the local press gave the impression that land for building on in Warner Street worth \$50,000 had already been made available by the Council.





Presentation of Life Membership Certificates to founding members of the Women's Group. Left to right: Rae Stott, Audrey Healy, Jacqui Harris, Pat Peterson, Joan Stanton, Joy Waller-Ogden.

The facts were otherwise. The land in question had been bought by the Council some years earlier with a view to widening the northern side of Warner Street. Since it had been offered to the Committee in November 1969, Lee Crofts had been telling the Council that it fell well short of the 50,000 square feet needed to build the requisite number of hostel and independent living units. Indeed, opposite this land on the south side of Warner Street, was a property of suitable size known as Frost's woodyard recently purchased by the Council and it was this land which Crofts was asking to made available to the Committee.

Another murky area was the question of priorities. Publicly, the Welfare Committee was asking for money for both clubs and housing. If the Appeal fell short, should priority be given to building urgently needed premises for the East Malvern Club rather than spending all the money on housing? The Malvern Town Hall launch coincided with the good news that the Council, after a good deal of prodding, had acquired two properties at 57-59 Fisher Street (just around the corner from the Waverley Road Shop) which it was making available for building a new club.

Crofts pointed out that if funds were apportioned equally, many more club members would benefit than residents in hostel units. Club rooms were also needed for the Chadstone Senior Citizens' Club which was suffering the same irksome restrictions on its activities as the East Malvern Club.

The clubs-versus-housing issue came into sharp focus when, to everyone's dismay, the October doorknock turned out to be less than successful, raising a disappointing \$7,058. Cr Bert Healy, who with Cr Doug Muir organised the doorknock, pointed out to a reporter from the Southern Cross: 'Generally the effort was well supported and a big percentage of those people at home contributed willingly. But a lot of people went out for the day because of the fine weather.' This was particularly disappointing as an enormous amount of voluntary effort had been expended on the day of the doorknock. An echo of that sunny Sunday afternoon is to be found in these instructions to a typical group of collectors:

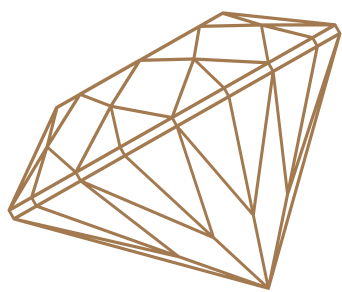
#### *Jenny Scholes and friends:*

Both sides of Melrose Avenue  
Both sides of Coolgardie Avenue  
Both sides of Forster Avenue

Herewith two badges, plastic bags in which to place money, two receipt boards, and receipts (9 per sheet) numbers 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337.

When you've finished, please call at Mr Buchanan's home, 10 Hilda Street, where Mr Alan Heath will drive you up to Cr Healy's home, 76 Burke Rd where money is counted and you should get a cup of coffee.

Thankyou,  
J. Waller, 211-2707



To add to the Welfare Committee's woes, relations with Appeal Chairman Sir Reginald Sholl became strained when the Committee decided to take up its option to buy the Waverley Road Opportunity Shop outright, at a cost of \$14,000. Sir Reginald expressed the view that he ought to have been consulted about the allocation of funds to another project outside the stated aims of the Appeal, and resigned the following February as Appeal Chairman.

In December the Appeal Committee reported that \$43,629 had been raised and that much depended on an approach being made to 53 charitable trusts. The response to the circulation of 15,000 brochures 'was very poor' and traders and professional people had responded 'without enthusiasm'. In fact, the tide was turning because that month the Malvern Council authorised its officers to purchase Frost's land "for future use by the Council". The following February the Council passed a resolution formally offering 'to the Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee Frost's land in Warner's Lane (south side) on payment of \$20,000 in lieu of the land on the north side of Warner's Lane previously offered.'

Although the Council's offer was welcome news, the request for \$20,000 was a serious blow. Responding to the Council's offer Crofts pointed out that 'because of the shortfall in receipts from the major Appeal, the sort of plan we now have in mind is to erect some 48 units on Frost's land and to provide limited club facilities. This program would involve expenditure to the order of \$400,000. If we have to pay \$20,000 to the Council we shall lose the Federal Government's subsidy on this figure and thus the accommodation project will lose \$60,000... and thus we would have to curtail the building program drastically. Another complication was the Council's insistence that 50% of the tenants be 'necessitous cases approved by Council.' This cut across plans to charge two thirds of the first tenants some ingoings—in effect a capital contribution.

A compromise was agreed upon whereby the Council was given representation on the selection panel for hostel accommodation.

The first Selection Committee comprised Air Commodore Greenaway (MECWA nominee), Neil Lockwood (Malvern Council nominee) and Vera Strachan (joint Council / MECWA nominee). The actual selection process devolved upon Vera Strachan until 1979 when May Armstrong and Sr Annette Madden helped share the responsibility.

The Council which had paid \$70,000 for the land generously agreed 'to be paid at the end of five years or at such later date as was mutually agreed upon.' By this time there was a solid core of Council support for an organisation which was clearly a success story and, as a bonus, was earning the council kudos by providing services which would be a charge on the ratepayers without MECWA's army of volunteers.

By June 1971 – officially the last month of the appeal the amount raised had crept up to \$74,000 when a surprise donation of \$20,000, enabled Mayor Julius Pollack to announce at the wind-up luncheon that the Appeal would reach its target of \$100,000. As for the original objective of \$200,000 the Mayor cheerfully pointed out that 'no one had expected more than half that amount'.

Explaining the circumstances surrounding the last minute windfall, Cr Bert Healy said the donor approached him before a church service (the Ewing Memorial Presbyterian Church in Burke Road), and said that having read that the Appeal had not reached its target he would like to help as a long-term resident of Malvern. "He asked whether the figures as reported were correct and said he would like to see me after the service. We got together later and ... he said he would like to make a contribution and handed me this cheque. I was speechless when I saw the amount." The donor who at the time remained anonymous was Noel Miller who subsequently served for many years on the MECWA Board as the convenor of the Appeal Continuation Committee.



Sharing the satisfaction felt by Lee Crofts and his Committee at attaining the Appeal target was architect, Cecil Baldwin of Sherrard Hume whose services had been enlisted a year earlier and who had already drawn up three different sets of plans depending on the availability of finance. With total funds in hand amounting to \$130,000, most of which had been generated by the Opportunity Shops, the stage was set to implement the full program as outlined by Rossiter only nine months earlier. At this important juncture, the Executive Committee was fortunate in acquiring the services of Glen Smith, a former Victorian Director of Posts and Telegraphs, whose administrative experience and knowledge of the inner workings of government departments were of inestimable value as convenor of the Housing Committee.<sup>3</sup>

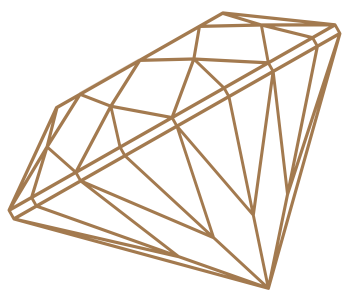
The housing plan which Glen submitted to the Executive Committee in July involved the construction of a hostel accommodating 48 persons in single units, each with wash basin and toilet,<sup>4</sup> and an independent living complex comprising 15 flats, 12 of which were to be single and three double, accommodation. Further evidence of Council goodwill was its decision to give permission for the proposed building area to occupy more than 50% of the site by allowing access to the kitchen area from Warner's Lane to be counted as part of the site.

The decision to build a hostel necessitated a constitutional transformation of the committee of management into a company limited by guarantee. The main drawback of the old arrangement where trustees<sup>5</sup> executed a deed of trust was the issue of liability. Running a large accommodation complex for the elderly involved a new range of responsibilities, not the least of which were the residents themselves. For example, if an elderly resident died in the hostel, relatives might challenge the legality of the actions of those in charge. In this situation a company limited by guarantee in as much as being a separate legal entity afforded greater legal protection to management.

Furthermore, if the old constitution were retained, the Hospital and Charities Commission would require the Welfare Committee to set up a separate constitution for the hostel together with a separate Board of Management, an intolerable duplication of administration.

The change to the constitution was ratified at the Annual Meeting in September 1971, and came into effect the following March when the assets of the Welfare Committee were transferred to the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Association. The distinguishing feature of the new constitution was a Board of Management of 16, two more than the old Executive Committee. The objectives, however, hardly changed, and Lucas' insistence on widespread community support was retained in the section on qualifications of membership which began with 'Representatives (not exceeding four each) appointed by the Churches, or voluntary organisations.' Lucas' assistance in drawing up the constitution was the last official service he rendered MECWA as he went overseas in 1972 for an extended holiday interrupted only by documents relating to transfer of assets being sent for his signature as the sole remaining trustee.

While Glen Smith and his Housing Committee were hard at work on the plans for the hostel, Bert Healy was heading a Clubs Committee with responsibility for designing new club rooms on the Fisher Street site. In this busy period inevitably the burden of work fell more heavily on some more than others. The transition from Welfare Committee to Company coincided with a rapid escalation in responsibilities, and a higher priority on people with proven administrative skills. One person who shared the burden of responsibility was Gordon Black who was elected to the Executive Committee at the 1971 Annual Meeting. A public accountant by profession, his skills immediately came into play in overseeing the changeover to a company structure.



Gordon and his wife Nan were communicants with Lee and Doreen Crofts of St John's Church, Finch Street. Like Lee, Gordon was a prisoner of war of the Japanese on the Burma railway, after surviving the sinking of the HMAS Perth in the Battle of the Java Sea. Another valuable contributor was Leon Bates who replaced Lorna Jack as the delegate from the Ewing Memorial Presbyterian Church, and whose wife Norma was a volunteer in the Waverley Road Opportunity Shop.

Before the Board could call for tenders a vast amount of time was spent ensuring the plans complied with federal and state government requirements. Thus we find Glen Smith at one meeting reporting that Miss Wille of the Social Security Department required 'baths to be island baths, toilets to be altered to position near the dining room, and a room for chiropodist, hairdresser etc.' Ultimately everything hinged on obtaining the maximum subsidy which, for the housing project, depended on an audited report of the Board's funds to the Commonwealth Department of Social Security.

An incalculable debt is owed to the volunteer ladies working in the Opportunity Shops. From June 1 to Dec 14, 1971 total funds available rose to \$146,261 due almost entirely to \$15,000 remitted by the shops. By May 1972 total funds had reached \$165,000, 1,000 more than what was required to receive the maximum two-for-one subsidy of \$328,000. Glen Smith decided the time had come to ask for tenders even though only \$1,000 remained for building the Fisher Street Club.

The Board had a financial ace up its sleeve in the form of 'ingoings' from applicants for accommodation which by May were estimated to be \$58,000. (Under an agreement with the Hospital and Charities Commission with which MECWA was registered, a maximum of one half of the applicants could be charged 'ingoing'. Between 1973 and March 31, 1984 ingoings amounted to \$538,996). There were already 127 applicants for the 'flats' of whom 68 were willing to pay 'ingoing.' Although hostel applicants

numbered only 17, some of the flat applicants, being over 70 years of age, could be steered into the hostel.

On June 23 Cecil Baldwin advised the Board to accept a tender price of \$505,066 submitted by Eric McGee Pty Ltd. At the same meeting Vera Strachan reported that 'ingoings' had reached \$70,000. Crunch time had come to the Board. McGee's price, although the lowest of eight tendering buildings, was an unpleasant shock, being well in excess of previous estimates. Nonetheless, the Board, anxious to keep faith with the East Malvern and Chadstone Clubs, was determined to proceed with the club projects as well as MECWA House.

The figures which Gordon Black presented were daunting. There was a cash shortfall of \$106,000 to be covered before the housing and club projects could proceed. Total cash required was \$314,000, comprising \$270,000 for MECWA House, \$30,000 for the East Malvern Club, and \$14,000 for the Chadstone Club. \$208,000 would be available assuming an inflow of \$2,000 per month from the Shops over the ten months of McGee's contract and \$15,000 borrowed against the Waverley Road shop.



Vera Strachan (left) with Audrey Healy (for many years President of the Meals Management Committee), in the Malvern Centre Kitchen. Photo taken during Audrey's term as Malvern's Lady Mayoress (1969-1970).



MECWA  
House nearing  
completion.

As \$70,000 of this shortfall could be funded from 'ingoings', Black asked the Council to give a guarantee over the remaining \$36,000 to enable all three projects to proceed. The request to the Council was followed up by a meeting of Gordon Black and Glen Smith with Miss Wille which proved decisive. According to the Board's minutes for July 4: 'Miss Wille stated that as we had sufficient funds in hand to claim subsidy for Housing she was not interested in borrowed monies necessary to complete other projects. Mr Smith recommended that we go ahead with building as sent out to tender.' Miss Wille's support was in line with advice already conveyed by the Department to accept the fixed price tender because of rapidly rising building costs. In the event, the contract was signed in August and a month later work finally commenced in Warner's Lane.

The long suffering members of the East Malvern Club were finally rewarded on July 22 when tenders for the Fisher Street project were advertised in *The Age*. The news for the Chadstone Club was less encouraging. Early in 1972 the Council had offered a site in Treyvaud Park facing Quentin Road only to withdraw it after vigorous complaints by local residents concerning the loss of parkland. An alternative site was found in Bowen Street which was subsequently built upon. Unfortunately, a drainage easement was discovered running across the block. The ensuing legal delays dashed any hopes of building the Chadstone Club in 1973.

As work progressed on the Fisher Street project, the Board's secretary May Armstrong who worked out of a tiny office in the Malvern Centre started to have some second thoughts about the location of the meals-on-wheels service. Every week May witnessed the difficulties under the which Mrs Pritchard and her lady volunteers worked. In 1969 there were complaints about the kitchen being overstrained when delivery of meals-on-wheels reached 550 a month. Total meals prepared that year numbered 32,781. By 1971 demand was still rising and eligibility for meals-on-wheels was restricted to those with a doctor's certificate<sup>6</sup> and people over 60 years of age, cutting out deserving cases under 60, such as invalid pensioners. In 1971 total meals prepared had crept up to 41,309 and cold meals had to be sent out because the Hot Box had reached maximum capacity.

In November 1972, May Armstrong and Joy Waller submitted a report to the Board recommending that the preparation of all meals-on-wheels be transferred to Fisher Street. The case was overwhelming. Because it was nearly double the area of the Malvern kitchen, the proposed East Malvern kitchen with careful planning of layout, storage and equipment was estimated to be capable of producing more than double the existing output of 200 meals a day, an important consideration in view of the ever increasing demand for meals-on-wheels. Geographically, Fisher Street was a more convenient location for volunteer drivers as a third of the meals were being sent east of Burke Road. Driver access to the Fisher Street kitchen was vastly superior to the cramped High Street entrance.





Opening of MECWA House on October 6, 1973. Left to right: Lady Delacombe, Glen Smith, Norma Bates, Bert Healy (rostrum), Leon Bates, Sir Rohan Delacombe, Audrey Healy, Sir John Gorton, Mrs Gorton.

A suggestion that both kitchens could be used was ruled out on financial grounds. If the two kitchens conducted their operations (buying, cooking and delivering) independently, the wages bill would be doubled and the cost advantages of bulk buying from one centre would be lost. In 1972 the meals-on-wheels service was running at a net loss of nearly \$7,000 per annum, two thirds of which was being funded from the 10 cent per meal Commonwealth subsidy introduced in 1970, and the balance from the Council subsidy of \$2,500. As the price of a meal had already risen from 35 to 40 cents in June 1972, cost control was imperative if only to protect elderly people on fixed incomes from rising prices.

Although the East Malvern Club was officially opened by Malvern Mayor Tom King on Sunday July 29, 1973, fitting out the meals-on-wheels kitchen was delayed another year because of cost flow pressures associated with building MECWA House.<sup>7</sup> For the next 20 years Malvern's meals-on-wheels were to be cooked and delivered from Fisher Street until the Board decided to source the meals from another municipality.

A month after the opening of the East Malvern Club, Glen Smith told the Board that building in Warner's Lane would be finished by mid

September. On Saturday October <sup>6</sup> MECWA House was officially opened by the Governor, Sir Rohan Delacombe. Ironically, missing from the ceremony that day was Lee Crofts who was too ill to attend, his speech being delivered by Leon Bates. Such was the popularity of the self-contained living units, that some residents had already moved in before the official opening. Applications for hostel accommodation, however, were slower because the hostel rooms were perceived as representing the last step before total care, and, hence were less sought after.

The opening of MECWA House significantly expanded the scope of the Board's responsibilities. John Quine, an experienced hospital administrator and later a Board President, was co-opted as chairman of the House Management Committee which was given responsibility for the administration of MECWA House. Its first task was to appoint a Supervisor. The Board minutes for July 3, 1973 record: 'That Mrs Hodge be engaged as Supervisor of MECWA House as from 30th July, at a salary of One Hundred Dollars, plus a flat and board and lodging'. Beryl Hodge, who took up residence in one of the double bedroom flats, hired five staff comprising an assistant supervisor, a cook, and three maids to care for MECWA's incoming residents.

## ACCOMMODATION FOR ELDERLY CITIZENS AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY

### MECWA HOUSE

Warner Street, off Elizabeth Street, Malvern

New centrally located building can now provide accommodation for some people who have reached 65 years of age (60 for females) if they are able to make an ingoing contribution of \$3,500

### FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- Single furnished carpeted, bed sitting room, each wired for TV set and telephone
- Individual electric heat bank, hand basin and toilet
- Call button for emergency attention
- Ample baths and showers
- All meals in spacious dining room
- Attractive lounges with pleasant courtyard aspects
- Tea making facilities for personal laundry
- Salon for personal hairdressing and chiropody attention
- Hobby or Craft Room
- Storage for suitcases, etc.

### ENQUIRIES:

Telephone 20 3516

or write to: MECWA House, P.O. Box 6, Malvern 3144

Running MECWA House imposed temporary cash flow strains. To ensure affordability and equity for low income residents, fees were kept to a maximum of three quarters of the current pension. The shortfall was made up from Commonwealth subsidies under the Aged Persons Homes Act. Under this legislation the Personal Care Subsidy for people in hostel type accommodation was increased in December 1973 from \$10 to \$12 a week, and eligibility was extended to those under 80 years of age<sup>8</sup>. With the hostel half full and the subsidy months away, Gordon Black told the Board that MECWA House would need a temporary overdraft to cover a predicted deficit of \$3,700 for the period up to December 31, 1973.

The financial clouds soon lifted as awareness of the quality of accommodation available filtered through the Malvern community. Within a year the hostel was full, and, with the subsidy coming through, Quine was able to report that 'financially it (MECWA House) was holding its own'.

A month after the opening of MECWA House, Lee Crofts resigned as Chairman, though remaining an influential Board member until his retirement in 1981. He had seen the housing project through to its successful completion and doubtless thought the time had come to pass the torch to someone else. Aptly described by his successor, Leon Bates, as 'that courtly dynamo', Lee was a great delegator. Appropriately, he made a point of acknowledging the debt he owed to the Board's secretary May Armstrong. 'I think only I can appreciate just how much work she has covered in this period.' Similar comments were to be made by his successors in the years ahead.

By 1975 there was a waiting list of over 100 for MECWA House and Black was able to report a healthy bank balance of \$125,000. The main driving force behind this financial turnaround continued to be the monthly remittances from the Opportunity Shops which were earning over \$30,000 annually. Donations as well were bolstering revenue. What had begun as a steady trickle in the early days of the Welfare Committee turned into a flood when Noel Miller, invited by the Board to be a one man Appeal Continuation Committee, contacted scores of Melbourne's best known benevolent and charitable trusts.

The lengthening waiting list combined with the revival in the Board's finances led irresistibly to the decision to extend MECWA House. With commendable foresight the dining room and kitchen in MECWA House had been designed to cater for 80 people to avoid expensive duplication of these facilities in the event of increasing hostel accommodation. The obvious area for expansion was the Council owned land on the north side of Warner's Lane.



LEFT: Roger Shipton MHR Higgins (1975-1990) (left) with Gordon Black viewing the independent living units.

RIGHT: Gordon Black (left) talking with Roger Shipton in the Noel Miller Gazebo.



In September 1974 Crofts told a concerned Board that the Housing Commission was in discussions with the Council about constructing 34 pensioner flats on the Warner's Lane land. Further inquiries into the Commission's plans revealed that MECWA House residents faced the disagreeable prospect of looking across Warner's Lane to flats of inferior design and construction to their own.

As the benign funding climate of the Whitlam era gave way to the belt tightening of the Fraser years set backs were inevitable. Reporting to the annual meeting in July 1976, Board Chairman Leon Bates ruefully commented, 'It seems that the most significant happenings in this year have been disappointments. We have had to defer and rethink the building of the club for Chadstone, and extensions of MECWA House. This is due to the failure of the Federal Government to provide subsidy, or even the promise of subsidy.'

Confronted with the need for urgent action Bates and Crofts at once contacted Cecil Baldwin to draw up preliminary plans for accommodating 40 residents. At a special meeting the following February 25, 1975, the Board resolved to recommend to the Council that 'land should be made available to MECWA for the building of hostel and flat units, and that plans should be submitted to the Council for approval.' The same meeting requested that Crofts lead a deputation<sup>9</sup> seeking Council support for the Chadstone club project. All seemed to be going well when in May the Council agreed to sell

the northern strip of Warners Lane for \$35,000 and offered to contribute \$30,000 towards the building of the Chadstone Club. Then the whole process stalled with much of the Board's time over the next 18 months being consumed in protracted negotiations to secure the Commonwealth subsidies without which neither project could proceed.

The delay was particularly irksome for the Chadstone Club whose members had been promised new premises in the 1970 Appeal only to see priority given to the East Malvern Club. Frustrated by the lack of adequate club room, they even suggested converting an old service station in Chadstone Road into club rooms until a cost analysis convinced them of the impracticability of such an exercise. In desperation, they agreed to May Armstrong's suggestion that they rent the Guide Hall in Ivanhoe Grove which the Guide Association was prepared to make available three days a week. The move took place in November 1976 with MECWA agreeing to pay the rental of the Hall and donating \$1,000 to fit-out suitable cupboards to store bowling and other equipment.

Although the Chadstone project seemed as far away as ever, prospects for the MECWA extension had brightened considerably. At the September Board meeting, a telegram from Roger Shipton, MHR for Higgins, was read out with the welcome news that a two-for-one capital subsidy under the Commonwealth Aged Homes legislation had been approved for extending MECWA House.





"Men at Work".  
The Chadstone Club.

After numerous meetings with the architect, Cecil Baldwin, Glen Smith, convenor of the Building Committee, presented detailed plans to the Board in December 1976. The final scheme comprised a 28-bed hostel on the north side of Warner's Lane together with 18 self-contained flats (17 single and one double), extending up the north side of Warner's Lane to Elizabeth Street.

In the midst of all this activity, a house at 8 Elizabeth Street abutting the west boundary of MECWA House came onto the market. Although the timing could not have been worse given the need to attract the maximum subsidy for the MECWA extension, the opportunity could not be passed up. Costing \$47,250, the property was subsequently renovated and converted into four independent living flats.

Following Glen Smith's submission to the Board, another 18 months elapsed before construction finally started on the north side of Warner's Lane. A number of factors caused the delay. The first obstacle was an appeal by neighbouring residents when the Malvern Council advertised the plan early in 1978. As well as objections on aesthetic and commercial grounds, there was opposition to the Council's decision (at the request of the MECWA Board) to close Warner's Lane.

Concerned about elderly residents being exposed unnecessarily to traffic hazards, the architect came up with the ingenious solution of an interconnecting gallery capped by a gazebo beneath which pedestrian but not motor traffic could continue uninterrupted.

The hearing before the Appeals Tribunal did not take place until October, the matter being resolved in favour of MECWA which was represented by Mr Ken Gifford, Q.C. Further legal delays occurred as a result of the necessity of consolidating all the land north and south of Warner's Lane, including part of the Lane itself, into one title before State government permission could be given to start construction. Objections by the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works and the Gas and Fuel Corporation were not overcome until February 1979 when easements were inserted into the title protecting their rights to access gas lines and water mains.

While these frustrating legal delays were occurring, the Board was having a running battle with the Department of Social Security over funding. Approval had been given in September 1976 for 21 hostel units and 18 flats. By making better use of the land Glen Smith and Cecil Baldwin increased the hostel units to 28. The Department responded by informing the Board that there was no prospect of additional funding until after June 30, 1979.

In the event, the Department agreed to the revised plan after Gordon Black, who succeeded Leon Bates as Board Chairman in 1977, argued that there was a proven demand for extra accommodation and that MECWA's financial resources were adequate to fund the project even if additional subsidies were not available until after the project was finished. The total cost of the project was \$996,025 and construction finally began in June 1978.

## Bowls for senior citizens



• MR. D. WYLES, first vice-president of the Lions Club of Chadstone Centre put down the first bowl when the Lions presented \$200 worth of indoor bowling equipment to the newly-formed Chadstone Senior Citizens' Club. On the left is the senior citizens' secretary, Mr W. Finighan, and on the right, the president, Mr L. Shugg.



ABOVE: The Community Bus on one of its countless trips.

Concurrently, funding had at last come through for the long awaited Chadstone Club. The tide turned in June 1977, when Ken Aldred, MHR for Henty, following representations by Joy Waller and the Malvern Council, informed the Board that Commonwealth funding for the Chadstone Club had been approved under the three-year funding program for senior citizens' centres introduced in the 1976 Budget. Under this legislation, the Commonwealth Government agreed to pay \$30,000 plus two dollars for every one contributed by the Council from municipal funds. With building costs escalating at the alarming rate of 20% annually, and the expected cost of the project increasing to \$200,000, the Board was faced with a contribution well in excess of the \$40,000 originally budgeted.

The plans were subjected to various cost cutting measures, most notably the deletion of the meals-on-wheels kitchen after deciding that meals could be more economically supplied from Fisher Street. In March the Malvern Council accepted a tender of \$156,554 from builder, Malcolm Holt. Construction was Council's responsibility because it had promised MECWA to contribute \$30,000 towards this project. The Council undertook to pay for the necessary roadworks in Bowen Street. The responsibility for liaising with the Council fell on the shoulders of Board member, Joe St Ellen, who had earlier supervised alterations to the heating and stage arrangements at the East Malvern Centre.

Construction of the Chadstone Clubhouse began in the same month as the MECWA House extension, and was completed by December. On Christmas Day, Joe St Ellen received a phone call from May Armstrong to say that heavy rain during the night had flooded the building and damaged the extensive vinyl tiling on the floors. This mishap together with delays associated with landscaping and furnishings and the necessity to redesign the road to avoid flash flooding postponed the opening date until May 1979. Progress at Warner's Lane went more smoothly, the builder comfortably meeting his April deadline by which time some residents had started moving into the independent living units.

The slow hostel intake of 1973 was not repeated, the selection committee being confronted with a waiting list of 140, ample confirmation of the wisdom of constructing the maximum number of units. On May 6 the Chadstone Club members gathered in their new club rooms to witness the official opening by Mayor Julius Pollack who handed the key of the club to their President A.J. Capper.

Exactly a week later on May 13, the MECWA extension was opened by Victorian Governor, Sir Henry Winneke.

The simultaneous openings of the Chadstone Club and the MECWA House extension were conspicuous 'bricks and mortar' achievements.

At the grass roots level, May Armstrong was busier than ever following her appointment in 1975 as the Board's first salaried Secretary and Coordinator, a position which foreshadowed the eventual appointment of a full time executive officer. Assisting May was Freda Herington, who, at the suggestion of Lee Crofts, a fellow communicant of St John's Church, Finch Street, had joined the House of Management Committee and later became a Board member.

The golden thread which runs through May's activities until her tragic death through cancer in 1985 was her tireless search for ways of improving MECWA's services to Malvern's elderly. A revealing example was her involvement in the Malvern Information Network set up in 1975 comprising representatives from local bodies such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau, the Chadstone Health Centre and local libraries. From the exchange of information at monthly meetings, members soon became aware of the need for specific projects to cater for unmet needs. One of these was the Community Bus Project with which May Armstrong became closely involved. Since 1970 a group of five or six voluntary drivers organised by Joy Waller had been driving frail elderly people on Mondays to the weekly entertainment at Fisher Street.

A similar service had been organised by May for the Malvern Club. There was a clear need to expand the service not only to transport more people to the Clubs or to the doctor, but to assist in delivering meals during school holidays when drivers were unavailable. Given the dearth of volunteer drivers, the most practical solution was a Community Bus Service. To support her case, May organised a feasibility study followed by letters and questionnaires to interested organisations. Following donation of a minibus by the Chadstone Lions, and a Council grant of \$2,500 towards annual running costs, the Community Bus finally came into operation in 1978, proving an immediate boon for Malvern's elderly.

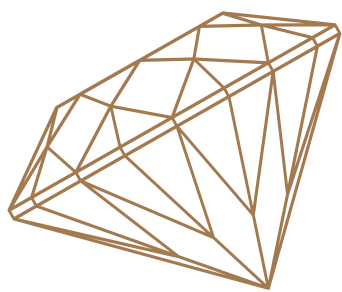
In many respects May's most important role was to oversee and support MECWA's growing range of services to the elderly. None was more important than meals-on-wheels. Constant advice was needed with the pricing of meals as inflation wrought havoc with costs and as embattled Meals Management Committee sought information on comparable prices charged by other municipalities. In 1979 the price reached \$1 a meal with no end in sight to further increases. By then May had been instrumental in assisting with two significant improvements in service.

In 1977 the metal containers and heavy bins were sold and replaced with light Alcan foil dishes and polyurethane containers. No longer would valuable time be wasted heating the containers or cleaning them on their return. More importantly, the lightness and stackability of the new containers made it possible for drivers to take out extra meals to people temporarily in need of help with weekend meals.

Related to this development was an improvement in the weekend meals service. In 1975 members of the Gardiner/Glen Iris/ East Malvern Interchurch Council organised a weekend meals service for about 15 people not coping with cooking for themselves. Each church had a roster Secretary with people on stand by. Volunteers took turns cooking on Saturdays and Sundays and MECWA supplied the foil containers. Two years later May extended this service by bringing the Roman Catholic churches of St Joseph's in Stanhope Street and St Mary's in Manning Road. As expected, the number of meals-on-wheels steadily increased after the opening of the Fisher Street kitchen. By 1979 total number of meals-on-wheels prepared reached 50,524 compared with 36,600 in the last year at the Malvern kitchen.

Club members needed constant support to ensure morale remained high. Each club had its own social committee which organised social functions, bus outings, and fundraising activities to purchase new equipment and furnishings.






The East Malvern Club was particularly active with a thriving membership which soared from 198 to 270 after the move to Fisher Street. On the other hand, membership of the Malvern Club was languishing. By comparison with the new club in Fisher Street, its furnishings and fittings were out of date and parking access was difficult. The transfer of meals-on-wheels, at first welcomed by members was seen as a further downgrading of the club's importance.

The best strategy to keep the Clubs thriving was to provide better services and activities for the members. Few matters impinge more directly on wellbeing of the elderly than mobility. Dissatisfied with the old arrangement of referring cases to an outside clinic, May instituted a system of regular podiatry clinics at all three clubs. In addition to traditional activities such as yoga and painting, classes were introduced not only for club members but for MECWA House residents.

The support of the Malvern Artists Society was enlisted. Trained instructors such as Syd Shuttleworth at the Malvern Club, Carol Harrison and Betty Deering at the East Malvern Club, and Doreen Crofts at MECWA House ensured that the painting classes were a particularly popular activity. Doreen Crofts' class consisted of six elderly ladies (the only man dropped out after finding that the instructor was a woman!) who revelled in the opportunity to develop latent artistic talents.

Despite the onset of Alzheimer's disease one of Doreen's pupils was able to execute intricate drawings of acanthus patterns. Sadly, Beryl Hodge, MECWA's supervisor, who put great store on neatness and tidiness, was often impatient with the painting group who were inclined to wander around the hostel in untidy painting gear. They were rebuked for any untidiness of their rooms and worse still, if they arrived late in the dining room after painting sessions were made to stand in front of the rest of the residents as punishment. By way of contrast, Ted Armstrong, the soul of kindness, assisted Doreen in procuring tables of suitable height for Doreen's class.

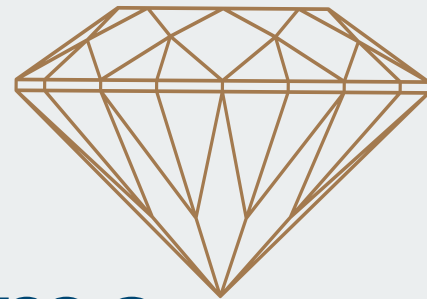
Regular exhibitions of paintings at the Society's Gallery always boosted morale, with the added bonus of raising revenue. The advent of the Community Bus ensured that a greater number of Malvern's elderly were able to access these activities. Less successful were measures to reverse the downward trend in the previously popular midday meals served in the clubrooms. Despite improvements in the menu, numbers continued to decline, a foretaste of changing social conditions which were to radically alter the clubs in the 1980s. 

- 
1. In 1978 Johnson ceased being a Council nominee on the Board of MECWA following his appointment as Chairman of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.
  2. The members of this committee were May Armstrong, Joy Waller and Lorna Jack.
  3. Glen S. Smith was elected to the Executive Committee at the 1970 Annual Meeting. The original members of the Housing Committee were: Glen Smith, Gordon and Nan Black, May Armstrong, Freda Herington, Alan McPherson, Lorna Jack, and Jean Herkes.
  4. Full ensuite facilities were considered but rejected in favour of a larger bedroom.
  5. The three trustees were Mary Moline, Dudley Lucas and Keith Jeffrey who died in 1970. The sub-committee responsible for the new constitution comprised Gordon Black, Leon Bates and Joy Waller.
  6. The requirement for a doctor's certificate was relaxed in 1976.
  7. The cost of the additional equipment was \$6,500. There were additional plumbing and electrical costs.
  8. Department of Community Services. Report of the Joint Review of Hostel Care Subsidies Arrangements, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1985.
  9. The other members were Joy Waller, Leon Bates, Ted and May Armstrong.



## Chapter 3:

# The Day Centre and Nursing Home



**In retrospect, there is a certain inevitability about the expansion of MECWA's activities. By the time MECWA house had been extended, some of the original residents had died or been transferred to nursing homes as the average age rose and the residents became more frail. Not surprisingly, attention was increasingly centred on the need to build a nursing home adjacent to MECWA House as the next logical step towards 'all of life care'. Quite apart from the belief that residents would suffer less trauma if they were transferred into a nursing home in familiar surroundings there was dissatisfaction with the standard of many commercial nursing homes.**

A strong sub-committee comprising Gordon Black, Lee Crofts and the evergreen Mary Moline was appointed to investigate the possibilities. Building on top of MECWA House was briefly considered and quickly ruled out as impracticable. Another suggestion was to purchase an existing nursing home and transfer the licence when land became available to build upon. Determined to build a facility matching the high standards of MECWA House, the Board focused on acquiring neighbouring properties in Elizabeth or Warner Streets. Two properties available in Elizabeth Street were rejected as unsuitable because there was insufficient land on which to build a 60-bed nursing home. Attention then switched to adjoining properties in Warner Street. In 1981 a house at 9 Warner Street, two doors from MECWA House, came up for sale and was purchased for \$56,000.

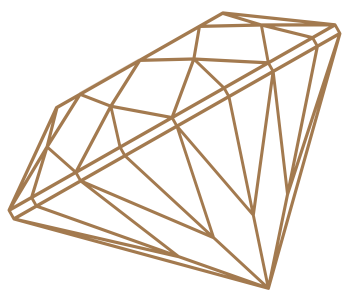
In September 1981 Black wrote to the Health Commission explaining that 'the Association was anxious to extend its activities so that it could offer people 'whole of life care'. We feel we have a need for a nursing home, we have \$250,000 to start it off and we have some land at our disposal.' He requested a discussion with officers of the Health Commission 'to clarify the situation and find out just what form our approach should take.'

The following month Dr A.R. Moore, Coordinator of the Extended Care Section of the Health Commission and a member of the Joint Commonwealth State Health Committee, and Mrs Carol Porter, were shown over MECWA House by Gordon Black, John Quine and May Armstrong. They were favourably impressed. 'This organisation represents the best sort of voluntary care organisation. The atmosphere, care and construction in the hostel are excellent. All of the residents seemed well-cared for, were socialising and their surroundings were pleasant. A great deal of thought had been given by the architect to the construction of the hostel and long space-consuming ramps made ambulation for the elderly easy.'

Unfortunately, this fulsome praise did not extend to the nursing home project. A disappointed Board was informed that no permits for additional nursing home accommodation in Malvern were to be issued in the foreseeable future as the 'Malvern area is more than adequately provided with nursing home beds on the basis of the approved ratio of beds per 1,000 residents'.

During his visit Dr Moore observed that 'the need for nursing home beds within the complex is very low. Only one of the 73 hostel residents is even approaching nursing home care need.' Taking a longer term view, the Board bided its time and over the next four years purchased three more properties in Warner Street.<sup>1</sup>

One positive development to emerge from the Commission's visit was Dr Moore's strong support for recent moves by MECWA to provide a day care centre service. The demand for these facilities arose from the need for socialisation and ongoing maintenance of patients discharged from Day Hospitals which had experienced phenomenal growth in the 1970s.



At the suggestion of John Quine, MECWA Board member and manager of the Caulfield Hospital, which had established a Day Hospital in 1969, Nancy Christopher (Hogan), Community Services Planner for Caulfield Hospital, contacted May Armstrong in 1976 as part of her brief to sound out support from local church, council and community groups for a day centre in the Malvern area. In July 1980, an Information Day for managers of Special Accommodation Houses<sup>2</sup> was held at the Mayfield Education Centre, following which May became Chairperson of a group of Special Accommodation managers and Council health officers which met monthly to consider ways and means of setting up a day care centre. Accordingly, the group set up a day care program in St James Church called The Fellowship Club which met each Monday under the supervision of Mrs Vija Bares, the proprietor of Malvern Green Lodge, assisted by a team of volunteers.

Despite the success of the Fellowship Club, it soon became clear to May's group that there were insufficient day care facilities not only for special accommodation residents but also for people living in their own homes or in hostels and nursing homes. A permanent full-time venue was needed for running day care programs. St James' Church Hall was ruled out because it was available only one day a week. Church halls generally were regarded as unsuitable because their size not only made them difficult to heat but didn't provide an intimate, friendly atmosphere so important for frail aged people. MECWA's three elderly citizens' clubs were suggested as a possible venue until May pointed out that this would be resisted by club members.

The latter were active elderly people who would feel threatened by the presence of a frail aged group fearing this as the next step facing them. Because the clubs were being used increasingly by community groups as well as club members it would not be possible to construct a full time program for the frail aged. Another drawback was the lack of access for wheelchairs at the Malvern and East Malvern centres.

To establish the need for such a centre Nancy Christopher (Hogan) with the collaboration of Jill Williams, Malvern's social worker and Annette Madden of the Caulfield Hospital, undertook a survey of existing day care centre facilities in Malvern. The report revealed an unmet demand from over 200 people in Malvern. Although, predictably, the largest group came from special accommodation homes there were 30 patients from the Malvern Day Hospital which was beginning to turn away patients needing specialised treatment because it felt obliged to accept referrals which were primarily for socialisation or family relief.

This was a misuse of resources as day centres were inexpensive to run compared with day hospitals which employed qualified staff. Run mainly by volunteers supervised by a full-time professional manager, day centres offered a low key program consisting of social activities, entertainment, craft work and exercise. They provided not only mental and physical stimulation for otherwise isolated people but much needed relief for relatives and carers.

In May 1981, armed with this information, Jill Williams successfully secured the support of the MECWA Board for the running of a day care centre. Three months later Council approved the establishment of a centre in a house in Ardrie Park together with an undertaking from MECWA to cover the first three years' running costs and manage the centre.

The Ardrie Park house with a variety of small rooms for specialised activities was well suited. Local residents, however, were hostile and successfully appealed against Council's application to convert the house into a day care centre. At this juncture a property at the corner of Manning and Burke Roads was offered to the Council by the Ewing Memorial Church at a peppercorn rent.



Tenth birthday of Day Care Centre.

Left to right: Mary Barry (CEO), Pauline Downes, Janine Stevenson, Sarah King (standing), Andrew Roger (Board Chairman), Anita Mummé (standing), Mary Tuohey, Margaret Penford.

The time had come to appoint a full-time supervisor. In July 1982 Anita Mummé, a qualified Occupational Therapist, took up her duties as Coordinator for the MECWA Day Centre in Ewing House which underwent extensive alterations funded by the Council. By this time there were 82 people attending sessions in St James' Church Hall while on a third day a craft group ran from the East Malvern Club. Assisting Anita were 18 volunteers either helping with transport or working with groups at St James' Church.

The sessions were finally transferred to Ewing House when the Centre was officially opened on Friday 25 November 1983. The move came none too soon. Since March, a Reality Orientation Program for elderly people suffering memory loss had been conducted on Fridays as a joint venture with the Malvern Day Hospital.<sup>3</sup> The small room at St James' Church was unsatisfactory because it was not possible to find space to take aside confused elderly who sometimes became disruptive. Ewing House was a charming Edwardian home which offered three activities rooms together with a sick bay, office for the Coordinator, and a room for volunteers all looking out onto a leafy garden setting.

At the July 1984 Annual Meeting May Armstrong was not a candidate for re-election. Ten months later, on May 29, 1985, she died of stomach cancer, showing great fortitude to the very end. In 1981 her standing in the community had been recognised when she became Malvern's Citizen of the Year, the first time the award was made. Within a month of this devastating loss, Freda Herington who had teamed so well with May resigned as assistant Secretary and two months later died of cancer.

In the ensuing administrative reshuffle the previous position of Secretary/Coordinator was replaced by Executive Officer, the first appointee being Anita Mummé. The range of her duties was indicative of the degree to which May Armstrong had expanded her role as Secretary since the days when she formed such a fruitful partnership with Lee Crofts. In addition to being responsible for the shops, meals-on-wheels, clubs, MECWA House, and the Day Centre, Anita was required to liaise with the Community Bus Committee, the Neighbourly Book Club, the Confused Elderly Committee, the Voluntary Care Association, the Malvern Information Network, the Southern Regional Consultative Council, the Aged Services Task Group and the Malvern Council.

Another break with the past was the decision to move the Association's registered office from the Malvern Centre to Ewing House where Anita worked as Executive Officer<sup>4</sup> alongside Bernadette Byrne, the Day Centre Coordinator. From this time the Day Centre became the hub for an increasingly wide range of services to Malvern's elderly. In 1987 a Home Care Relief program was introduced for carers of people suffering from Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.<sup>5</sup>

Volunteer drivers brought confused elderly people to the Centre where they were assisted by programs designed to stimulate awareness of self and surroundings. Activities included flower arranging, preparing and cooking food, exercises, ball games, quizzes and outings aimed to prevent further deterioration in mental functioning as well as offering support and family relief for carers. A key feature of the program was a Home Care Sitters Service.



LEFT: Beth Rose administering podiatry at the East Malvern Club.



RIGHT: Sheila Rateau and Noel Miller.

Volunteers who had undergone special training at the Centre took over the caring role so that carers were given a desperately needed break by meeting friends for lunch, the theatre or to play bowls.

Organising the program was an expensive commitment involving three members of staff – Bernadette Byrne, Sarah King and Mary Tuohey – who supervised and trained the volunteers. The program was only made possible by the advent of the Home and Community Care (HACC) program which funded 80 per cent of the cost of the scheme.<sup>6</sup> HACC was a Commonwealth Government initiative to shift emphasis away from providing institutional care in favour of assisting people to live at home. In a review of aged care in Australia, the Commonwealth Government estimated that approximately 25% of nursing home placements between 1963 and 1985 were ‘inappropriate placements’ of residents who have been better looked after in their own homes with support rather in an institution.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the Home Care Relief program HACC took over the funding for meals-on-wheels and provided funding for an extension of MECWA’s podiatry services. In 1989 podiatry offered at the three Clubs was put on a fully funded sessional basis. The service included the cost of treatment of feet disorders and custom made orthotics and prostheses to correct problems and assist people to walk without pain or discomfort.

In many instances podiatry was the first point of contact of the elderly with MECWA’s range of services. For the isolated the social contact was especially welcome. Frequently, during podiatry sessions, the podiatrist was able to provide information on social activities such as card clubs and the availability of other community services such as the Ulcer Clinic at the Caulfield Hospital.

In 1996 additional HACC funding made possible two further extensions of the Respite program. In a new Saturday program respite care was offered on alternate Saturdays for frail aged people with a disability or dementia and younger disabled people to participate in socialisation activities in the supportive environment of the Day Centre. Various activities were offered according to the interest and abilities of the clients. Activities included graded exercises and mobility sessions, music, quizzes and discussion, cooking, craft and outings. A nourishing midday meal was provided as well as morning and afternoon tea and transport by mini-bus or taxi was available for people who lived in the City of Stonnington. Another innovation was offering respite care in blocks of time ranging from twenty four hours to three days instead of four hours per week. For the first time carers were able to stay away for a weekend.

Prospects for the dormant nursing home project brightened in 1986 when Board Chairman David Ripper, received the welcome news that the Department of Community Services had granted a Certificate of Approval-in-Principle for a 30-bed facility.





Opening of the Olive Miller Nursing Home. Left to right: Barry Cook (Executive Officer), Ken Thompson, Ross Heale, Joy Waller-Ogden, Andrew Roger, Cecil Baldwin, Glen Smith, Leon Bates.

Hopes sank again early in 1987 when the Department made it clear that a capital subsidy would not be available as priority was being given to the construction of hostels. Standing firm the Board reiterated its commitment to ongoing 'Whole of Life' care for MECWA House residents, and the need to keep faith with its army of volunteers who had been working for a nursing home.

To supervise the project, a Building Works Committee was appointed comprising John Quine (Chairman), Glen Smith, Lee Crofts, Graham Barnard and Ted Armstrong. The building site, adjacent to the east side of the independent living units built in 1973, was situated at 10-14 Warner Street, and involved the demolition of five properties: a brick pair at 12/14 Warner Street and a house at 10 Warner Street for the nursing home, and, across the road, 7 and 9 Warner Street to provide land for a 28-bay carpark without which no Council building permit could be issued.<sup>8</sup> Finance to buy the land came once again from the profits generated by the two opportunity shops.

The all-important federal funding came through in May 1988. That month Peter Staples, Federal Minister for Housing and Aged Care, following representations from Joan Child, MHR for Henty, (whose electorate included Chadstone), visited MECWA House to announce a Commonwealth Government grant of \$636,600 (later increased to \$747,600) for the nursing home. With cash in hand of \$1.2 million and the project estimated to cost \$2.7 million, a Million Dollar Appeal to bridge the gap was launched in mid 1989 by Malvern Mayor Janice Carpenter.

The Appeal Committee<sup>9</sup> headed by the Hon Lindsay Thompson, Patron, and Sir Gordon Allard, Chairman, was highly successful in attracting community and business support.<sup>10</sup> Significant donations included \$50,000 from the Gandel Group of companies, proprietors of Chadstone Shopping Centre, \$100,000 from Malvern Council (in particular proceeds from the Charity Dinner Dance organised by George Pepperell, a Board member, during his time as Mayor of Malvern), \$25,000 raised by residents of MECWA House, and large bequests from a number of estates and charitable trusts.

With additional funds, W.O. Longmuir Pty Ltd, the builders, commenced construction early in 1990. The architect was again Cecil Baldwin who was required to design a nursing home within the constraints of a relatively small site. The building was on two levels, one for the caring program at street level and the services, kitchen, and staff facilities on a lower level, necessitating costly excavation of the site.

Apart from two four-bed and two single rooms, all rooms were two beds, the single and double rooms having toilet and hand basin facilities. A multipurpose quiet room was provided to offer space for residents and privacy for relatives. To reduce costs, meals were prepared in the Hostel and transported by mobile Bain Marie to the nursing home. The entire building was air conditioned and linked by a covered walkway with MECWA House to give privacy for people being transferred and convenient access for hostel residents wishing to visit friends in the nursing home. Toilet and bathroom facilities were better than regulatory requirements and all bedrooms were provided with sliding doors.



LEFT: Volunteers with Nursing Home residents.



RIGHT: MECWA House Manager Peter Toynton (left) with Tom and Pat Jenkins who donated two wheelchairs in 1994 in memory of their mother Mabel Jenkins, a former MECWA House resident.

In recognition of a substantial donation by Noel Miller and his family in memory of Noel's wife Olive, the home was named The Olive Miller Nursing Home, and was officially opened on Sunday March 3, 1991 by Victorian Governor, Dr Davis McCaughey.

Director of Nursing, Sheila Rateau<sup>12</sup>, went to endless trouble to ensure that the modern appointments were matched by a warm and caring atmosphere. To make life more interesting for the residents, an Activities Coordinator was appointed to implement a program of word games, quizzes, crosswords, bingo, exercises, craft and cooking. Volunteers supported this program by reading to the residents, organising carpet bowls or playing old time music on the piano. Books and tapes were supplied by the Malvern Mobile Library.

Special events such as Mothers Day or Cup Day were celebrated and bus outings to places of interest such as Southbank on the Yarra were regularly organised. Students from nearby schools such as Scotch College or Mandeville Hall regularly visited to talk with residents or take them for a wheelchair ride before tea. To enhance the family atmosphere, relatives were encouraged to take responsibility for small chores like filling the fruit bowl or refreshing the flower vases.

The Million Dollar Appeal was the catalyst for a change in location of MECWA's administrative personnel. During the Appeal Executive Officer Barry Cook and his assistant Di Hunt Smith moved office from the crowded conditions

at Ewing House to a small lounge room at MECWA House to be accessible to the Appeal Committee. To provide adequate space for volunteer training and future expansion the Board purchased and refurbished an old shop at 171 Darling Road, East Malvern to which Barry Cook and his office staff moved in October 1990. The following year, the accounts previously prepared manually (a mammoth task), were transferred onto computer.

In order to prepare meals for the nursing home, a major re-equipping of the MECWA House kitchen was undertaken. As well as the kitchen, other alterations to MECWA House were becoming an urgent priority to cater for the increasing frailty of the residents. As far back at 1981, May Hamilton, MECWA House Supervisor after Beryl Hodge, with the assistance of a 'flatty', Florence Thornhill, started up a Residents Shop where residents could easily purchase items such as toiletries, confectionery, tissues, drink and biscuits. So popular was the shop that a roster of volunteers was organized to assist Lilian Potter who took over the running of the shop after Florence Thornhill retired. In 1991 a small trolley was donated so that this service could be extended to nursing home residents<sup>13</sup>.

As the average age of hostel residents rose steadily to 86 (and of units to 81) by the end of the 1980s, the MECWA House Management Committee<sup>14</sup> became increasingly concerned with the rising incidence of dementia which often manifested itself in the form of wandering at night.

To cope with this security problem, stand up staff (two members of staff sleeping on the premises) were employed with another on stand by. In 1989 this arrangement was altered to one staff member on night shift with the other on call. The extra cost was financed by the admission of two more residents. By 1992 it was estimated the 60 of the 76 hostel residents were in need of some type of personal care, a far cry from the early years when the selection criteria required applicants for admission to MECWA House to be between 60 and 65 and ambulatory.

Indeed the whole building was starting to date. The toilets were unsuitable for accommodating the needs of residents using wheelchairs. Worse still, the lack of full ensuite bathroom facilities meant that residents needing assistance with showering had to be taken down the corridor to the showers.

Of particular concern were those residents suffering from Alzheimer's and related dementias. To cater for these residents, a new courtyard was accessed through the dining room. The courtyard featured a rose garden and was furnished with wooden garden furniture, chairs and tables. More handrails for the frail were also installed. To complete the dementia wing, two walls were removed in 1994 to provide access to larger, more sociable communal areas for activities and dining facilities in the dementia wing.

To enhance the comfort of the elderly, specially designed chairs were purchased, built at the correct height to make sitting and standing easier, with neck and back support for those accustomed to sitting for a long time.<sup>15</sup>

Admirable as these measures were more had to be done to assist the elderly suffering from dementia. In 1990 it was estimated that 19 of MECWA House residents were experiencing Alzheimer's condition.

With national research indicating that 10% of the population over 65 could be expected to contract Alzheimer's Disease, 860 of Malvern's over 60 population of 8,600 (21 per cent in Malvern compared with Melbourne's average of 15 per cent) were at risk. A painful reminder of unmet demand was MECWA House's waiting list which had grown to 500, even though MECWA was already caring for 850 Malvern people through a wide range of support and residential services.

Cheryl Evans, MECWA House Supervisor, reported in July 1991 'the demand for placement in the Hostel is great. The urgent shortlist is becoming a long list. As we are not having a high turnover, some relatives and doctors of persons on the shortlist are becoming impatient.

On July 29, 1991 the MECWA Board successfully negotiated with Malvern Council to purchase a portion of the College of the Bible site at 7-11 Elm Road, Glen Iris on Gardiners Creek with a view to establishing a 44-bed Special Care Unit for the elderly suffering from Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. The two storey building, known as Campbell Edwards House, was to be retained as a Day Care Centre on the ground floor with space for staff training and administration upstairs. Attractive units built on two levels were to provide special care for those for whom hostel and nursing home accommodation were not appropriate. The purchase price was \$350,000 payable over three years, and the total expected cost of the project was \$4 million.

That the Board could enter into such a costly commitment so soon after funding the nursing home is an indication of how far the organisation had grown since the first full operating year of 1960/61 when total annual revenue was less than \$4,000. In 1991 total operating revenue generating a surplus of \$11,050 was \$3,765,887 of which fees from residents and clients totalled \$939,757, government subsidies \$1,430,784, fundraising and donations \$813,292, and bequests \$154,104 (the balance coming from interest and rents).





Interior of one of the Elm Road units.

Net assets totalled \$4,841,614 of which cash in hand and investments exceeded \$500,000. That year a Bequests Program was launched by the Promotion and Fundraising Committee chaired by Neil Lockwood.

A year later revenue from entry contributions or 'ingoings' for MECWA House increased tenfold after the Board, on the advice of their new Chief Executive Officer, Mary Barry, decided to take advantage of changes to Commonwealth Government regulations introduced in the late 1980s governing the level of entry contributions which could be charged by Commonwealth funded hostels. As a consequence 80% of MECWA residents were rated as non-financially depended persons whose entry contributions were linked to a sliding scale based on the assets of incoming residents.

Plans for the Special Care Unit were abandoned after Chief Executive Officer, Mary Barry, warned the Board of the unlikelihood of Commonwealth Government funding in the foreseeable future for institutions caring for dementia patients. In June 1995 MECWA entered into an arrangement with the Community Housing Program to build ten independent living units on part of Elm Road for over 60-year-olds who could not afford to fund their own housing but who were eligible for public housing.

Original plans for a 30-unit complex were abandoned in the wake of a change in Office for Housing policy away from providing public housing in favour of a voucher system for available accommodation.

Assessment for eligibility was the responsibility of MECWA which provided support services such as delivered meals, in-home respite care and any other services to assist and allow the residents to stay there as long as possible. The units were officially opened on January 28, 1998 by the Hon. Ann Henderson, Minister for Housing. 🏠



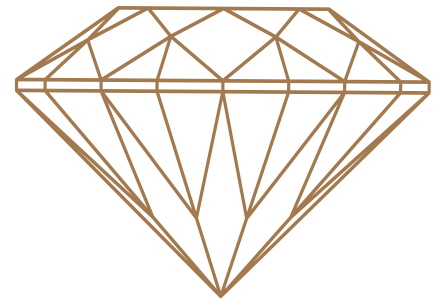
11 Elm Road units (circa 2004).



1. 7 Warner Street in 1982, 15 Warner Street 1983, and in 1985 a brick pair at 10/12 Warner Street.
2. This followed a council report on special accommodation houses in Malvern prepared by the Town Planning Department, Social Worker and Recreation Officer in September 1979.
3. Assisting Anita Mummé was Bernadette Byrne from the Malvern Day Hospital.
4. In 186 Anita Mummé resigned as Executive Officer. Her successor was Barry Cook.
5. Referrals were received from the Malvern Council, Chadstone Community Health Centre, Royal Southern Memorial Hospital, Caulfield Hospital and local doctors.
6. The program was initially funded by a Demonstration Grant of \$19,252, increased a year later to \$63,724 (following successful representations to Community Services Minister, Mr Race Matthews in response to the overwhelming demand for the service. In its first full year the program was delivering 4,440 hours of care including training, coordination travelling and administration costs.
7. This information comes from an article on Aged Care in the 90s by Mary Barry in the MECWA newsletter (No 9) March 1993
8. 7 Warner Street was bought in 1987 and the brick pair at 12/14 Warner Street in February 1986.
9. The other committee members were: Harold Byrnes (vice-Chairman), Joy Treyvaud (Secretary), J. Campbell Johnston (Hon.Treasurer), Virginia Davey, Ralph Crosby, Audrey Healy, Ray Ian, Neil Lockwood, Graham Menzies, Noel Miller, Julius Pollack, Warwick Ramsden, Lowrie Shears, Dr John Stuckey, Claude Ullin, Neil Walford, Joy Waller-Ogden.
10. Downes, Venn and Associates were appointed to provided professional fundraising advice.
11. The properties sold over 15/15A Warner Street and 2-4 Elizabeth Street bringing in \$570,000. The cost of land for the entire project was \$454,000 met from funds transferred from the Opportunity Shops and other voluntary fundraising.
12. Previously Director of Nursing Williamstown Hospital and later CEO of Bundoora Health and Life Care.
13. When Miss Potter resigned through ill health in 1992 Mrs Audrey Goldie and Mrs Dorothy Davis took over with the assistance of the roster of volunteers.
14. The MECWA House Management Committee became the Residential Care Committee when its duties were extended to the Nursing Home. One of its most difficult decisions was to recommend against the admission of a young disabled person aged 31 to ensure that no elderly person had to make way for a younger person.
15. The refurbishment cost \$250,000, in nominal terms.

## Chapter 4:

# New Directions



The election in 1992 of the Kennett government committed to the rationalising of local government and compulsory competitive tendering for government services posed a host of new challenges for MECWA. To plan for the future, the Board on the initiative of CEO Mary Barry, held a Strategic Planning Workshop on 24 February 1993, the outcome of which changed forever the scope and direction of MECWA's activities. Three far reaching decisions were taken: to expand outside traditional municipal boundaries, to become more independent of government funding, and, closely related to the previous decision, to provide a competitive fee for service operation for those better placed to afford the purchase of professional care.

To muster support for this radical change of direction, a Community Forum was held at the East Malvern Club in June 1993 to discuss the launching in September of MECWA Private Care, a subsidiary private company to provide home help on a fee for service basis in the City of Camberwell. Launched on September 1, 1993

at the Malvern Town Hall by Robert Knowles, the Victorian Minister responsible for Aged Care, this new MECWA offshoot, under the direction of Karin Dixon, was an immediate success, not only meeting a long felt need but also feeding profits into MECWA's income stream.

After six months of operations, monthly client time charged had reached 1,100 hours, double the budgeted figure. The range of home services included home help (cleaning, washing, vacuuming, laundry and meal preparation), personal care (bathing/showering, dressing, toileting, getting up and going to bed, nutrition, safety, banking, shopping, and transport), and overnight or live-in care (a carer sleeping over or living in to provide assistance with all personal and domestic tasks).<sup>1</sup>

In June 1995, the Red Cross in the process of divesting itself on non-core operations, sold Redicare Attendant Care Services to MECWA Private Care which changed its name in December to MECWA Redicare.



LEFT: Mary Barry with Leonie Burke.

RIGHT: Signing of contract with the City of Whitehorse. Left to right: Nancy Hogan, MECWA CEO, Peter Seamer, CEO of City of Whitehorse, Karin Dixon, MECWA Redicare Manager.



Left to right: Leonie Burke, Simone Semmens, Kevin Biggin.

More important was a tripling in the client base<sup>2</sup> which expanded from an area within an 8-10 kilometre radius of Malvern to as far afield as the City of Whitehorse and the Shire of Whittlesea. The range of clients which previously focused on aged care grew to include young people with disabilities—another significant break with MECWA's traditions but in line with the requirements of HACC funding which was conditional upon a percentage being made available to assist people with disabilities.

Linkage programs became another area of rapid growth whereby HACC funding was made available to provide care for the aged and disabled with more severe and complex needs to defer placement in nursing homes. Indeed the remarkable success of MECWA Redicare can be attributed in part to the way in which it dovetailed in with the prevailing government philosophy of redirecting funding from nursing homes into home care.

Easily the most spectacular component of local government reform was the amalgamation of councils which commenced in 1994. The announcement that Malvern was to be amalgamated with Prahran to form the City of Stonnington left the Board with no alternative but to expand its operations into Prahran or wither on the vine. To pave the way for tendering within the City of Stonnington, a Special Meeting in July 1994 approved a change in the Association's name to MECWA Community Care following an amendment to MECWA's Memorandum and Articles of Association at the 1992 Annual Meeting to ratify the provision of services outside the City of Malvern.

In November 1993, the Board learnt that Aged Care Victoria had advised the City of Prahran that the former SEC site on the corner of Charles and Greville streets would be suitable for establishing an aged care residential facility in Prahran. At a meeting arranged with the Prahran Council the land was purchased. Two Prahran councillors, Win Vears and Chris Gahan were appointed to the MECWA Board. Following further discussions with the Prahran Council planning commenced in 1994 for a 50-bed centre. An Appeal Committee of Leonie Burke (Chairperson), Kevin Biggin, Tony Charlton, Andrew Porter, Simone Semmens, initially Carol Aylett, then in 1995 Judith Oliver (Appeal Director), and Nancy Hogan was constituted to raise \$1.5 million to bridge the gap between the anticipated cost of the project (\$6.5 million) and the Commonwealth Government subsidy.

In 1996 the Appeal was boosted by a magnificent donation of \$500,000 from the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Foundation and a donation of \$100,000 from Baillieu Myer on behalf of the Sidney Myer Trust. By December the appeal had reached \$1.1 million and the bulldozers had commenced clearing the Charles Street site.

Named The Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre, and officially opened on 27 February, 1998 by the Hon. Dr Michael Wooldridge, Prahran's new aged care centre was designed by architects Thomas Adsett & Partners to incorporate features to meet the needs of the elderly well into the 21st century.





Jill Randall (left) East Malvern Opportunity Shop Coordinator, sorting clothes with volunteer Carmel Ryan.

The Centre's unique central location and accessibility to public transport has enabled residents to continue their enjoyment of Prahran's diverse community life. Secure and specialised care is provided and all rooms have private ensuite facilities and space to accommodate personal accessories. The courtyards and gardens surrounding the complex provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere for leisurely activities. Community facilities include large dining areas, a lounge room and activities area for residents to socialise. Unlike MECWA House additional smaller living areas provide a retreat for quieter activities and conversation.

The success of the Stonnington Appeal owed much to the increasing professionalism of the organisation.<sup>3</sup> In 1993 MECWA, under the CEO Mary Barry, took the decision to set up a Development Office under Carol Aylett. Her role was to foster the development of MECWA in the eyes of the community, set up a fundraising computer database, co-ordinate and extend MECWA's fundraising activities, and organise a quarterly issue of the MECWA newsletter (in the past prepared on an ad hoc basis by the office secretary). The Development Office became the Community Relations department in late 1995 with the appointment of Judith Oliver as Community Relations Manager. As part of the broader focus of this department, fundraising through special events was stepped up and a part-time donor Liaison Officer, initially Carol Aylett, and in 1997 Graham McKern, was appointed to oversee bequest development.

In addition to the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre, the MECWA Board took two other significant initiatives in 1996 to expand into the Prahran district of Stonnington.

In March MECWA took over the delivery of meals in the Prahran section of Stonnington. Perhaps an even more dramatic change for those who remembered the original meals-on-wheels service was the decision two years earlier to buy 'Cook-Chill' meals from the City of Caulfield, thus ending a 20-year tradition of preparing meals-on-wheels in the East Malvern kitchen.

The new arrangement was driven by the need to meet revised Commonwealth standards requiring meals to be blast frozen, a change in food preparation which would have required expenditure on a specially designed unit costing \$9,000. By utilising Caulfield's equipment, costly capital expenditure was avoided in updating the Fisher Street kitchen and, more importantly, a wider menu was provided catering for special needs such as diabetics, vegetarians and ethnic groups.

Later in 1996 a second move into the Prahran area took place with the opening of MECWA's third opportunity shop at 52 Chapel Street, Windsor. The shop caters for the trendy Chapel Street scene and Swinburne students disembarking at the Windsor Station. A second-hand van with the MECWA name blazoned on its side was bought<sup>5</sup> to facilitate purchasing and pickups.

By this time the three shops were being run by paid coordinators<sup>4</sup> who had to walk a thin line between traditional ways of doing things and the need to adopt new marketing strategies in the face of intense competition from recycle shops, garage sales, fetes and markets. For example the Malvern Shop offers designer clothing and shoes while the East Malvern shop retains its traditional family orientation.





Italian senior citizens enjoying a game of cards at the Malvern Centre.

In 2004 the Waverley Road shop underwent a complete renovation in a 'shabby chic' style and four years later all three shops went online. The heart and soul of the Shops continues to be the devotion of its volunteers.

From the earliest days of MECWA 'more volunteers needed' was the constant cry, a problem exacerbated by the inexorable rise in the participation rate of women in the workforce.<sup>6</sup> To meet this challenge the position of Volunteer Coordinator was created in 1993, becoming a full time fully-funded appointment four years later.

Volunteer management and training is a core activity at mecwacare. Volunteers sort and price donated items in the opportunity shops, stock shelves and create window displays. They also assist in the Mens' Sheds and at residential centres, stocking library shelves, running the Resident Kiosk and helping with activities. In the Community Centres, volunteers assist with setting out meals and equipment for various activities.

The clubs were not immune to the winds of change. Mention has been made of the increasing use of the senior citizens' clubs by community groups. Organisations such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau, the Malvern Historical Society, St Johns Ambulance Brigade, not to mention meditation and yoga group began to hire the club premises for meetings in the 1980s. All this was part of a process whereby the clubs were being transformed into community centres.

By the late 1980s, the golden age of the senior citizens' clubs had passed. In 1980 MECWA's three clubs had a total membership of 676, of which 305 were at East Malvern, 150 at Malvern,

and 221 at Chadstone. In mid 1982 the Health Commission wrote to all the clubs requesting changes to their constitution to reduce the age limit to 55 years and to change their name to Centre instead of Club. The East Malvern Club agreed but others were hostile despite visits by Carol Porter to all senior citizens' clubs in Melbourne.

In September 1983 the Chadstone Club agreed to change its name to "Centre" and to drop the age limit to 55. Indications of decline surfaced in November 1982 when Mr Holman, President of the East Malvern Club, reported that, 'Unfortunately, quite a few of our older members have died and membership has dropped a little'. In June 1984 the Malvern club reported, 'Meals are still down but it appears that counter lunches can be obtained at the Pub for \$2.50 and they can even take food home for tea!' In July that year, May told the Board that 'we should make some move to encourage ethnic groups to use the centres' and suggested 'that a lunch might be held which could introduce these groups to the centres'.

May's advice was prescient. From the late 1980s active Italian and Greek Senior Citizens' Clubs of approximately a 100 members each began using the Malvern Centre on Tuesdays and Thursdays respectively for activities like cards and bingo with lunch usually as the centerpiece. By this time the original Malvern Elderly Citizens' club had gone into voluntary dissolution of which all that remained was an enthusiastic group of 30 carpet bowlers which met regularly on Fridays. On Mondays the Centre was hired out to a variety of organisations such as the Austin Hospital Auxiliary.



LEFT: Carpet bowls at the Malvern Centre.



RIGHT: Presenting prizes at Malvern Carpet Bowls Club Christmas 1995. Left to right: Geoff Bell (President), Nancy Hogan (MECWA CEO) and Peggy Lamont, who at age 95 was the best all-round bowler for 1995.

On Wednesdays a painting class attended in the morning and in the afternoons a Womens Social Group from the Burke Road Day Centre. Traditional senior clubs survived at the other two Centres though in reduced form. East Malvern's membership fell to 45 of whom a small group of women met for craft work on Monday mornings and about 20 or 30 in the afternoon for a concert provided by professional entertainers. The Centre was used on Tuesday afternoons by a predominantly Italian carpet bowls group of 10 to 15 members, on Wednesday by a yoga group in the morning and in the afternoons by a gentle exercise group and on Thursdays by a painting group.

By the 1990s Chadstone was the least utilised club. Billiards, once a popular activity, was no longer played. On Tuesdays afternoons four to

six members played cards while on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons bingo attracted up to 25 or 30 members. In line with the decision to move beyond the confines of Malvern, the MECWA Board in 1997 made an approach to the Shire of Cardinia which was calling for expressions of interest to provide council services.

Called CardiniaCare, these services embraced home help, home maintenance, adult day care, meals delivery, social support and senior citizens' centres for frail, aged and disabled residents. Funding came mainly from the HACC program via the Department of Human Services supplemented by a Council grant and client fees. Although vastly different in geographical spread<sup>7</sup> – Cardinia Shire is 83 times the area of Stonnington – the range of services provided a close fit with MECWA's traditional services.



FAR LEFT: Staff of CardiniaCare outside their Pakenham offices.

LEFT: Left to right: Neil Lockwood, Robert Knowles MLC, Noel Miller, Peter Costello.



LEFT: Lunching Out program at the Malvern Valley Golf Club Bistro. Left to right: Lesley Cox, Ella Meyer, Robert Gale (Volunteer Driver), Bernadette Fabian (Lunching Out Program Coordinator) and Max Moxon.



RIGHT: Neil Lockwood, Board Chairman, with Val Miles, first President of the East Malvern Opportunity Shop.

The successful launch of MECWA Redicare unquestionably contributed to MECWA's success in being chosen to auspice the service in May 1997.

The transition from Cardinia Council to CardiniaCare was very smooth with most of the council staff under Tracey Devereux accepting employment with MECWA in new offices rented in Pakenham. As a result of the Cardinia venture MECWA's profile grew and its reputation with the Department of Human Services which was involved in the decision to appoint MECWA as the auspicating body, was enhanced.

As with the establishment of MECWA Private Care the auspicating of CardiniaCare was a major break with MECWA's past traditions, changes strongly endorsed by the Chairman, Neil Lockwood, who successfully explained their rationale to MECWA's supporters and the wider community.

The new directions policy did not preclude the provision of new services within Malvern. On December 29, 1994 the Board took the opportunity of purchasing the ex Gardiner Primary School site in Osborne Avenue with a view to building an assisted living and retirement complex. In recognition of Noel Miller's great contribution to MECWA the site was named

The Noel Miller Centre at a dedication ceremony on June 2, 1995, attended by Board Chairman Neil Lockwood, Noel Miller, Peter Costello, MHR for Higgins and Federal Shadow Treasurer, and Robert Knowles, Victorian Health Minister.

In 1998 MECWA's headquarters were relocated from 173 Darling Road to more spacious office accommodation in 450 Waverley Road to cope with increasing staff numbers. Notwithstanding the expansion in its organisational structure MECWA continued to attach great importance to the personal element in delivering a caring service to clients. An interesting example of this was the introduction in 1997 of the Lunching Out Program under the coordination of Bernadette Fabian, whereby meals-on-wheels recipients were taken out to lunch on selected days by MECWA volunteers.

As one client put it, 'I get meals-on-wheels three times a week and the Lunching Out Program is lovely. It's a nice change to go somewhere instead of sitting at home talking to myself. I enjoy the company, I was in business for so long so I suppose I'm used to having company. I've also met up with people I used to know in the past. I really like Bernadette (Fabian) and Marj (Walker) (Lunching Out and Meals-on-Wheels Coordinators). They're such fun and so helpful.' 🍷





TOP: Josh Epstein (left) and Andrew Garnett (right) delivering meals in Prahran.

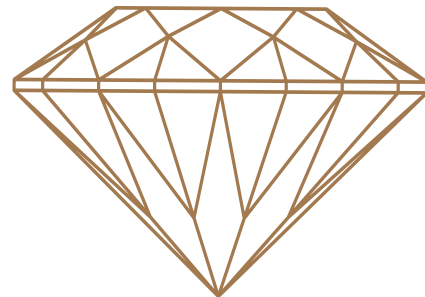
BOTTOM: East Malvern Opportunity Shop volunteers. By June 1998 profits had reached \$1.3 million.

1. Staff were located in rented office at 173 Darling Road, next to the MECWA head office.
2. With implications for the donor base.
3. Peter Dalton and Associates recommended an achievable target of only \$1m. In the event the Appeal raised \$1,427,000, a shortfall of only \$73,000 on the revised target of \$1.5m. The Appeal won the 1997 State and National Awards Fundraising Institute of Australia in the category of organisations whose fundraising income, excluding bequests and capital appeals, is less than \$500,000 per annum. Factors contributing to this win were: the difficulty of the appeal (raising so much for an aged care hostel), the outstanding quality of the Appeal materials and the innovative approaches used to raise funds.
4. Amanda Arnott (Malvern), Patricia Wilson (Prahran), and Jill Randall (East Malvern and overall Coordinator.)
5. Courtesy of Eugene Notermans, proprietor of Hemden Shirtmakers Pty Ltd.
6. Slacks which were off limits to volunteers on duty in the early days of the East Malvern shop are now almost a uniform in the winter because the volunteer ladies are older and feel the cold.
7. For example, meals-on-wheels rounds of 65 kilometers compared with five kilometers for an average round in Stonnington.



## Chapter 5:

# MECWA Cares for Melbourne



**With the advent of a new millennium the process of change which began in the 1990s accelerated over the next decade completely transforming and enhancing the scope of MECWA's services. Three themes can be discerned in this process: modernisation of facilities, a significant geographical widening in the delivery of services, and a steadily increasing professionalism over the whole range of activities.**

Commenting on the year's progress in her 2000 report CEO Nancy Hogan observed: "The time has come to rebuild our existing Malvern facilities which have served the community over 30 years". The success of the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre with its ensuite facilities and spacious light filled interiors with garden outlooks was a constant reminder of the deficiencies of the Warner Street properties, in particular MECWA House. As outgoing Chairman, Neil Lockwood remarked: "One issue we continue

to wrestle with is the redevelopment of MECWA House, the MECWA Independent Living Units, and The Olive Miller Nursing Home. We are committed to redevelop these facilities on a new site at Osborne Avenue, Glen Iris, yet financially the project is still just out of reach. We continue to seek solutions with financial institutions as we are determined to provide the best possible facilities for our residents". The trouble was that approaches to traditional sources of funding, the major Australian banks, had met with distinctly negative responses.

Financing a relatively unknown entity providing residential services to the elderly was a bridge too far. In the event this impasse was overcome when N M Rothschild Australia decided that the request for funding was worth the risk after all.

In May 2001, the City of Stonnington approved a building permit to construct a 135-bed facility in Osborne Avenue.



LEFT: Long-time community housing tenant Geoff Gould and Chief Executive Michele Lewis at the Remembrance Day Service at 9 Elm Road in 2008. Geoff was an integral part of the community culture at Elm Road until his death in 2018, working closely with mecwacare Housing Co-ordinator Barbara Watts and volunteering in one of the opportunity shops. Geoff also shared a special bond with Ms Lewis, with the pair becoming pen pals for many years.

RIGHT: 7 Elm Road Units completed in 2016.





LEFT: Central foyer of the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre.



RIGHT: End of an era, leaving Warner Street.

The total cost of the project was \$17.5 million and was funded from the sale of the Warner Street properties for \$9.2 million with the balance provided by short-term borrowings from N M Rothschild and a Community Appeal whose Committee chaired by Susan Calwell raised \$2 million.

For those early volunteers, Board members and supporters of MECWA who had worked so hard to bring to fruition their dream of affordable accommodation for Malvern's elderly citizens, the sale and subsequent demolition for redevelopment of the Warner Street properties was a sad but inevitable event. With the completion of the project, 102 residents of MECWA House and The Olive Miller Nursing Home moved into the Noel Miller Centre in July 2003.

Their new home provided a totally fresh and more friendly environment far removed from the outmoded institutional design of MECWA House. All the new tastefully furnished bedrooms with ensuite facilities together with the communal areas looked out onto landscaped courtyard gardens. As a consequence residents were able to enjoy an environment much more reminiscent of the their own home surroundings.

The light filled interior offered a range of large and small lounge and dining rooms, as well as a private dining room for use by residents on special occasions. Also available were hairdresser and laundry facilities, kitchenettes and activity rooms, together with a kiosk stocked with gifts and other items to meet everyday needs.

Activities such as concerts, music recitals, excursions, in house movie nights, and exercise programs were regularly offered by the Centre's Lifestyle team and were much appreciated amenities.

The official opening of the Noel Miller Centre in November completed a trifecta of projects enhancing MECWA's residential facilities. While construction was under way at Osborne Avenue a new wing was added to the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre which on completion in mid 2002 provided ten extra high dependency beds bringing the total number to 60 comprising 45 low care beds and 15 high care beds. Two years after the Centre was officially opened in November 2002 by the Hon. Kevin Andrews, a Sensory Garden with the assistance of a generous donor was created for the therapeutic benefit of older residents.

The garden, designed and constructed by Stan Smith and his team at Maze Gardens is a collection of specific plants that aim to provide sensory stimulation. A further enhancement to the Centre's amenities was the construction in 2009 of an outdoor deck to provide a restful oasis for many residents including those confined to wheelchairs, to read or simply to enjoy a safe and secure environment surrounded by plants in bloom.

In the same month as the transfer of residents to the Noel Miller Centre, another group of residents moved into a new extension to the Elm Road units in Glen Iris.





LEFT: The Noel Miller Centre, Glen Iris.



RIGHT: Sensory Garden at the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre.

The project was a response to increasing community demand for low cost accommodation and was funded by the Victorian government. Ironically, while all this was going on, MECWA's oldest landmark, the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Centre, was marked down for demolition by the City of Stonnington to make way for an enlarged Malvern Library which opened in 2005.

No less significant than these developments was the consolidation and expansion of MECWA's services in home nursing, home and personal care, and related community services for the elderly and disabled. Looking back to the time when she was appointed to start up MECWA Private Care in 1993, Karin Dixon recalled how she had a desk, a chair with torn upholstery, and a file containing 80 applications for a few care staff positions. "It was a challenging time but a rewarding one. It coincided with a change in government funding and delivery for aged care including home based care.

From that first day we began to push the traditional geographical boundaries in which MECWA operated, moving to an 8-10 kilometre radius outside of Malvern". Two years later following the purchase of Redicare from the Red Cross the business tripled in size with a further widening of the geographical boundaries. Care staff rose to 300 supported by seven office staff. In 1998 further growth occurred with the commencement of Redicare Nursing Service. As Karin recalled, "This was a natural progression. Our clients were getting frailer, and the trend to stay at home and the push for early hospital discharge was growing.

It was natural for us to add nursing to Redicare's operations. This move was consolidated further in 2000 with the acquisition of Tudor Home Nursing Service which opened up the acute care market to us". Within a year MECWA Redicare had over 500 carers, 100 nurses, 18 permanent care coordinators and administrative support staff.

From 2000 to 2003, Redicare expanded its in-home services within the inner southern suburbs of Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, Whitehorse, Boroondara and Stonnington and also into the northern and western Metropolitan regions. Home nursing services included wound and medication management, intravenous, stomal and enteral therapy, continence support and assessment, and palliative care. Home care services provided personal support with general household tasks such as cleaning, vacuuming and ironing as well as personal care assistance with simple tasks such as showering, dressing, preparing meals and shopping.

Services were offered on a fee-for-service basis for private clients while others were subsidised under the Home & Community Care, Veterans Home Care, or National Respite for Carers programs funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. All assessments for home nursing or home and personal care are conducted by a registered nurse who coordinates all subsequent contacts with the client – a feature unique to MECWA as a service provider.



LEFT: Offering personal care for seniors in our Community.



RIGHT: Woodworking shed at Rivendell House.

Since 2001 MECWA Redicare had been providing services for a growing number of clients living in the City of Brimbank. As a consequence, in 2004 MECWA Redicare signed a Service Accord with the City of Brimbank with the aim of strengthening the collaboration and coordination between the two organisations in the delivery of services. Because of the cultural diversity of this municipality whose population includes significant Turkish, Vietnamese, Greek and Italian communities, Redicare staff undergo special training in working with interpreters and in cross cultural communication.

In 2007, *mecwacare* opened an office at 2 Devonshire Street, Sunshine, in order to operate the HACC program locally and facilitate closer liaison between Redicare's client service coordinator and assessment staff with the City of Brimbank's Aged and Disability Unit. These links were further strengthened in 2009 when *mecwacare* Western Regional staff team moved out of the Devonshire Street premises to the City of Brimbank's municipal offices in McCracken Street, Sunshine.

As a result there is now a single inquiry line for home care services, providing residents with greater convenience. After an initial clinical assessment, clients are provided with the best available services from either *mecwacare* or the Council.

In 2007 *mecwacare* opened an office in Plenty Road, Preston for its staff who were operating home nursing services in the suburbs of Banyule, Moreland, Darebin, Whittlesea, and Nillumbik.

Two years later to meet the growing demand for quality at-home care the office moved to 26 High Street, Northcote. The new office has more space for MECWA's Northern Regional staff team, including specialist Nurse Advisors who manage Adult and Child Continence programs in north-western Melbourne.

A similar story of rapid growth and change occurred following the move into the Shire of Cardinia in 1997. "We set up offices in a small house in Johns Street (Pakenham)", recalled Anne Wright and Janeen Smart. "Planned Activity Groups (PAGs) were serviced in a rented room at the Pakenham Seniors Centre with only a few clients. An additional group was run from Emerald and Koo Wee Rup once a week.

The office was manned by one manager, two part time office staff, one PAG coordinator, two PAG assistants, 28 care staff and maintenance person. There were only two computers in the office and they weren't connected to Head Office. There was no email and information was placed on disc to send to Head Office. Manual processes were used for most accounting packages and information was then sent to Head Office to process and store."

To accommodate the increasing demand for services in the Shire, Rivendell House at 8 Henry Street, was purchased in 1999. A woodworking shed was added to the premises to meet the needs of a woodworking group primarily of men who enjoyed the more active social aspects of the program. Initially, there were only 15 to 20 clients with one or two assistants.





A birthday celebration for one of the Ladies' Group members at Bowen Street.

Over the next decade a Community Transport Service was started with volunteer drivers to enable clients to attend shopping or medical appointments as far away as the Alfred Hospital – an important service in a Shire which lacks public transport infrastructure.

The Community Centre at Rivendell House today manages a full day program six days a week catering for people living with dementia, clients with acquired brain injury, and older adults looking for social integration and inclusion. Planned Activity Groups which are also available in community rooms in Garfield, Koo Wee Rup and Emerald one or two days a week enable clients to enjoy a wide variety of activities and services including craft work, music therapy, day outings, card games, gardening projects, podiatry and strength training programs.

The latter are particularly important for improving balance, flexibility and coordination leading to improved bone density and greater feelings of self-esteem. Most of all, strength training reduces the risk of falls.

A nutritionally balanced meal is provided each day. A unique feature of CardiniaCare is the provision of a delivered meals service with the assistance of paid drivers to clients who would otherwise be nutritionally compromised or at risk. By 2009 staff numbers had grown to 28 part time and 70 full time servicing over 2,000 clients annually. *mecwacare* currently occupies commercial office space in 66-68 Main Street after moving from the cramped office in Johns Street to a house in 48 Main Street.

Similar programs are offered at *mecwacare's* Bowen Street Community Centre in Chadstone. In 1998 the underutilised Bowen Street Elderly

Citizens' Centre underwent extensive renovations and alterations funded with the assistance of a Department of Community Services grant of \$219,000 to offer care for a younger group of individuals with a disability. The facility which included a club room for the Chadstone Senior Citizens' Club to continue activities was officially opened in February 1999.

A special program is available once a week for people with an acquired brain injury as a result of a variety of causes such as traffic accidents, drugs or alcohol abuse. On the other four week days there is a variety of planned activity programs for senior citizens. Lunch is provided every day and volunteers help bring clients to the centre. In January 2009 clients from the Burke Road Community Centre – elderly frail people over 65 – came over to Bowen Street following the decision to consolidate programs at one Centre.

At Fisher Street a similar transformation occurred in 1999. For two years MECWA Access Service (formerly Caulfield Access Service) had been running programs to support individuals with intellectual disabilities. With the assistance of a grant of \$93,625 from the Department of Human Services MECWA was able to convert and refurbish an underutilised section of the Centre to accommodate a Living Skills Centre while still retaining room for senior citizens' activities. The Living Skills Program is designed to assist clients to develop living skills in areas such as budgeting, healthy shopping, preparation of food, cooking and cleaning to increase their independence at home. All client records are maintained on a database designed specifically for this program by *mecwacare* staff. Opportunities are provided for clients to improve their horticultural skills in the surrounding gardens.



LEFT: Fisher Street Living Skills Centre.



RIGHT: Judith Congalton delivers expertise to mecwacare in health accreditation.

Reporting on the purchase of Tudor Home Nursing Service in July 2000, Robin Syme, who succeeded Neil Lockwood as Chairman that year, noted that this acquisition had added “a new dimension to services provided by Redicare. With this purchase came the requirement to ensure services were provided within a quality management system which could be demonstrated to funding providers.” Essentially this was another example of “who pays the piper calls the tune.”

Confronted with the issue of funding an ageing population and people living longer and requiring more expensive care it became paramount for the Commonwealth Department of Health and the Ageing to ensure that service providers achieved optimum efficiencies and value.

Following the implementation of the Commonwealth Aged Care Act in 1997 and the accompanying Aged Care Reform Program, providers of residential aged care facilities were required to be accredited by the Commonwealth Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency by January 2001 in order to continue receiving government funding.

Faced with this important deadline the Board handed responsibility for ensuring MECWA's quality management systems would meet the required criteria to Residential Services Manager Judith Congalton, whose prior experience as Director of Nursing at St Vincent's Private Hospital and a surveyor with the Australian Council on Health Standards well qualified her to perform this role.

Important gaps in the quality assurance systems were identified at the Warner Street facilities such as deficiencies in relation to the systematic recordings of residents' sleep, bowel and urinary patterns, and lack of resident surveys and reports of meetings with families. The whole process involved committing MECWA to seeking ISO (International Organisation for Standardization) 9001-2000 certification which in the 1990s had become widely accepted as meeting quality accreditation requirements for healthcare facilities.

The elements for ISO accreditation involved 44 criteria for assessment covering a wide range of issues from occupational health and safety to the ratio of staff to residents and the quality of buildings. In the event MECWA received the required accreditation over all its programs which was reconfirmed the following year. Over the succeeding years there were regular reviews of all MECWA's programs by the Commonwealth Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency, SAI Global quality management system (ISO 9000:2001) and SAI Global occupational health and management system (ASNZ 4801:2001) with staff embracing commitment to implementing a Continuous Improvement Management System.

Underpinning all this was an increasing emphasis on staff training to ensure the highest possible levels of professionalism in the delivery of services.

In 2000 approximately 45% of MECWA's staff of carers held formal qualifications. In 2002 a separate position of Manager Training and Development was created and partnerships were established with a variety of registered training organisations to deliver accredited training.



Current Chief Executive Michele Lewis (right) with Amalia Araujo, Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) Excellence Awards Trainee of the Year, 2009.

Providers include Chisholm Institute, Swinburne University of Technology (Hawthorn and Wantirna Campuses), the Australian Vocational Learning Institute, and the Interactive Training and Alzheimer's Association of Victoria. By 2005 over 80% of Residential Services personal carers and Redicare carers held Certificates III in Community Services (Aged Care Work) while 98% of Community Carers held "Certificate III (Home and Community Care)", and 25% "Certificate IV in Aged Care Work".

In addition to this drive for formal accreditation a policy of extensive in-house training has been implemented in areas such as manual handling, infection control, hazardous substances, food handling, first aid level 2, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and fire safety. Issues needing special attention are regularly identified and prioritised for incorporation in the program.

Development of appropriate information technology systems has been integral to delivering efficient and optimal outcomes in an organisation spread across more than 20 locations in the metropolitan area. In 2003 the email system was standardised and a web-based browser was installed to facilitate direct access to head office from all sites. A year later a Human Resources Management Information System was purchased to facilitate the collection of employee information and improve management reporting.

In 2006 Teleclock, a system designed to provide all the information needed to pay staff and invoice clients, was implemented in Redicare. Carers simply used the telephone to enter start and finish times per client and the system automatically recorded the details. The system also sent recorded messages relating to special events, training, or occupational health and safety reminders.

Carer safety was enhanced as the system kept head office informed of carers' whereabouts. In 2007 Icare, a computerised resident documentation program was implemented across the Noel Miller and Trescowthick Centres under the guidance of Michele Lewis, Director of Residential Services. Based on national standards for assessment and care its purpose was to eliminate paper based documentation and streamline data collection processes.

Even before the opening of the Noel Miller Centre the MECWA board was aware that the demand for accommodation in its residential aged centres was continuing to outweigh the availability of beds. A search for suitable sites for another aged care centre bore fruit in 2005 with the purchase of properties at 1245 and 1247 Malvern Road, Malvern – by chance only around the corner from the site of MECWA House. Shortly afterwards, Chairman, Robin Syme, announced that the MECWA board had committed to the construction of a new centre for 120 residents.





LEFT: Windsor Opportunity Shop in Chapel Street (circa 2009).



RIGHT: Malvern East Opportunity Shop in Waverley Road.

Malvern Road is to set new standards in aged care living. The design includes open air courtyards and gardens designed by renowned landscape gardener John Patrick and stylish interior decoration by Glenda Roberts, together with many innovative features such as a home theatre and club room, cafe and internet access, library and reading room and single, double and three-room suites to provide a range of living options. Construction was planned to start early in 2007 but was delayed for months as a result of preliminary excavations revealing contamination of the site by previous owners.

Malvern Road will open in early 2010. Unlike the funding of the Noel Miller Centre there was no hesitation from Australian banks in providing the required short term borrowings – a testimony to MECWA's strong financial position and its enhanced reputation following the surprisingly rapid discharge of its debt ahead of schedule to its bankers. Amidst all this change *mecwacare's* volunteers continue to be the life blood of the organisation.

In a myriad of ways they make an indispensable contribution whether sorting and arranging loads of second-hand clothes and household effects for the three opportunity shops, serving in the residential centres' cafeterias and helping residents with personal care, assisting staff with planned activities in the community centres, or acting as volunteer drivers to bring clients to and from *mecwacare's* three community centres.

Sadly, the tradition of volunteers for delivering meals-on-wheels in Malvern came to an end in the decade leading up to *mecwacare's* Jubilee.

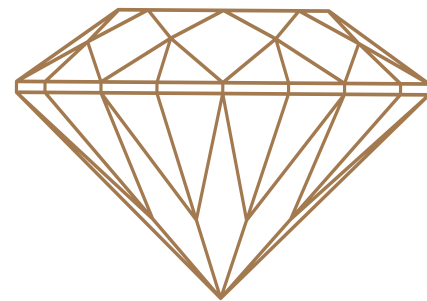
In 2002 the contract for the delivery of meals in Prahran and South Yarra was not renewed owing to the increasing difficulty of finding sufficient volunteers. The meals service in Malvern continued until July 2007 when *mecwacare* decided to hand over responsibility to the City of Stonnington. With changing community expectations and the growing availability of prepared meals at supermarkets and other retail outlets demand for delivered meals in the previous three years had declined from 52,000 to 27,000 per year.

As well, the City of Stonnington were able to negotiate a much better price for clients given economies of scale as well as being able to offer greater choice. Establishing meals-on-wheels was the first goal that the original Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee set itself in 1959. The connections and friendships made between volunteers and the elderly are still fondly remembered.



## Chapter 6:

# The Growth Agenda



**With the significant work undertaken during the previous decade setting the standard for future facilities and services, mecwacare began a phase of exponential growth unlike any it had experienced before. Setting a precedent for what was to come was the much-anticipated opening of the state-of-the-art mecwacare Malvern Centre in the heart of Malvern, where it all began 50 years earlier.**

Board Chairman Mr Robin Syme and Member for Higgins Ms Kelly O'Dwyer officially opened the Malvern Centre on February 1, 2010. A significant focus of the evening's celebrations was the naming of the centre's four wings, honouring those who had made an extraordinary contribution over the past 50 years: mecwacare Life Governors Joy Waller-Ogden, the late Mary Moline, the late Neil Lockwood and Ross Heale. Each person had tirelessly contributed to mecwacare and collectively dedicated over 110 years of voluntary service. Mr Syme said at the time: "We have been privileged to witness four such remarkable and inspiring volunteers."

Chief Executive Michele Lewis welcomed the first resident to the Malvern Centre, Mrs Lorraine Rayner, and her family by presenting her with a bouquet of flowers to mark the occasion. Still considered by many as "the jewel in the crown", the Malvern Centre was built to support the tremendous need in the area for quality aged care accommodation. In a time when the population was ageing and more Melburnians were facing decisions regarding the ongoing care of family members, this new centre provided excellent high and low care in beautifully appointed surroundings and was the first aged care home in Melbourne to offer two and three-room suites.

Immaculate attention to detail is what set the 101-bed centre apart from the rest – from high-quality linen and contoured pillows to beautiful crockery and cutlery. Furnishings and artwork throughout the centre were carefully selected in consultation with interior designer Glenda Roberts to provide relaxing and elegant surroundings. There was even a café, cinema room, library and hairdresser on-site.



LEFT: Malvern Centre opening. Left to right: Ross Heale, Max Gregory and Member for Higgins Ms Kelly O'Dwyer.

RIGHT: Chief Executive Michele Lewis giving flowers to Mrs Lorraine Raymer, first resident at the new Malvern Centre.



LEFT: Malvern Centre lounge.



RIGHT: Chairman Robin Syme cutting the 50th anniversary cake with Chief Executive Michele Lewis.

Ms Lewis commented: “We strive to provide the highest quality care and services available for seniors, which is still true to our founders’ dreams and remains key to everything we do today.”

In October 2009, more than 120 people mingled in a festive atmosphere at the Stonnington Town Hall to celebrate *mecwacare*’s 50th anniversary. They reflected on how the organisation had grown from its foundations in 1959 to one that cares for over 6,000 people across greater metropolitan Melbourne, with 823 staff and 256 volunteers.

With the expansion in residential and home care services during the past decade came the need to upgrade systems and processes, particularly the information and communication technology network, to improve workplace activity and flow of information. *mecwacare* implemented a number of enterprise systems, including the Great Plains accounting software package and resident billing program CIM to improve efficiencies, as well as a standardised networking environment with seamless connectivity at all site locations.

It was also a period of change at the Board level. Chairman Mr Robin Syme elected to step down after 10 years in the role. Mr Syme had overseen a very productive and successful development agenda during his tenure. He supported, guided and mentored three Chief Executives and had seen the organisation grow significantly in its services to the community and in the recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers. His kindness, attention to detail, fair approach and keen intelligence supported a reflective

management style and the organic development of the organisation. A luxurious 31-unit retirement living complex next to the Malvern Centre would later be named in his honour.

At the June Board meeting in 2010, the Board was most pleased to announce the appointment of Mr John Hood as the new Chairman, another strong supporter of *mecwacare* since he joined the Board in 1998. His mother was also a resident at MECWA House in Warner Street. Twenty-one years on, Mr Hood is still Chairman today.

In order to support this first level of growth, *mecwacare* conducted a thorough check of its internal foundations, such as a review of its financial position to ensure long-term sustainability, the capacity of staff to deliver the forecast increase in services and whether the right clinical and governance systems were in place to support this audacious move. The organisation worked hard to pay off debt so it was in a sound financial position to forge ahead with its plans, including new developments and significant refurbishments, in line with the expansion across Victoria.

*mecwacare* developed an Organisational Risk Register aligned with strategic objectives and Australian Standards to support monitoring and control of key risk areas. A review the following year saw the adoption of a “traffic light” framework to inform the potential and status of the risk, what action had been undertaken and completed, and areas where further action was required. Future development of the site occupational health and safety risk register supported the identification and analysis of OHS risks, enabling trending between sites and facilities





LEFT: New Chairman Mr John Hood.



RIGHT: Volunteers Marelene Butterley and Marjorie Waite, with Malvern East Opportunity Shop Manager Brenda Davies.

mecwacare's commitment to continuously improve the care provided was evidenced in its involvement in numerous research projects throughout this period, one of the first being with the National Ageing Research Institute titled, *Staff/resident communication practices in residential aged care – strategies for enhancement* in 2009. As a result of this project, conducted at the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre, a staff resource education kit was developed for all aged care facilities across the nation.

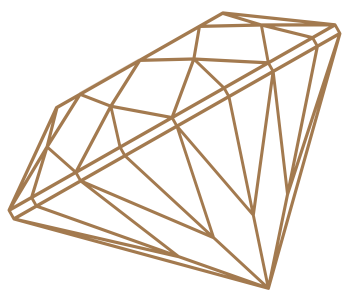
Residents were also involved in the Victoria Police campaign You Are Not Alone, aimed at building trusting relationships between senior Victorians and police to encourage the reporting of crimes. The campaign included postcards and posters that were designed and delivered to elderly people's homes, doctors' surgeries, emergency facilities and aged care facilities across the state. The residents were delighted to have been involved in this work and perceived it as an inclusive way of contributing to the community in which they live.

Community programs continued to be reviewed and major renovations at the Fisher Street Centre were completed to provide a safe facility that met disability standards and allowed more streamlined program activities for people with disabilities. On-site offices ensured close contact between staff and service participants, which reinforced the improvement of support and care standards. This heralded the completion of a three-year program of work to significantly

transform services at this site and the nearby Bowen Street Centre. Podiatry services were relocated to Bowen Street.

Quality occupational health, safety and risk management, coupled with reflective governance, remained a focus throughout the following year to ensure the organisation was a sustainable, developing business that provided quality care and met employment challenges into the future. mecwacare was at the cutting edge in this area with a very skilled team reflecting on all aspects of the service, including auditing, undertaking root cause analyses and encouraging participation in continuous improvement.

The Board continued to lead in the development of the strategic plan, risk management plan and governance around clinical and organisational outcomes. In the 2010-11 Annual Review, it was noted: "Strong financial rigour and the conservative investment approach adopted by the Board enabled mecwacare to weather the financial crisis satisfactorily".



However, not all *mecwacare* services were immune to the global financial crisis, with the three opportunity shops suffering due to people hanging on to their treasures and not clearing older clothing from their wardrobes. The shops experienced an overall decline in the donation of goods, which put considerable pressure on sales. On a positive note, the organisation welcomed some new volunteers at the shops. “Over the past years we have experienced the loss of several volunteers due to ageing, illness and loss of mobility. Staff and fellow volunteers feel the loss acutely as friendships formed over the years at the shops are highly valued and enriching,” it was noted in the Annual Review.

Volunteers continue to love working in the shops and across the broader organisation, including lifestyle activities, bus trips and social visits. *mecwacare* offers additional services when volunteers are part of a program and donations and government funds become diminishing resources as the sector moves into a time of consumer-directed, consumer-pays arrangements.

At this time, the aged care sector was on the brink of myriad change. *mecwacare* had participated in community debate around Productivity Commission recommendations and while it was well positioned to embrace the forthcoming changes, it was also quick to acknowledge it needed to be flexible in developing options for people as they age. *mecwacare* reinforced its commitment to its mission, vision and values to ensure it continued to provide for the disadvantaged, aged, disabled and others in its care.

Disability services went from strength to strength, with confident service coordination and strong client advocacy as clients transitioned across their maturing years, struggled in their accommodation or chose new life directions. Staff improved their skills through strong continuous management, supported by learning and development opportunities and a focused recruitment strategy.

At Rivendell House and Bowen Street, planned activity groups prospered as a result of good programming and coordination, growth in services and active client engagement. Refurbishment of the Bowen and Fisher Street centres the previous year had improved access, egress and safety for clients and workers.

The *mecwacare* Malvern Centre grew in numbers of residents and staff as the organisation continued to focus on developing the necessary skills to deliver high-quality care, including customer service, wound care and management of difficult and challenging behaviours. It was at this time that *mecwacare* introduced nurse educators to undertake bedside training in residential and home care settings.

But all the planning in the world could not have prepared the organisation for the floods that occurred in February 2011. During this unplanned weather event, the Malvern Centre welcomed several residents from the Noel Miller Centre at one o'clock in the morning after they were forced to evacuate. The following day, the centre took in 25 aged care residents from Koo Wee Rup, south-east of Melbourne, in need of urgent accommodation.

“It was lovely to be able to assist in times of crisis and residents really enjoyed having guests, hearing the stories of rising waters, night time escapes and life in residential care in Koo Wee Rup,” Mr Hood noted.

No sooner did they farewell their guests, the Malvern Centre was opening the doors of its Wellbeing Centre to Bowen Street clients seeking shelter as their site was badly affected by the flooding too. It was a busy time and provided lots of discussion and diversion for clients. As a result of the extreme weather conditions, many *mecwacare* services suffered water damage with refurbishments, repairs and replacement of carpets undertaken at the Malvern Centre, Noel Miller Centre (entire first floor), Bowen Street, Fisher Street and the Glen Iris community housing units.





LEFT: The Malvern Centre hosts Koo We Rup residents during the floods.



RIGHT: Home care client Bernice with Direct Care Worker Jackie.

Residents watched as Gardiners Creek burst its banks and water slowly crept across the paths and up the hill. Some residents even considered packing their bags and moving into *mecwacare's* emergency accommodation. Luckily, there was a slowing of the rain, the leaks stopped dripping, towels were wrung out and the residents could rest again.

Home nursing and care services continued their transformation with the program restructured into regional teams in order to better manage the services and prepare for future growth. Following a review in October 2011, *mecwacare* merged the Northcote and Sunshine offices into the North West Metro Service on the border of the growth corridor at Keilor East. This significant undertaking marked a giant leap in technology, with *mecwacare* investing heavily in a new computer system that was expected to revolutionise the coordination of services, advance clinical management tools for care staff in the community and allow a speedier response to referrals and assessments.

“This is a time of building in the home care arena to allow for future growth and development as the baby boomers increase their demand for services and options for care into the home,” said Ms Lewis. “Information technology plays a key role in taking us forward. Thankfully, we have an excellent team guiding this core business function.”

Substantial resources were directed towards the development of Carelink+, a new client management system.

This new technology spurred the redesign of key internal processes to ensure appropriate and best use of the product and more importantly, the best client service delivery. In tandem to this, a number of Active Service Model (ASM) initiatives were introduced to provide an improved level of care to clients and their families. The ASM was a Victorian Department of Health initiative designed to build capacity and ensure care was restorative.

A review of client intake processes was undertaken with a subsequent restructure resulting in a centralised intake model for the Southern and Eastern Metro areas, improving access and creating a more efficient method of managing client intake. Service managers were directly allocated to a regional team, resulting in more efficient client administration with the regional structure benefitting rostering and staff placement. *mecwacare* continued to collaborate with Cardinia Shire and Brimbank City Council regarding Home and Community Care intake, assessment and coordination of services to ensure clients received the services they needed in a prompt and efficient manner.

Community housing at Elm Road received a facelift with hundreds of native trees and shrubs planted across the property to attract native birds, reduce lawn mowing and watering, and improve the environmental sustainability of the area. Residents really appreciated the upgrade with several noting this as the “best home I’ve ever lived in”. Several residents have now turned 80 or more.



LEFT: Jane and Simon Price at the Malvern Centre.



RIGHT: Award recipients from the Employee, Volunteer and Contractor Awards 2019.

The beauty of the units is that they are disability and ageing friendly and allow for residents to live independently for many years. When the service opened some years ago, most residents were relatively young however over the past years, we have seen more regular respite admission to our residential facilities, home care more often provided and some permanent transfers to our aged care facilities.

A major achievement for the team at the Noel Miller Centre was the opening of a fourth care unit. With people entering care at a later age, many residents now had more complex care needs that required a greater level of clinical expertise and coordination. Hands-on staff education was increasingly critical to delivering the best care outcomes. Restructuring the centre improved the clinical skill mix of staff by having more registered and enrolled nurses providing and guiding care to residents.

At the Malvern Centre, six new two-room high-care suites were established at the request of residents to reflect "Ageing in Place", which recognises the importance of residents' surroundings as they age and meeting their changing needs and requirements.

In 2010-11, *mecwacare* commenced the development and implementation of an Employer of Choice Program that aimed to position the organisation as an employer of choice and market leader in the aged care, community and care sector.

This program was later reinforced as one of six strategic objectives in the organisation's 2015-19 Strategic Plan.

In May 2011, *mecwacare* was declared by the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency to be compliant with the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999. A position that has only strengthened over the past decade, with 55 per cent of Board Members female in 2019.

Other positive workforce initiatives included the Employee and Volunteer Awards Program, which provided staff with the recognition they deserved for their contribution to care and services across *mecwacare*. "The work of aged and disability carers can sometimes be painful, with the loss of people they have cared for and grown to love. The awards assist staff in joining together and acknowledging the significant efforts undertaken in caring for an aged care and disability community," Ms Lewis said. The organisation introduced a Board Scholarship program in 2011 that supports its Employer of Choice initiatives and is part of *mecwacare*'s ongoing commitment to staff professional development.

Another key focus was the reinforcement of the *mecwacare* values – Caring, Accountable, Respectful and Ethical. From personal care assistants and direct care workers at the coalface through to the Board of Directors, all were aspiring to these values and working towards a strong and binding culture.





LEFT: Staff training is a key focus. Pictured is Nurse Educator Joan Thomson with staff.



RIGHT: Anne Wright on a day trip with disability clients.

By 2011-12, *mecwacare* was providing services to over 7,000 people each week in all 31 local government areas in metropolitan Melbourne, employing 907 staff and 250 volunteers. It was also the start of sweeping reforms in the aged care sector.

Management worked hard to establish a framework to achieve the recommendations outlined in the Department of Health and Ageing reform package that was unveiled in April 2012. A surplus budget allowed the organisation to grow in the context of these reforms and the organisation's strategic plan. The reforms, to be progressively implemented from July 1, 2012, presented challenges and opportunities with a massive shift to a customer service model that empowered clients to become actively engaged in their care and forced staff to rethink how they interacted with them. Under the Board's direction, *mecwacare* continued to seek and review options for growth in residential services, home nursing and care services and community services.

The Board and Leadership Team reviewed the strategic plan to address the need for more independent living units for people over 60 who were financially disadvantaged and subsequently, tendered for community housing in the Bayside region. *mecwacare* applied for funds to grow existing services in Cardinia and Brimbank. An upgrade of Rivendell House in Pakenham was commissioned to accommodate the growth of

planned activity groups and services in Cardinia Shire and surrounding areas. *mecwacare* Malvern Centre reached full capacity with a continued demand for its popular two-room suites.

*mecwacare* services continued to meet accreditation and certification standards. Disability services were audited for the first time, with surveyors reviewing programs and processes against the disability framework. Three-year service certification was achieved, reflecting strong and healthy systems and processes. Planned changes associated with the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme meant people with a disability would soon have a wider range of options and providers for services and support. *mecwacare* would adjust to accommodate the upcoming changes with an emphasis on transition through services as clients' needs changed.

To address the service growth in Home Nursing and Care Services, the organisation continued to invest in information technology and rolled out new client management system Carelink+ to streamline and integrate in-home client services, payroll and invoicing. This new system delivered expected efficiency improvements in the coordination of care delivery in clients' homes.

In March 2012, *mecwacare* was granted an official Employer of Choice for Women citation for 2012 and 2013 by the Australian Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, with only 36 organisations in Victoria achieving the status.





LEFT: Volunteer Annette Morozoff.



RIGHT: Fisher Street Online Books participants Jesse and Gayani.

This was a significant accomplishment, recognising the hard work by so many to develop a culture worthy of such a title. Applications were assessed against rigorous criteria including work/life balance, learning and development opportunities, paid parental leave, equality in advancement opportunities and pay equity. During the same year, *mecwacare* achieved certification from the Breastfeeding Association of Australia. Both of these accolades were huge steps towards *mecwacare* becoming an inclusive and diverse organisation.

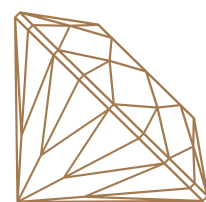
Although the organisation had undergone considerable change and growth in recent years, one of the constants has always been its volunteers. These generous people have been fundamental to the provision of services since *mecwacare* was founded by a group of community-minded individuals in 1959. “They share our goal of providing care and assistance to those in need. We recognise the selflessness and dedication of those who donate their precious time to our organisation,” said Board Chair John Hood. In 2017-18, *mecwacare*’s volunteers contributed a massive 36,472 hours of voluntary work.

Bowen Street Centre clients moved back into their refurbished hub in October 2011. Volunteer Ted Symes was nominated for a Minister for Health Volunteer Award and the popular Monday afternoon music program continued to grow – it now had a long waiting list of people wanting

to join. Clients from the Fisher Street Centre, which now provides day services for up to 150 adults with intellectual disabilities, established *mecwacare* Online Books, which sells donated books through an eBay store.

The program builds the clients’ business skills and knowledge which will transfer to more meaningful lives outside of *mecwacare*. The Fisher Street team introduced a catering program that was so popular, it added another program called Soup Kitchen. Participants learn new catering skills while preparing nutritious food for themselves, other participants and staff. Participants also provide a very popular trolley service at the Malvern Centre, selling gifts and magazines to the residents, who look forward each week to their visit.

*mecwacare* significantly expanded its learning and development portfolio due to increased mandatory training levels in residential services and increased staff numbers in home and nursing care services. Courses included registered nurse and enrolled nurse training and a Dementia Care Essentials certificate through Alzheimer’s Australia. Other courses available to staff included Certificate IV Frontline Management, Certificate IV Lifestyle and Leisure and Diploma of Frontline Management.



The organisation committed to transition direct care workers to a minimum Certificate III qualification. It successfully implemented a two-day orientation program for staff prior to entering the workplace. This program included competency skills development and legislated mandatory training.

As change in the aged care and disability services sector intensified, *mecwacare* moved from the strategic and planning phase into operational reality. Mindful of the government's imperative for service growth to remain viable and the implementation of the *Living Longer, Living Better* aged care reforms and the National Disability Insurance Scheme, *mecwacare* considered a number of options for strengthening and growing its services while keeping its community roots and values intact.

With more than 10,000 clients and 1,200 staff, *mecwacare* successfully tendered for care services in the Ballarat region. It was a momentous occasion as it was the first time in the organisation's 54-year history that it would provide care outside of metropolitan Melbourne. The lead-up to launching the service was an exciting time, with significant work across the organisation to win the tender and ensure a smooth client transition. Some Melbourne-based staff relished the opportunity to help establish a new service, putting their hand up to leave their roles in disability and community services and relocate to Ballarat to join the home care team. It was an unexpected but welcome benefit of this strategic growth period as staff had the opportunity to upskill and move within the broader organisation.

*mecwacare* envisaged more than 160 clients would transition to the Ballarat service with care provided by more than 40 local staff members and an expectation the service would grow rapidly into nursing care, private care, hospital in the home and post-acute care. In the 2012-13 Annual Review, Mr Hood noted: "We are proud of

the dedicated and professional staff who made this a reality and look forward to welcoming our new clients and staff members in the Ballarat region."

The Ballarat Region Service opened its doors in Drummond Street North on July 1, 2013. Expanding beyond Melbourne had been a crucial part of the organisation's five-year strategic plan and it was very proud to see this come to fruition. "We are looking forward to becoming part of the Ballarat community and to building a strong reputation in regional Victoria," Mr Hood said. This service now cares for over 1,000 clients and employs 100 staff.

Ms Lewis was invited by the Victorian Government to represent *mecwacare* as part of a trade mission to south-east Asia. The mission included tours and discussions with aged, acute and private healthcare facilities in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. Home care services were in their infancy in south-east Asia as the region struggled to embrace demographic changes.

Dementia care, residential facilities and community programs were often basic. Ms Lewis showcased *mecwacare*'s services, governance and principles of client transition through the continuum of care. Government leaders and aged care organisations in the region were very interested in its service delivery models, with several since visiting *mecwacare* to see the facilities first-hand. "We gained a deeper understanding of the Australian healthcare agenda through discussions with representatives from our government and aged care sector," Ms Lewis said. "This trip was enlightening and showed *mecwacare* as an emerging force as we grow our services."



LEFT: Ballarat Region Service staff outside the new office.



RIGHT: Barry Fenton at the Bowen Street renaming ceremony in 2017.

mecwacare's impeccable results from external audits continued throughout 2012-13, with three successful surveys against the Community Care Standards which covered all programs funded under Home and Community Care and the National Respite for Carers Program, including planned activity groups, community transport, nursing, respite care, personal care and maintenance services. Feedback noted a team that was "committed to high-quality service and respectful of the individual".

In the current climate, when the aged care and disability services sector is under more scrutiny than ever before, mecwacare can hold its head high and proudly attest that it has never failed an accreditation survey or been found non-compliant. In 2017-18, it successfully completed 117 external audits and/or reviews.

Two new Board Members were welcomed, Elizabeth Dimitriadis and Ian McHutchison. Ms Dimitriadis was the director of health and community services consultancy group, LDC Group. Mr McHutchison was a Board member at Urban Communities, the Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership and the Eva Tilley Memorial Home and had performed key roles at Adult Multicultural Education Services and the Brotherhood of St Laurence. mecwacare thanked Jorgen Elstoft, Virginia Rogers and Ceridwyn Spain, who resigned or retired from the Board after a combined 27 years of dedicated volunteer service.

Mr Elstoft's family had been long-time volunteers and donors to mecwacare, and the Noel Miller Centre Library is named in his and wife Jenny's honour due to their generous founding contribution. Mr Elstoft would later be bestowed the honour of Life Governor in 2014 and in May 2016, mecwacare's residential aged care centre in Hamlyn Heights (Geelong) was named Elstoft House.

In June 2013, Leading Age Services Australia, one of the national peak bodies for aged care, awarded Board Member Barry Fenton its Victorian Volunteer Award for Excellence. This award recognised Mr Fenton's incredible contribution to mecwacare over three decades, including his Board service, driving buses for community clients, delivering meals on wheels and working in the opportunity shops. He would later have a community centre named after him.

With a focus on social interaction, residents at the three residential aged care facilities actively participated in their local community, spending time with students from schools and youth programs. At the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre in Prahran, the St Michael's Grammar School Band and Hello Music School Children's Orchestra regularly performed for residents, who loved to encourage the youngsters and talk with them about their instruments, schools and lives. At the Noel Miller Centre and Malvern Centre, students from St Kevin's and De La Salle colleges spend time getting to know the residents, helping with crosswords, assisting them on walks and outings, and many other activities.





School children are regular visitors to the residential centres.

The Malvern Centre has a special relationship with the nearby Malvern Central School, with residents and children regularly visiting each other for art and craft activities, dances and games. These interactions facilitate social independence, inclusion and community engagement for all involved, be they young or young at heart.

mecwacare extended its support to veterans by providing nursing and personal care to those members of the community who were eligible for Department of Veterans' Affairs services, such as the veterans' community nursing program and veterans' home care. Many of mecwacare's Home and Community Services today are supported by government-funded healthcare programs, including Home and Community Care (HACC), Transport Accident Commission (TAC), Individual Support Packages (ISP) and the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). It is also a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider. Care provided through these services supports good health and wellbeing and aims to maximise independence.

mecwacare's collaboration with the National Ageing Research Institute continued when it partnered with NARI and La Trobe University on a pilot study aimed at developing and evaluating individualised falls prevention strategies for people with dementia. The organisation participated in research with the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre to explore what decision-making means when a person has a diagnosis of dementia. mecwacare's participation in these research projects supports advances in care for people with dementia while developing awareness and skills for staff.

On the technology front, the North West Metro Service in Keilor East tested the organisation's new automated phone system, replacing the manual call intake process to ensure speedier service for clients calling in, reducing phone noise and managing more effective distribution of referrals.

With house prices in Melbourne and the cost of living on the rise, rental affordability became more challenging. mecwacare decided to address the issue head-on and successfully tendered for independent living units in the beachside suburbs of Sandringham and Beaumaris. This would almost triple its capacity to provide homes for people who are over 65 and financially and socially disadvantaged.

As well as renovating the eight one-bedroom units in Beaumaris and the 27 purpose-built units that are disability-friendly in Sandringham, the organisation would add 23 units to its Glen Iris site, bringing the total to 89 units. This program was in part funded by the Federal Government's National Rental Affordability Scheme with the Home Nursing and Care Services team supporting safe, healthy living as the residents age.

Having completed its preparation, mecwacare was now in the midst of significant expansion of all its key service areas. During the past five years, there had been significant changes and challenges in the structure and funding of the aged care and disability sector.



LEFT: Sandringham community units.



RIGHT: Direct Care Worker Lindsay Sinclair and home care client Margaret Danielson.

Many options for development had been considered, keeping in mind the government imperative for service consolidation and changes in legislation relating to Home Care Packages and Home and Community Care. *mecwacare* spent several years consolidating its foundations, reviewing service systems and upgrading IT infrastructure to meet the upcoming challenges.

As part of the government's *Living Longer Living Better* reform package that took effect in July 2014, there was now one set of funding rules for care provision. Residents had more choice in how they made their entry fee payments, while the cost of ongoing fees would now be determined by a single means test. Both these changes meant greater choice and flexibility for residents and *mecwacare* had worked hard to ensure it was prepared to maintain the quality of care.

Home Care Packages were successfully tendered through government and introduced to support older people and people with disabilities to continue living in their own home and to introduce more choice and flexibility with their care. *mecwacare* was successful in its initial application for 118 packages and the program was rolled out from October 2013. This formed a critical part of *mecwacare*'s strategic development plan and the Board was delighted it had achieved such significant growth.

With 100 per cent uptake of the packages, the organisation was keen for the government to offer more in the upcoming announcement in December. It was noted at the time: "We are excited about growing our packages as the

government continues to support older people and people with disabilities to live independently in their homes as they age and receive care. We are confident that the coming second year of our Home Care Packages program will be even more successful than the first." Fast forward five years and *mecwacare* now provides more than 500 Home Care Packages.

In June 2013, *mecwacare* was successful in tendering for the provision of home care services in the City of Melbourne. From September 2014, it began providing home care, respite care, personal care, meals on wheels, planned activity groups and neighbourhood house support from South Yarra to Flemington, gaining 700 new clients, as well as six planned activity groups and neighbourhood centres in the CBD, Carlton, Kensington, North Melbourne and South Yarra.

It purchased four properties in Malvern Road, adjacent to the Malvern Centre. These properties were being considered for a future development – now known as the Robin Syme Residences, 31 luxurious independent living units currently under construction and due to open in July 2020.

An extension at Rivendell House in Pakenham was completed to allow for more services and an improved modern facility that is wonderfully suited to both younger clients with disabilities and older clients. The new look was fresh and clean, with large activity rooms, a spacious dining room and large outdoor deck for participants to enjoy. Rivendell House provides services to more than 200 clients in the Cardinia Shire, part of Melbourne's south-east growth corridor.



Left to right: Staff member Maria, Bowen Street Centre client Glen and Volunteer Warwick.

Programs continue to grow in popularity and help to ease the social isolation many of the clients experience through activities such as dance classes, outings and meals. In 2015, stage two of the renovations would be completed with a full upgrade of the kitchen.

In March 2019, staff and clients in the south-east were challenged by numerous bushfires that burned out of control for days in the Bunyip region. Some staff, who had to be evacuated because their homes were under threat, still put their clients first by ensuring the most vulnerable in their community remained safe and well cared for during the worrying time.

This was a fine example of the caring nature of *mecwacare* staff, who always provide supportive and compassionate care no matter what the circumstances. Ms Lewis said: "The extreme heat always brings challenges and it can be very tough to deal with the worry and fear of fire invading your home. I am so proud of our staff who, despite this challenge, still took the time to support people in our care and in their local community."

Over at the Bowen Street Centre, which provides a broad range of programs to more than 200 clients per week from the Stonnington area, a support group for carers called the Café Club commenced. This group meets monthly to share experiences and ideas in a supportive environment.

Next door, *mecwacare* tendered for a long-term lease at the May Armstrong Centre where it planned to provide additional services to adults with intellectual disabilities. This would double the number of clients who currently accessed day services at the Fisher Street Centre.

In July 2013, the Noel Miller Centre celebrated its 10th anniversary with an afternoon tea complete with speeches, live music and a cake. Residents welcomed around 80 guests into their home, including family and friends. Guests included Life Governors Ross Heale and Joy Waller-Ogden, who were generous donors in the early days of the centre, and Tanya Costello from the Jack Brockhoff Foundation – a founding donor organisation. Planning commenced for refurbishment of the facility, including new furniture, light fittings and replanting in the gardens.

At the Malvern Centre, a case conference was conducted for the first time, using telehealth technology. This allowed residents, family members, staff and medical practitioners to consult via video technology. The successful method trialled would increasingly be used to provide care and services in the future. In another first, a resident at the Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre became the first person in a residential aged care facility in Australia to sign up for an eHealth record. This seamless flow of health information using digital technology enhanced care coordination and health outcomes for residents.





LEFT: Margaret Watson, a mecwacare volunteer for more than 50 years.

Malvern Opportunity Shop in Wattletree Road.

In May 2014, mecwacare celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Malvern Opportunity Shop in Wattletree Road. Support from the Stonnington City Council has been essential throughout the shop's entire existence. More than half a century later, it is still going strong with its treasure trove of clothing and accessories, contributing to mecwacare's yearly fundraising efforts. It remains a favourite shopping destination for the local community, as well as international stars such as pop princess Kylie Minogue and acclaimed actress Rachel Griffiths.

Recruitment continued as a key focus throughout 2013-14 as the organisation continued its fast-paced growth. More direct care workers and office staff for the Ballarat Region Service were needed, with a 40 per cent increase in the number of clients in its first year and the City of Melbourne service coming online in September 2014. General Manager of Home Nursing and Care Services Leigh Cashen said at the time: "Our close-knit group are comprised of locals who have a fantastic collective knowledge of not only the clients but the culture and community of Ballarat. This has been one of the keys to our success in an area where word of mouth is so important."

To ensure mecwacare maintained the highest level of care, the organisation implemented high-performance modelling, designed to identify the core characteristics of top performers to inform future recruitment and retention. This included the expansion of psychometric testing, which was originally introduced in 2011 for leadership and management positions, now offered for all Direct Care Workers. The introduction of occupational health and safety training for staff over the age of 50 also addresses rising Workcover claims and management of risk. Learning and development opportunities increased, with 7,000 attendances at 115 courses offered in 12 months.

An e-learning project commenced to provide accessible computer-based training to over 500 geographically-dispersed staff, offering an alternate way for them to achieve job-specific competencies.

Carelink+, the customer relationship management system that was introduced two years earlier, was further developed to support the new Home Care Packages service. mecwacare brought payroll processing in-house for the first time, lowering costs and increasing efficiency. It also implemented a human resources system that provided staff with online access to their payroll information.

In January 2015, mecwacare embarked on a new five-year strategic plan that would continue to drive its growth agenda in the aged and disability services sector. This blueprint would facilitate the extension of service delivery into regional Victoria to cater for more clients than ever before and to create a new service approach that was both innovative and inclusive. With a government imperative for larger viable organisations in the sector, the plan focused on the growth agenda and remaining an Employer of Choice.

mecwacare refined its purpose, vision and values to better reflect its geographical and service growth while keeping staff focused on providing personalised care to residents and clients. A review of the values, which included seeking feedback from residents and clients, found they were well established and embedded into systems, processes and staff interactions with clients and residents.

Subsequently, the shift from a state government "nurse-focused" care model to a federal government consumer-directed model of care and service delivery required mecwacare to make business and cultural changes.

Mr Hood stated: “The shift from a state to federal model of consumer-directed home care has led to significant procedural and staffing adjustments to prepare for a nationally-consistent approach to assessment and referral, all while continuing to expand services into rural and regional Victoria.”

As hoped, *mecwacare* secured another 106 Home Care Packages – the fourth most awarded in Victoria – to add to its initial 118 packages. Most were level three and four, allowing higher levels of care for clients. As a result, the Home Care Packages team expanded dramatically, with four new coordinators appointed.

An important component of the strategic plan for growth and service expansion was realised in December 2014 when *mecwacare* extended its residential aged care services with the addition of two new facilities. Residents, staff and volunteers from the 69-bed Park Hill facility in Mornington and the 30-bed Richmond Hill centre in Richmond (formerly Sir Eric Pearce House) were welcomed into the *mecwacare* family on December 1, 2014. The transitions went smoothly with many of the staff previously working in the facilities joining *mecwacare* and bringing their knowledge and experience with them.

This was much appreciated by the organisation, as well as the residents who were pleased to see familiar faces supporting them. Ms Lewis said at the time: “With these new additions we are building upon the foundations of quality service provision already established at our other three facilities, with almost 100 new staff members adding to the diversity, skills and experience of *mecwacare*’s residential services”. Plans were immediately underway to upgrade the Richmond facility, which was later renamed Rositano House in recognition of a generous bequest from the estate of Maria Rositano, a neighbour of the facility.

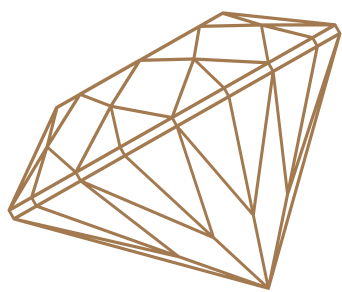
During four more successful accreditation surveys in 2015, residents let the assessors know they were being provided with high-quality personalised care and that they thoroughly enjoyed living in this community. Both the residents and assessors described staff as “kind and caring, demonstrating *mecwacare*’s values in everyday interactions”. Successfully achieving accreditation at both new sites six months after taking ownership demonstrated the organisation’s professional focus on staff integration, education and putting the residents’ care needs first.



LEFT: Park Hill, Mornington.



RIGHT: Richmond Hill (Rositano House), Richmond.



At this time, *mecwacare* took steps to advance its specialised clinical care and research capabilities across all services by establishing a Research and Improvement portfolio that incorporated learning and development and a clinical education and projects unit.

Funding was received to develop a sustainable, best-practice palliative care model to provide the highest quality end of life care across residential and community care settings. The aim of the *Palliative Care Partnerships* project, in association with Cabrini Health, was to provide a fulfilling palliative care experience for each client and their loved ones at a time of great need by providing specialised care and practical support that addressed physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural needs and preferences. This would be achieved through a number of strategies, including enhancing the skills and expertise of nursing and care staff, optimising communication pathways and refining assessment and care planning processes.

Project outcomes were implemented in 2015-16, including an increased focus on individualised support, development of an Advance Care Planning model, enhanced palliative care knowledge among staff with improved access to resources and a reduction of unnecessary hospital transfers.

Significant refurbishment work continued at two of the other facilities. This included internal painting, the purchase of new curtains, blinds and carpets for the community room and new bathrooms at Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick Centre, while gardens were re-planted and new chairs and sofas brought into some of the lounge and dining areas at the Noel Miller Centre. Residents and families appreciated the new furniture, sitting and spending time overlooking the beautiful established gardens. Over the coming years, *mecwacare's* extensive building and refurbishment program would become testament to its commitment to ensure all facilities are contemporary and comfortable.

Renovations on the eight community housing units in Beaumaris and the 27 new purpose-built units in Sandringham were completed in December 2015. These units, in addition to the 31 units in Glen Iris, would address the growing need for quality, affordable accommodation for people over 65 or people with disabilities, who are disadvantaged and have minimal assets. As part of its strategic planning process, *mecwacare* would go to great lengths to ensure its focus remained fixed on supporting the disadvantaged and vulnerable in the community. They were at the heart of the organisation 60 years ago and remain at the core of everything it does today.

The Beaumaris units in Dalgetty Road are less than one kilometre from the beach and only 500 metres from Beaumaris Concourse Shopping Centre while the Sandringham complex in Sandringham Road is close to the train and just a few hundred metres from the beach, restaurants and cafes. They even have sea views from the upper floors! Work also commenced on the expansion of units in Elm Road, Glen Iris, which front Gardiners Creek and are surrounded by native plants and leafy walking trails with trains, trams and shops all within easy walking distance. With the addition of 23 purpose-built units, which were officially opened by Federal Member for Higgins Kelly O'Dwyer in March 2016, the property now contains 44 one-bedroom units and 10 two-bedroom units.

“Rising property prices and the cost of living means many older people are unable to live independently. Many of our community housing residents have difficulties or are at risk of homelessness, and we hope that by providing quality, affordable housing, this burden will be eased,” said Ms Lewis. *mecwacare* offers care and support services into the home for these residents, including Home Care Packages clinical assessments, medication and wound management, as well as personal care tasks such as showering, dressing and grooming.





Direct Care Worker  
Alessandro Anibaldi,  
Home and Community  
Care Client Alexander  
Isman and his wife Rose.

mecwacare's Bowen Street Centre commenced a program that assists people with dementia to stay engaged and connected. The program provides a safe, caring environment for small groups of clients engaging in socialisation, outings, memory and sensory activities. Staff received training suited to the special needs of people living with dementia. This program, which is still running today, provides respite for family members who are primary carers and need to take a moment out of their day to breathe. A complementary program providing social respite to carers of loved ones with dementia has also proven immensely popular. Another popular feature of the Community Services program is the Social Support holidays that offers subsidised trips for clients and their carers to various Victorian destinations each year.

These trips give clients of varying ages and abilities an affordable holiday while maintaining the level of daily care they need, with 24-hour support from qualified and experienced staff. When speaking about the program, one client carer said: "They had such a great time and were just so pleased with all aspects of the trip. From how well it was organised, the structured activities, the quality of the facilities and especially the care they received."

A new corporate services building was purchased in Malvern Road, Malvern and in October 2015, staff moved from their home of almost 20 years in Waverley Road, Malvern East, which they had outgrown in parallel with the increase in services. A new website reflecting this service growth and expanding presence across Victoria was launched.

By now, mecwacare had 1,400 staff and 300 volunteers.

With its significant strategic focus on service growth, development and geographical expansion, mecwacare charged into this new era of consumer-directed care. In order to survive, organisations needed to focus on growth, with larger businesses having greater resources and an increased capacity to adapt to changing funding models and government regulatory and reporting requirements. This was especially true for not-for-profit organisations such as mecwacare, where the alternative to growth was merger or consolidation of smaller providers, which could result in a reduced "local community" service focus, a traditional strength of not-for-profits.

With this imperative for service growth in mind, mecwacare experienced a range of growth outcomes, with each of its primary services – home nursing and care services, home care packages, residential services, community housing and community and disability services – expanding substantially in 2015-16.

The organisation prepared for transition from the state government's Home and Community Care (HACC) program to the federally-administered Commonwealth Home Support Program, as part of the consolidation of aged care services under the My Aged Care program nationally. From July 1, 2016, Victorian HACC services for people aged 65 years and over would be directly funded and managed through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). The Victorian Government would continue to fund HACC services for people under the age of 65 years, with some clients transferring to the National Disability Insurance Scheme as it rolled out across Victoria. Ms Lewis said at the time: "The scale of these upcoming changes means there are significant implications for how we will report service hours and for our financial modelling of service delivery into the future."



Simon Price Centre,  
Mont Albert.

In February 2016, in what was the largest statement of regional growth in the organisation's history, *mecwacare* acquired six aged care facilities, expanding residential services to 11 facilities and welcoming an additional 312 residents and 400 staff to the organisation. This bold acquisition, which boosted *mecwacare*'s capacity to over 700 beds, marked its residential presence in regional Victoria alongside home nursing and care services in Ballarat and advanced its five-year strategic plan for growth and sustainability into a Victoria-wide service provider. These facilities were in Hamlyn Heights (Geelong), Traralgon in the Latrobe Valley and Terang in western Victoria, as well as an additional three Melbourne centres in Mont Albert, Box Hill and Westmeadows. Mr Hood said: "The commitment shown by all in ensuring a smooth integration of our new services was truly inspiring."

This significant expansion required an incredible amount of support, with the Residential Services, IT, Human Resources, Quality and Risk, and Marketing teams working together to deliver best-practice outcomes as the organisation moved to an integrated service model across all 11 residential facilities. Ms Lewis commented: "All staff worked incredibly hard to ensure the new sites were connected with our systems from day one and that staff were fully supported during the complex service transition."

Three of the new facilities were renamed in honour of long-serving Board Members, past and present. *mecwacare* Elstoft House in Hamlyn Heights was named in honour of Mr Jorgen Elstoft, a former Board Member of *mecwacare* (1995-2014) and Life Governor since 2014.

Mr Elstoft served as Treasurer for many years with a firm hand to ensure fiscal responsibility and had been a generous donor to the organisation. *mecwacare* Simon Price Centre in Mont Albert was named in honour of Mr Simon Price, a *mecwacare* Board Member from 1991 to 2008, a former Vice Chairman and Life Governor of the organisation since 2008, renowned for his gentle yet persuasive approach in his mentoring capacity. Mr Price brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the financial governance of *mecwacare*, where he chaired the Finance Committee for many years. *mecwacare* Atchison Centre in Box Hill was named in honour of Mr John Atchison, a Board Member since 1990 and current Vice Chairman.

With a background in building and engineering consultancy, Mr Atchison had been instrumental in supporting the organisation's building and redevelopment projects over the past 26 years, not only with technical expertise but with an enduring and genuine commitment to ensuring quality housing for residents. This facility later closed due to ongoing legal issues between the previous owners. Forty residents were relocated to other *mecwacare* centres.

Since acquiring the new facilities, *mecwacare* has implemented a range of clinical, lifestyle, equipment and building improvements to ensure each new facility aligns with the organisation's purpose, vision and values. Its five original residential facilities underwent a range of new initiatives built around improving the delivery of services and enhancing the daily care and lifestyle of residents, which remained a focus of staff and volunteers.





LEFT: mecwacare has a diverse workforce made up of 89 nationalities, including volunteers.



RIGHT: Disability services participant George.

Building on the work that was already underway, mecwacare embarked on long-term clinical projects to increase staff knowledge, improve clinical processes and client and family experiences, as well as make a substantial contribution to palliative care best practice across services and the sector more widely. In 2017, this focus would be extended with funding from the Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network to establish the *My Life Matters Project* to further improve access to Advance Care Plans and increased the number of ACPs completed by mecwacare clients. In consultation with GPs, mecwacare contacted 182 clients to discuss their choices, with 45 plans developed free of charge with help from a mecwacare Link Nurse. Clients reported that completing an ACP gave them peace of mind, knowing their wishes would be recorded and respected. They felt empowered to make decisions about their future healthcare needs and the medical interventions they would choose.

Focused annual best-practice clinical care projects provide additional training and development for all staff at mecwacare, which enhances the health and wellbeing of residents and clients. This specialised training is in addition to the annual learning and development program and includes critical areas such as advance care planning and palliative care, wound and pressure injury management, pain management and medication assessments, and behavioural management. These projects empower and upskill staff through a variety of training options, embedding best practice into systems, culture and processes to ensure

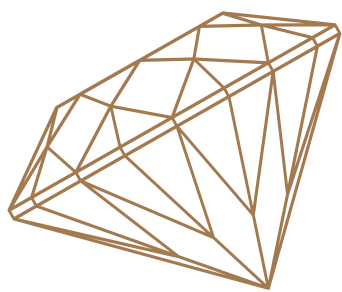
high-quality and well-coordinated care for all residents and clients within mecwacare services.

In October 2015, mecwacare staff were invited to complete an anonymous safety climate survey that was part of a project with Monash University, looking at the importance of health and safety to staff and management. A total of 636 (60 per cent) of staff participated, which was 87 per cent of direct care workers and 45 per cent of other employees, surpassing expectations. Pleasingly, the survey found that staff felt they could speak up about health and safety issues and that they felt comfortable raising such issues. They felt that management believed health and safety was important.

Diversity at mecwacare became a priority, with 50 per cent of clients coming from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and around 70 per cent of staff from a CALD background, speaking 65 languages. The organisation committed to providing a cultural and/or language match between clients and care staff. Recruitment processes ensured the cultural and linguistic diversity of staff reflected the demographics and needs of clients both now and into the future. Today, mecwacare's workforce is made up of 89 nationalities, with staff speaking 98 languages.

Fisher Street Centre was now offering up to 70 programs a week for people with a disability, with diverse activities catering to the individual goals of clients. The horticulture group received a donation to landscape the outdoor areas, replacing old plants with colourful new ones to improve the sensory garden.





The Active Sports Program continued to be a success, with sports such as basketball and tennis rewarding effort, while bushwalking and fitness classes in the gym ensured clients remained physically active in a supportive environment. Music and movie options were a highlight, with singing classes and concerts engaging clients creatively. In addition to the online bookshop, a new online bric-a-brac sales program began, teaching business and customer service skills to clients through eBay sales and interaction.

Community services experienced growth across all regions, which was indicative of efforts to provide program variety and give clients significant choice and control over the programs they pursued and how they participated. Rivendell House in Pakenham had an 18 per cent increase in clients, with an average of 139 clients attending programs each week.

Due to further expansion into regional Victoria, new employment opportunities became available to cater for clients in the newly-created South West Region Service, which was an extension of the Ballarat service into the Barwon region.

In 2015, *mecwacare* again achieved accreditation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality, one of only 90 organisations nationwide to receive the citation, which had been achieved annually since 2012.

*mecawacare*'s signature fundraising event, the annual Charity Golf Day, was a major success with record player numbers and attendees, and significant funds raised to support services.

As *mecwacare* entered the next stage of its five-year strategic plan, the era of consumer-directed care continued to be the focus of change to how the Victorian community received funding and care. Increasing choice and service options was essential in achieving the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes. *mecwacare*'s sustainability, progressive growth

and increased presence in regional areas was advanced throughout 2016-17. Now with more than 1,500 staff and 350 volunteers delivering services across Victoria, the organisation had cemented itself as one of the major players in the sector.

And still there were more adjustments to come, with the Federal Government commencing changes in the home nursing and care domain. In January 2017, there was a division between services for people aged over 65 moving to the Federal Government's Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and people under 65 staying under the Home and Community Care (HACC) program provided by the State Government. HACC and ISP (Individual Support Packages) funding was also slowly transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

These changes, significant for the organisation, will continue through to 2020 as the government reshapes the aged care and disability services sector. In February 2017, Home Care Packages were altered, with funding allocated to individuals, giving consumers the ability to choose their provider based on location and care needs. Ms Lewis reflected on the changes: "This has been a catalyst for diversification of services and the development of partnerships to ensure clients are receiving the range and choice in care and services that they request."

In tandem to the changes in home care, the organisation purchased a new site in Hoppers Crossing and commenced the development of a 101-bed aged care facility and 10 adjacent retirement living units. This was the first residential facility in Melbourne's west and continue the strategic goal of geographical growth. This state-of-the-art facility, with its stylish one and two-room suites including access to a landscaped garden or balcony, was named the John Atchison Centre after Vice Chairman of the *mecwacare* Board, John Atchison. President of the Senate, Senator the Hon Scott Ryan, officiated at the opening on May 15, 2018.



John Atchison Centre,  
Hoppers Crossing.

This followed the unveiling of plans for the luxurious Robin Syme Residences in Malvern, an exciting 31-unit complex next to the mecwacare Malvern Centre that will be completed in July 2020. These elegant two and three-bedroom residences will have access to numerous services and 24-hour care, as well as five-star communal facilities including a gymnasium, café, lounge, dining room and business lounge.

There was much to celebrate throughout this period, with a number of milestones highlighting mecwacare's longevity and success. These included the 20th anniversary of the Pakenham office providing home nursing and care services to the Cardinia Shire and Keilor East office marking 15 years. O'Mara House residential aged care facility in Traralgon turned 20. But the biggest celebrations were reserved for the Noel Miller Centre and May Noonan Centre in Terang, which both commemorated their 40th anniversaries.

In August 2016, mecwacare opened two new opportunity shops in Hawthorn and Reservoir, taking the total number of outlets to five. Staff and volunteers celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Windsor Opportunity Shop in Prahran, which remains a favourite on the popular Chapel Street shopping strip.

South West Region Service in Ballarat transitioned many clients living with a disability to the National Disability Insurance Scheme and mecwacare acquired more Home Care Packages in the City of Greater Dandenong and the City of Bayside.

An annual survey of HCP clients found customer satisfaction was 98.5 per cent, an outstanding result and evidence of mecwacare's ongoing commitment to provide high-quality services.



LEFT: Robin Syme Residences in Malvern (architect's drawing).



RIGHT: Windsor Opportunity Shop Volunteer Graham Hardie.





LEFT: Rivendell House client George Wilson.



RIGHT: Chief Executive Michele Lewis and Facility Manager Maria McIntosh at the refurbished Rositano House.

After successfully acquiring a long-term lease, renovations at the May Armstrong Centre in Bowen Street were completed and the centre opened in 2017, with strength training sessions running Monday to Thursday, as well as art, gardening and computer classes. This added space, next to the Bowen Street Centre, allows for greater frequency of disability day services and client attendance.

This centre was named after May Armstrong, a former coordinator of MECWA Services and Secretary of the Board of Management. May passed away in 1985 but her legacy at *mecwacare* continues. Rivendell House increased its services to six days a week, addressing social isolation by delivering fun and friendly programs that continue to grow in popularity. A team of volunteers provides care and friendship to clients, as well as assisting in the Men's Shed with woodworking and therapeutic activities for people living with an acquired brain injury.

A major technological achievement at this time was the rollout of wireless internet access in all residential centres, supporting residents to stay connected to family and friends from the comfort of their own room. This has been of enormous benefit to residents, including 101-year-old Bill Rudd at the *mecwacare* Trescowthick Centre. Bill uses a computer in his room for research and news and to run his own website. He will also publish a book on Australian war heroes in late 2019. Having wi-fi connectivity in his room has enabled Bill to continue his passion in a comfortable and supported environment.

*mecwacare* established iCareHealth, formerly known as iCare, across all its residential facilities to reduce compliance risks and enhance the quality of care for residents. It has made recording details easier and quicker for staff, who are then able to spend more time with residents and increase their productivity. Progress notes, medical details and care plans are entered into the electronic system to ensure all information is kept in one place. This is beneficial for staff, who can securely access accurate and up-to-date information to support residents' care.

Through the generosity of donors and foundations, *mecwacare* was able to undertake significant renovations at Rositano House in Richmond, including the substantial refurbishment of bathrooms to improve safety and infection control, the addition of three new lounges (up from one) and quiet spaces, as well as two new outdoor areas, including one with a balcony and views of the city. Fire safety was improved with the widening of doors throughout the building. The result of this extensive work was a safer, cleaner and better supported environment for the high-care needs of residents.

By mid-2017, *mecwacare* had strengthened its position in the sector by embracing the challenges of myriad government changes and an ever-growing need for high-quality services. It was now caring for more than 14,000 people across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria each week through 1,700 staff and 350 selfless volunteers.





Volunteer and Fisher Street Disability Centre client William McDonald (left) with staff member Mark Mallett.

And in just 12 months, the number of clients accessing its services had increased by 700 per cent, largely due to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). *mecwacare* experienced significant growth in its home care business alongside disability services, with 600 clients already transitioned and a further 1,000 waiting to transition across multiple service regions, which was up from 120 clients in the previous year. Home Care Packages increased significantly – by 214 per cent. Services were now being provided in 58 council areas across Victoria from 24 sites.

Expansion of one-on-one support was a key focus, meeting the individual goals established under the NDIS. Support Coordinators help clients understand the range of services available, which include assistance with self and personal care, transport, community participation and daily life activities, such as domestic duties. Such growth in the disability services sector has seen increased hours for existing staff wanting extra shifts as clients under 65 have added support both now and into the future. Rollout of the NDIS will continue for another 12 months, which is expected to see *mecwacare*'s services expand significantly in this area. The organisation is also investing in staff training and service development to meet this forecast demand.

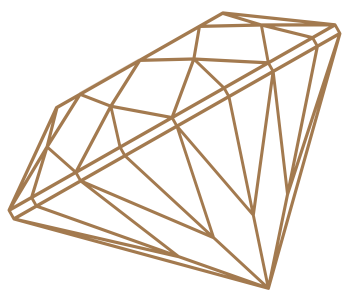
Operating in a rapidly-changing landscape, where service responsibility has moved from state to federal government, *mecwacare* has positioned itself as a formidable player. Ms Lewis said: "Market consolidation and growth in the number of providers is a government-led initiative and the not-for-profit product of care and lifestyle is critical to people having choices. As a care-focused organisation, our attention is firmly fixed on providing the best care possible."

To achieve the strategic objective of increasing the number and geographic spread of home care clients, *mecwacare* entered and established services in a number of new regions, most notably Nillumbik, where it supported an additional 350 clients before moving into the areas of Greater Dandenong, Monash and Ballarat.

Renovations at several residential aged care centres created modern and comfortable environments that residents were proud to call home. Substantial refurbishments were conducted at Vincent House in Westmeadows, Park Hill on the Mornington Peninsula, Elstoft House in Hamlyn Heights (Geelong) and Prahran's Trescowthick Centre. In addition to the internal upgrade at the Trescowthick Centre, major external works included the replacement of weatherboard cladding on the atrium turrets with cladding that would withstand all weather elements for many years to come.

The centre's main courtyard was refreshed with new outdoor furniture to enhance the welcoming and user-friendly space. At Vincent House, major refurbishment work included the transformation of recreational areas, including a new library, quiet room and outdoor balcony. The vinyl floor was replaced with carpet and new curtains and blinds were installed to enhance the living environment and safety for residents. Ms Lewis said: "Our building program is testament to our commitment to ensure our facilities are contemporary and comfortable."

In November 2017, the Bowen Street Centre was renamed the Barry Fenton Centre, acknowledging Board Member Barry Fenton's more than 30 years of voluntary service at the centre.



Barry drove the bus, assisted in the kitchen and helped for many years at the site, which made him the perfect candidate in the renaming process. He was recognised for his extensive contribution to the community at the 2017 Higgins Awards and when the centre celebrated its 20th anniversary in February 2019, Barry was humbled by the recognition he received for the major role he had played. It was evident at the anniversary morning tea how much the staff and participants treasure him.

A year later, after much consideration, *mecwacare* farewelled the May Noonan Centre in Terang when it agreed to sell the home to a Warrnambool-based provider. This would benefit residents and staff because the home would be managed by an organisation that had strong ties to the local community. Earlier in the year during the bushfires, May Noonan Centre residents were safely evacuated to the SES rooms. *mecwacare*'s energy generators then permitted an early return to the facility. Staff and volunteers were commended for their role in ensuring resident safety was the number one priority. The community united during these fires and two residents who were at the centre on respite decided to stay permanently following the evacuation because they were so impressed by the safety and care provided.

In 2018, there were more anniversaries to celebrate – Simon Price Centre in Mont Albert turned 40, the Fisher Street Centre and Trescowthick Centre in Prahran commemorated their 20th birthdays. Sir Donald and Lady Trescowthick attended a lovely afternoon tea celebration with their family to mark the occasion.

On a more sombre note, *mecwacare* mourned the loss of Jane Price in April 2018 – and her husband Simon the following year on February 17. Jane and Simon, who married in 1956, dedicated their lives to supporting the community, including *mecwacare*'s residents and clients.

A grandmother of four, Jane was caring and compassionate, and sought to make a difference to the lives of people in need.

Simon's leadership and expertise helped set the foundations for rapid expansion of *mecwacare*'s services across Victoria. In 2010, the Life Governor received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to the community, significant recognition that acknowledged his selfless approach to helping others. He was a kind and caring man, and his legacy will continue.

Another *mecwacare* stalwart who had a profound effect on the organisation was Joy Waller-Ogden. Joy devoted a remarkable 55 years of her life to the organisation, including 29 years on the *mecwacare* Board – two terms as Chairman, seven terms as Treasurer and six terms as Vice Chairman. She was instrumental in the early days, setting the foundations for what the organisation is today. Joy was appointed a Life Governor in 1993 and passed away at Box Hill Hospital on April 23, 2019. A wing at the Malvern Centre is named in her honour.

Innovation remained a key focus throughout 2017-18, with *mecwacare* launching an organisation-wide wound care best-practice model, which provides high-quality and well-coordinated wound care for residents. *mecwacare* put staff safety first with the introduction of the EziTracker Mobile App across its home care services. EziTracker is a safety initiative that records when staff arrive at the client's home and when they leave. This was previously utilised through the home phones of clients (the old Teleclock system) but with the high prevalence of smartphones among staff, the new application was an opportunity to increase safety and improve the program's reliability.

As the organisation grasped the multitude of changes in funding and how it delivers services, there was a shift happening in the community housing space. The profile of tenants living in *mecwacare*'s units had changed dramatically. Many were now women aged over 70 who had experienced financial hardship, often following a marriage breakdown and domestic abuse that had left them with very little to support themselves. Tenants had lived in cars or on the couch of a friend before finding their way to *mecwacare*'s community housing program.

mecwacare continued to excel in quality and risk management, achieving 100 per cent compliance following 117 external audits and reviews across the organisation, which was a 19 per cent increase in external audit activity on the previous year.

In line with the organisation's growth in services and staff, a team of nurse educators with a diverse range of nursing experience conducted more than 2,800 hours of education, including 811 formal face-to-face staff learning opportunities. Nurse educators are dedicated to supporting positive experiences and best-practice outcomes for consumers through staff knowledge and skill development. They collaborate with key stakeholders across the organisation to ensure staff have the required knowledge, skills and abilities to competently and safely perform their roles, in line with the organisation's values.

As mecwacare entered its 60th year of service, it looked forward to the opening of its new residential aged care facility in Caulfield, aptly named Jubilee House. This centre is a 40-bed modern and luxurious home, offering boutique-style accommodation that includes a selection of tastefully decorated single and oversized rooms, as well as two-room suites with their own

kitchenette. All rooms are private with ensuite bathrooms and some have access to the smart courtyards. Floor-to-ceiling windows fill the stylish home with natural light throughout.

Facilities include a café, library, cinema room, hair salon and pleasant indoor and outdoor areas, including a range of lounge rooms for residents to enjoy on their own or with family and friends. A vibrant lifestyle program will cater to all interests and abilities.

Barry Fenton Centre celebrated its 20th anniversary in February 2019 and on March 22, 2019 mecwacare's oldest resident, Iris Nankivell, marked her 106th birthday at the Noel Miller Centre. Staff from across the organisation joined family and friends at this very special celebration.

In April 2019, mecwacare proudly opened a new Home and Community Care Services office in the seaside township of Inverloch. The new office provides Home and Community Care (HACC) and Commonwealth Home Support Programme services, National Disability Insurance Scheme and Private Care services to more than 1,000 clients across the Gippsland region.

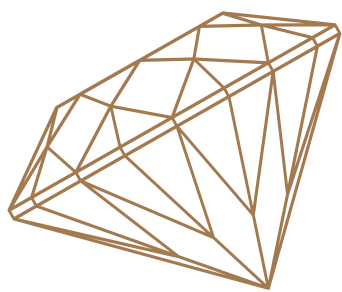


LEFT: Noel Miller Centre resident Iris Nankivell who was 106 years young in 2019.



RIGHT: Inverloch office staff.





mecwacare became the HACC Program for Younger People provider in Monash, Ballarat and Knox to provide meals, personal care, respite care, domestic assistance and home maintenance to people under 65. This ongoing geographical expansion throughout metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria is in line with the strategic objective to reach more clients and support them to remain independently in their own homes, as well as giving them the opportunity to choose a not-for-profit provider.

Board members, staff, volunteers, donors and community supporters gathered at Jubilee House on July 3, 2019 for a spectacular 60th anniversary celebration, a high tea that included a performance by the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir, a string quartet and the official opening of Jubilee House by The Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria. This grand occasion also marked the official opening of Jubilee House. Later in the year, mecwacare will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the East Malvern Opportunity Shop.

At the time of publication, work was about to be completed on a major refurbishment at O'Mara House. Recognised as one of the top three aged care centres in Traralgon by Three Best Rated, the works will include a new theatre, new kitchenettes, an improved reception area and entrance, new curtains and carpet, an expansive garden makeover and new furniture throughout the living areas. This work will enhance the comfort, design, functionality and accessibility for the 67 residents who call the facility home. Three Best Rated assessed the centre's reputation, history, complaints, ratings, satisfaction, location, trust, cost and general excellence. Reviews highlighted the caring nature of staff and the homely feel in the communal lounges and dining areas.

Equally as exciting, the organisation is getting ready to build a brand new two-storey 100-bed residence at the Simon Price Centre in Mont Albert.

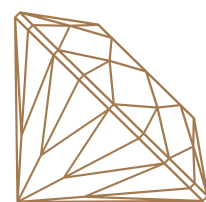
mecwacare's environmental focus has been bolstered by a range of initiatives focused on renewal and retainable energy sources. It was successful in acquiring funding from the Department of Environment and Energy to install solar panels at its opportunity shop in East Malvern. As part of the Solar Communities Program, a solar and battery storage system will alleviate demand on the national energy grid and be used as a community educational tool to demonstrate the benefits of clean energy production.

Recent upgrades and improvements to processes, systems and facilities have seen the organisation reduce its carbon footprint and adopt environmentally-friendly alternatives. Sensor lights were installed in facility bathrooms, lowering energy costs and providing a safer option that ensures lights automatically turn on when in use by residents and staff. Double glazing windows keep heat inside facilities to reduce the reliance on heaters during the colder months and water tanks are minimising water usage.

LED fittings replaced lighting at the Noel Miller Centre thanks to the generosity of the late John Moline and his daughter Bronwyn. Their donation paid for all the LED lights at Noel Miller Centre, where John was a resident. It is the most efficient lighting technology available for homes (up to seven times more efficient than halogen lights), as well as providing significant cost savings. mecwacare has since installed this lighting system at several sites, including Park Hill, Rositano House, Trescowthick Centre, Elstoft House and O'Mara House.

mecwacare's Finance and Human Resources teams are focused on a paperless workplace, with reporting and data collection more productive through electronic forms and systems. Toilet paper is 100 per cent recycled and recycling bins are located near all desks and kitchens to encourage staff to adopt an environmental focus at work.

As the sector experiences an increased level of scrutiny, mecwacare is watching with keen interest the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, which began in Adelaide in



January 2019. While the commission will primarily focus on the quality of care being provided in residential and home-based aged care services, it will include people living with disabilities in residential aged care settings. *mecwacare* welcomes this inquiry, which will address failings in the system and ensure our older Australians are receiving the highest quality and safest care that they deserve.

Ms Lewis said: “We are a values and care-driven not-for-profit organisation that prides itself on providing the very best care possible to our residents and home-based clients. It deeply concerns and saddens me that this may not always be the case across the sector. *mecwacare* removes poor workers, develops skills and continually improves its services.”

Among the issues being raised are the presence of Registered Nurses (RNs), the training requirements of staff, fees and the cost of food. *mecwacare* employs RNs at all its residential sites with the number dependent on the size of the facility and all personal care assistants must have a minimum Certificate III in Aged Care. With regard to fees, there is a daily accommodation payment, which is set by the Commonwealth Government, or a refundable accommodation deposit. All meals are freshly prepared on-site and the money allocated to food far exceeds industry standards. Testament to the quality of the organisation’s food services is the Whitehorse Council’s 5-Star Food Premises of the Year award presented to the Simon Price Centre in Mont Albert, recognising *mecwacare*’s commitment to delicious and nutritious food, as well as safe and hygienic food practices.

A further demonstration of the high-quality care being delivered every day by *mecwacare* was the naming of the Trescowthick Centre as a finalist for Best Aged Care Facility at the Australian Healthcare Week Awards in March 2019.

Looking back at MECWA’s progress over the past 60 years and in particular the last decade, it is truly remarkable that today’s organisation, now known as *mecwacare*, started with a voluntary committee whose first financial decision was to employ a part-time cook and whose first annual report was written in a school exercise book.

*mecwacare* has grown into a major provider of residential, nursing and support services for the aged, disadvantaged and people with special needs and disabilities. It provides care to 15,000 people in all 31 local government areas in metropolitan Melbourne, as well as a large part of regional Victoria through 1,700 staff and 450 volunteers.

*mecwacare*’s primary objective is to enhance the quality of life for people who need care, especially older people and people living with a disability. It does this through the delivery of innovative, responsive and fully-evaluated services that are provided in residential settings, community facilities and clients’ homes.

It is an organisation with a proud history of offering quality care and services with a focus on the individual needs of clients and their families. This is achieved by providing services that reflect choice, independence, participation, community connection and positive ageing.

In 2020, consumers will have even greater choice when the Commonwealth Home Support Programme and the Home and Community Care Program for Young People transition to client choice. *mecwacare*’s preparedness for this substantial increase in activity is well underway.

With the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, it has restructured its services and developed a new skillset to respond to the changes, implemented new financial reporting systems and introduced new ways to operate. Choice and flexibility, a consistent approach and a simplified process for consumers remain key areas of focus to ensure clients receive premium care.



Elpi Vagas, has been the face of mecwacare for more than 25 years.

In line with its values, mecwacare is committed to providing affordable and high-quality care and will continue its strong growth agenda to ensure it reaches as many people as possible.

With the expansion to 11 aged care residences across Victoria and a record of upgrading facilities and growth in home care services statewide, mecwacare is well on the way to building capacity to maintain and develop quality care services for its clients, residents and the community for many years to come.

It has risen to the challenge of change, focusing on consumer-directed care to ensure services meet individual care needs and goals. As a not-for-profit provider of aged care and disability services, mecwacare is acutely aware of how the organisation impacts the wider community and is committed to ensuring that all processes and best practices are diligently followed. Growth has allowed the organisation to achieve economies of scale that were previously unattainable.

It has restructured its services to respond effectively to these changes and will continue its preparedness for future changes and reforms. A new five-year strategic plan will guide the organisation through all of this.

“I am very proud of the high-quality, safe and respectful care we provide every day. We all work extremely hard to balance clinical care and lifestyle choices and are continuously looking at ways to do things better,” said Ms Lewis, who has fearlessly led the growth agenda over the past 12 years.

And the secret to success? The remarkable contribution over 60 years of a wide variety of concerned citizens prepared to give up their time and the professional dedication of staff determined to offer the highest standards of service. mecwacare would not be what it is today without these people and the long-term support of its many friends and corporate partners.



LEFT: Treasurer Colin Squires, Joy Waller-Ogden and former Chairman Robin Syme.



RIGHT: Chief Executive Michele Lewis, Chairman John Hood and long-time staff member Helen McDonald.



# 2019 Board of Directors

## Board Committees

### Chief Executive Review Committee

Mr J. Hood (Chair)  
Mr J. Atchison  
Mr C. Squires  
Mr I. McHutchison

### Finance and Audit Committee

Mr C. Squires (Chair)  
Ms D. Coe  
Mr J. Hood (ex officio)  
Mr I. McHutchison  
Ms R. Au

### Clinical and Service Governance Committee

Ms E. Dimitriadis (Chair)  
Ms S. Barton  
Ms S. Calwell  
Mr B. Fenton  
Mrs A. Court



#### John Hood

Chairman  
BE (Mech), FIE (Aust) FAICD, FIMC  
Appointed 1998  
Area of expertise:  
Executive recruitment consultant



#### John Atchison

Vice Chairman  
BE (Civil), MIE (Aust)  
Appointed 1990  
Area of expertise:  
Building and engineering



#### Colin Squires

Treasurer  
BE (Hons), MBA, MAICD  
Appointed 2008  
Area of expertise:  
Corporate finance



#### Susan Barton AM

Appointed 2005  
Area of expertise:  
Not-for-profit sector



#### Anne Court

DipMUS  
Appointed 2007  
Area of expertise:  
Fundraising and events



#### Barry Fenton

Appointed 1984  
Area of expertise:  
Governance



#### Ian McHutchison OAM

BJuris, LLB  
Appointed 2013  
Area of expertise:  
Law and finance



#### Elizabeth Dimitriadis

MBus, DipBus, BA  
Appointed 2013  
Area of expertise:  
Governance and disability services



#### Susan Calwell

Appointed 2000  
Area of expertise:  
Marketing and events



#### Rachel Au

(co-opted July 2017)  
Appointed 2017  
Area of expertise:  
Finance and project management



#### Dallas Coe

BCom/LLB (Hons), CA  
Appointed 2006  
Area of expertise:  
Finance and auditing

# | Appendices

## Appendix 1:

# Founding Members of the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee

Surname	Initials	Title	Organisation
Adams	G	Mr	Malvern Arts Council
Anderson	N	Rev	Malvern Congregational Church
Anderson	N	Mrs	Malvern Congregational Church
Bailey		Mrs	St George's Church of England
Bampton	W	Rev	Methodist Church Burke Road
Barnes	H	Mrs	Methodist Church Malvern (Spring Road)
Beveridge	C E	Dr	Malvern Arts Council
Birch	A E	Mrs	Malvern Horticultural Society
Bloom	E	Mrs	RSS & AILA (Ladies Auxiliary)
Bloomfield		Mrs	St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church
Bracher	G	Mr	Malvern City Council
Cairns		Mrs	Liberal & Country Party Malvern Branch
Chambers	H	Rev	Methodist Church Malvern (Spring Road)
Clark	W H	Mr	Tooronga and Malvern North Ward Progress League
Clarke	A M	Mrs	Catholic Women's Social Guild Malvern Branch
Corless	M	Miss	Australasian Women's Association
Crouch	N	Mrs	St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church
Cullen		Mrs	Malvern Girl Guides Local Association
Dann	R W	Rev	St George's Church of England
Garson	A	Mr	Rotary Club of Malvern
Gerbes	A	Mr	Methodist Men's Society (Spring Road)
Grant	K R	Mr	Methodist Church Burke Road
Haynes	R J	Mr	Malvern Congregational Church
Henry		Mrs	Malvern Girl Guides Local Association
Henry		Miss	Salvation Army Malvern Corps
Horman	A	Mr	Tooronga and Malvern North Ward Progress League
Howard	E		St Roch's Church
Hughes	W H	Mrs	RSS & AILA (Ladies Auxiliary)
Inglis	F	Lt Col	Salvation Army Malvern Corps
Irwin		Mrs	Malvern Girl Guides Local Association
Jeffrey	K	Mr	Rotary Club of Malvern
Johnson	E V	Mr	Malvern City Council
Jones	L	Mr	Rotary Club of Malvern
Kelly		Mrs	Catholic Women's Social Guild Malvern Branch
Kitchen	C McK	Mrs	St George's Church of England
Lanyon		Mrs	Country Women's Association of Victoria Malvern Branch
McAllester	M	Mrs	Methodist Church Malvern (Spring Road)
McKean	W A	Mr	St John's Ambulance
Moline	L	Mrs	Children's Hospital Auxiliary
Muirden	K A	Mr	Methodist Church Burke Road
Muirden	K A	Mrs	Methodist Church Burke Road
Neale	F	Mr	Malvern Arts Council
Nigto	L		St Roch's Church
O'Callaghan	M D		St Roch's Church
Owen		Mrs	Malvern Girl Guides Local Association
Palstra	J	Mr	Salvation Army Malvern Corps
Peacock	A D	Mr	Gardiner Presbyterian Church
Power		Mrs	Malvern Congregational Church
Rainsbury	H R	Mrs	Country Women's Association of Victoria Malvern Branch
Roberts	A	Mrs	St James Church of England
Rodda		Mrs	St James Church of England
Rosenblum		Mr	Liberal & Country Party Malvern Branch
Sanderson	J A	Mr	All Saints Church of England
Shaw	L B	Mr	Malvern Camera Club
Sholl	R R	Justice	St George's Church of England
Stevens	S E	Mr	Malvern City Council
Stevens	S	Mrs	Methodist Church Malvern (Spring Road)
Strachan	V	Miss	Malvern City Council
Strickland	H	Mr	Methodist Men's Society (Spring Road)
Sullivan	J		St Roch's Church
Thompson	J	Miss	Salvation Army Malvern Corps
Webster	G	Mr	Rotary Club of Malvern



## Appendix 2:

# The Malvern E.C. Welfare Committee The First Annual Report of the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee

I have much pleasure in presenting the first Annual Report of the Malvern Elderly Citizens' Welfare Committee. This committee elected ten months ago, meets once each month as well as holding quarterly general meetings. In December last a Ladies Auxiliary was formed, Mrs Scherer (president), Mrs Gudgeon (secretary), whose report you will hear later and early this year a social club of the elderly citizens was formed – Mr Clark (president), Mrs Horman (secretary). Mr Clark will also give a short report. A delegate from each of these sub-committees attends our meetings. We also appointed a publicity officer, Mr Sullivan, who is doing a wonderful job for us.

The club rooms were handed over to this committee by the Mayor, Cr Johnson, on Wednesday 9th December, and was opened to the public for the first time on Wednesday December 16, 20 people attending. This was a great day for the people of Malvern, a milestone in our history. This was followed by a Christmas party held on Wednesday December 23rd. At this time the rooms were open only on one day a week. But early this year they opened twice weekly and then daily.

On May 1 meals were started at the centre on three days a week, for which a charge of 2/6 is made, and this is greatly appreciated by the club members. Then on July 1 the service of meals-on-wheels began and at present we are delivering up to 15 meals a week.

The committee feels that this service is one (of) the most important we give as it helps those who cannot help themselves. We would like to do more in this direction but it takes time to search out those who need us.

There have been a large number of purchases by us during the year. The first, a piano, generously donated by Cr Morgan.

Then we bought 50 chairs second hand from the Department of Supply, a second stove, a twin of the first one, cutlery, bookshelves, pots and pans etc, table linen and a host of small items. As well as these, a number of items have been donated, a table by Mr K. Jeffrey, two meals-on-wheels units by Mrs J. Johns and Mrs Lester Shaw, an outside blind over the kitchen window, and play cards and books etc. We now have on order a Hot Box and hope to see this installed at an early date.

During the year there have been three people appointed as paid staff, a cleaner, then a cook, and now an assistant cook. We have made sure that we are fully covered by insurance including workers compensation and a Public Risk policy.

The subject of finance has caused us some concern and a doorknock was suggested. However, Rotary in Malvern, have come to our aid in a very big way and we are extremely grateful to them.

Our biggest future need is to build a pantry and we hope that in the near future some plans can be made. When the Hot Box is installed the kitchen will be further short of space.

We were sorry to receive the resignations of three of our Committee – Mrs Roberts, Mr L. Shaw, and Mr Callaghan and thank them for all their support. According to the constitution we were able to appoint three new members in their place, Mr A. Cant, Mr W. McKean, and Mr K. Jeffrey.

A Birthday Party is planned but a date is not fixed. All interested will be notified when.

---

*Author's note: The original of this report was hand written by Mary Moline in a school exercise book, now in MECWA's archives.*

## Appendix 3:

### The Women's Group

The Women's Group, on the initiative of Mary Moline, was formed early in 1970, as part of the 1970 Appeal, with the objective of holding at least one large function a month for one year.

The group was aided by Mrs Iris Clark who was the appeal consultant. Over \$12,000 was raised in the first year – a remarkable achievement.

The original members were:

Mrs Mary Moline (President for the first 15 years), Mrs Barbara Atkins, Mrs Bernice Batty, Mrs Jacquie Harris, Mrs Audrey Healy, Mrs Beryl Muir, Miss Pat Peterson, Mrs Joan McLaughlin, Mrs Barbara Sitlington, Mrs Rae Stott, Mrs Joy Waller (Treasurer), Mrs Joan Stanton, Mrs Eileen Gandolfo (Secretary).

The year's functions with amounts raised less expenses were as follows:

Home – Viewing, May 1970	\$936.25	(less \$114.85)
Luncheon – 'Greenknowe', June 1970 (home of Sir Robert Knox, guest speaker Dame Zara Holt)	\$669.24	(less \$118.81)
Lady Mayoress Card Party, July 1970	\$663.00	(less \$29.20)
Film & Luncheon August 1970	\$1,189.20	(less \$552.70)
Indian Night, September 1970	\$165.90	(less \$12.50)
Home – Viewing, October 1970	\$652.40	(less \$150.90)
Auction and Sale, October 1970	\$2,003.76	(less \$247.30)
Luncheon, October 1970 (home of Audrey Healy)	\$554.15	(less \$67.50)
Garden – Viewing, November 1970 (the gardens belonged to: Dame Hilda Stevenson, Mrs S R C Wood, Dr and Mrs Norman Wettenhall, Mrs H M Ridley, and Mrs Claudia B Creswick)	\$153.75	(less \$141.15)
Morning Coffee & Stall, December 1970	\$266.21	(Nil)
Garden – Viewing, January 1971 (Dame Mabel Brookes' Mt Eliza home 'Brookwood')	\$2,015.00	(less \$146.89)
Film & Luncheon, March 1971	\$867.50	(less \$356.50)
Luncheon & Fur Parade, April 1971	\$762.79	(less \$164.49)
Celebrity Concert, June 1971	\$1,089.90	(less \$567.88)
Luncheon, 'Greenknowe', June 1971 (Guest speaker: Sonia McMahon)	\$1,255.70	(less \$276.06)
Small functions, donations, and bank interest	\$992.71	
<b>Total monies raised:</b>	<b>\$15,107.26</b>	<b>(less \$2,946.73)</b>

After such a busy and happy year 25 of the original committee decided to stay together for at least one function a year thereafter (initially to raise money for furnishing the MECWA units). This became a tradition and has been continued ever since. During the Million Dollar Appeal for The Olive Miller Nursing Home in addition to the traditional July luncheon the Group led by Rae Stott held special functions which raised \$15,300. In 1993 Rae Stott and Pat Peterson who had been organising these functions since the group's inception decided in their own words

'to make way for younger women', Di King (President), Pru Weber, Joan McLaughlin, and Jenny Poolman (Treasurer). By June 1998 the Group had raised \$175,833 since inception, a noteworthy contribution to MECWA's finances.

The Women's Group has continued to support mecwacare through Annual Charity Card Days and since 2008, the Charity Golf Day under the auspices of Friends of mecwacare. Their activities often raise in excess of \$5,000 and their support has been, and will continue to be, highly valued.

## Appendix 4:

# Executive Committees of MECWA from 1959 to 1972

### 1959/1960

S. E. Stevens (elected Chairman pro tem)  
F. J. Hopkins (succeeded Stevens as Chairman)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
G. Bracher  
A. Cant  
W. H. Clarke  
Lt Col. Inglis  
K. W. Jeffrey (replaced Mrs Roberts)  
E. V. Johnson  
W. A. McKean  
Mrs R. L. Moline (Secretary)  
Mrs Roberts (retired during year)  
Miss V. Strachan

### 1960/1961

F. J. Hopkins (Chairman)  
S. E. Stevens  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
G. Bracher  
A. Cant  
W. H. Clarke  
Lt Col. Inglis  
K. W. Jeffrey (replaced Mrs Roberts)  
E. V. Johnson  
W. A. McKean  
Mrs R. L. Moline (Secretary)  
Miss V. Strachan

### 1961/1962

K. W. Jeffrey (Chairman)  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
G. Bracher  
A. Cant  
W. H. Clarke  
F. J. Hopkins  
E. V. Johnson  
W. A. McKean  
Mrs R. L. Moline (Secretary)  
Miss V. Strachan  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham

### 1962/1963

K. W. Jeffrey (Chairman)  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
G. Bracher  
G. E. Fone  
E. V. Johnson  
W. A. McKean  
Mrs R. L. Moline (Secretary)  
Mrs H. R. Power  
S. J. Spindler  
Miss V. Strachan  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham

### 1963/1964

W. A. McKean (Chairman)  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
G. Bracher  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
G. E. Fone  
E. V. Johnson  
Mrs R. L. Moline (Secretary)  
Mrs H. R. Power  
S. J. Spindler  
Miss V. Strachan  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham

### 1964/1965

*(Committee members increased from 12 to 14)*

E. V. Johnson (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
Mrs A. M. Clarke  
N. L. B. Crofts  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
G. E. Fone  
Mrs R. L. Moline (Secretary)  
Mrs H. R. Power  
N. Stevens  
S. J. Spindler  
Miss V. Strachan  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham



## 1965/1966

E. V. Johnson (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
Mrs A. M. Clarke  
N. L. B. Crofts  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
G. E. Fone  
J. E. Johnston  
Mrs R. L. Moline  
Mrs H. R. Power  
N. Stevens  
Miss V. Strachan (Secretary)  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham

## 1966/1967

N. L. B. Crofts (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
Mrs A. M. Clarke  
Mrs C. L. Coffey  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
G. E. Fone  
E. V. Johnson  
J. E. Johnston (Secretary)  
Mrs R. L. Moline  
Mrs H. R. Power  
N. Stevens  
Miss V. Strachan  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham

## 1967/1968

N. L. B. Crofts (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
Mrs A. M. Clarke  
Mrs C. L. Coffey  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
G. E. Fone  
Mrs J. Herkes (replaced Miss V. Strachan)  
E. V. Johnson  
J. E. Johnston (Secretary)  
Mrs H. R. Power  
N. Stevens  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham

## 1968/1969

N. L. B. Crofts (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong  
C. Cameron  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)

Mrs A. M. Clarke  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
Mrs J. Herkes  
E. V. Johnson  
J. E. Johnston (Secretary)  
Mrs R. L. Moline  
Mrs H. R. Power  
N. Stevens  
Mrs F. G. Tuddenham

## 1969/1970

N. L. B. Crofts (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
Mrs C. L. Coffey  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
H. T. H. Healy  
Mrs J. Herkes  
E. V. Johnson  
Mrs R. L. Moline  
Mrs H. R. Power  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller

## 1970/1971

N. L. B. Crofts (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
Mrs C. L. Coffey  
Mrs A. L. Cullen  
H. T. H. Healy  
Mrs J. Herkes  
E. V. Johnson  
Mrs R. L. Moline  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller  
B. Welch

## 1971/1972

N. L. B. Crofts (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes (Treasurer)  
L. B. Bates  
H. T. H. Healy  
G. D. Black  
Mrs J. Herkes  
E. V. Johnson  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller  
B. Welch

## Appendix 4:

# MECWA Boards of Management from March 1972 to 1982

### 1972/1973

N. L. B. Crofts (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
L. B. Bates  
H. T. H Healy  
G. D. Black (Treasurer)  
Mrs J. Herkes  
E. V. Johnson  
A. W. McPherson  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller  
B. Welch

### 1973/1974

L. B. Bates (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
G. D. Black (Treasurer)  
N. L. B. Crofts  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
H. T. H Healy  
Mrs J. Herkes  
E. V. Johnson  
A. W. McPherson  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
J. D. Quine  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller

### 1974/1975

L. B. Bates (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
G. D. Black (Treasurer)  
N. L. B. Crofts  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
H. T. H Healy

Mrs J. Herkes  
E. V. Johnson  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
J. D. Quine  
Lady Sholl  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller

### 1975/1976

L. B. Bates (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
G. D. Black (Treasurer)  
N. L. B. Crofts  
H. T. H Healy  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
E. V. Johnson  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
L. Ninnis  
J. D. Quinel  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller  
Miss J. Williams

### 1976/1977

L. B. Bates (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
G. D. Black (Treasurer)  
N. L. B. Crofts  
H. T. H Healy  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
E. V. Johnson  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
L. Ninnis  
J. D. Quinel  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller  
Miss J. Williams

### 1977/1978

G. D. Black (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary/Coordinator)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
L. B. Bates  
N. L. B. Crofts  
H. T. H Healy  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
E. V. Johnson  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
L. Ninnis  
J. D. Quinel  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller (Treasurer)  
Miss J. Williams

### 1978/1979

G. D. Black (Chairman)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary/Coordinator)  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs E. Cox  
R. B. Cox  
N. L. B. Crofts  
Mr M. M. J. Dumais  
H. T. H Healy  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
J. D. Quine  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller (Treasurer)  
Miss J. Williams

### 1979/1980

G. D. Black (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary/Coordinator)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs E. Cox  
R. B. Cox  
N. L. B. Crofts  
Mr M. M. J. Dumais  
Mrs F. E. Herington

N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
J. D. Quine  
M. Quinn  
G. N. Smith  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller (Treasurer)  
Miss J. Williams

### 1980/1981

G. D. Black (Chairman)  
J. J. St Ellen (Vice-Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary/Coordinator)  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. B. Bates  
Mrs E. Cox  
R. B. Cox  
N. L. B. Crofts  
Mr M. M. J. Dumais  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
V. G. Mulder  
J. D. Quine  
Mrs M. J. Waller (Treasurer)  
Miss J. Williams

### 1981/1982

G. D. Black (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary/Coordinator)  
G. J. Barnard  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. B. Bates  
Mrs E. Cox  
R. B. Cox  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
V. G. Mulder  
J. D. Quine  
D. T. Ripper  
J. J. St Ellen  
Mrs M. J. Waller (Treasurer)  
Miss J. Williams



## 1982/1983

J. D. Quine (Chairman)  
D. T. Ripper (Vice-Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary/Coordinator)  
G. J. Barnard  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
G. D. Black  
Mrs E. Cox  
R. B. Cox  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
N. K. Miller  
Mrs M. H. Moline  
V. G. Mulder  
Mrs M. J. Waller (Treasurer)  
Miss J. Williams B. Welch

## Appendix 4:

# MECWA Boards of Management from 1983 to 1993

### 1983/1984

Mrs E. M. Cox (Chairman)  
D. T. Ripper (Vice-Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
Mrs E. M. Armstrong (Secretary/Coordinator)  
G. J. Barnard  
Mrs H. M. Barnes  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
G. D. Black  
R. B. Cox  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs A. E. Healy  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
Mrs J. Livingston  
N. K. Miller  
V. G. Mulder  
J. D. Quine  
G. S. Russell (Treasurer from Nov 83)  
Ms G. Schutt  
Mrs M. J. Waller (Treasurer until Sept 83)  
Miss J. Williams (until July 83)

### 1984/1985

Mrs E. M. Cox (Chairman)  
D. T. Ripper (Vice-Chairman)  
G. J. Barnard  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
G. D. Black  
R. B. Cox  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
Mrs F. E. Herington  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs A. E. Healy  
Mrs J. Livingston  
J. D. Quine  
G. S. Russell (Treasurer)  
Ms G. Schutt  
Mrs M. J. Waller

### 1985/1986

D. T. Ripper (Chairman)  
L. B. Bates (Vice-Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
L. B. Bates  
G. J. Barnard  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
G. D. Black  
Mrs E. M. Cox  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs N. Fone  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs A. E. Healy  
Mrs J. Livingston  
J. D. Quine  
M. Quinn  
G. S. Russell (Treasurer)  
Ms G. Schutt  
Mrs M. J. Waller

### 1986/1987

D. T. Ripper (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
G. J. Barnard  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
G. D. Black  
Mrs E. M. Cox  
Mrs J. A. Carpenter  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs A. E. Healy  
Mrs J. Livingston  
G. A. Pepperell  
J. D. Quine  
M. Quinn  
G. S. Russell (Treasurer)  
Mrs M. J. Waller

## 1987/1988

D. T. Ripper (Chairman)  
E. D. Armstrong  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
G. D. Black  
Mrs J. A. Carpenter  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs A. E. Healy  
Mrs J. Livingston  
Mrs A. A. Mummé  
G. A. Pepperell  
G. S. Russell (Treasurer)  
E. Smalles  
Mrs M. J. Waller

## 1988/1989

Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Chairman)  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
R. Bellerby  
G. D. Black  
Mrs J. A. Carpenter  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs J. D. Graham  
R. E. Heale  
Mrs A. E. Healy  
R. E. Lang  
Dr P. J. Miach  
Mrs A. A. Mummé (Secretary)  
G. A. Pepperell  
A. M. Rodger (Treasurer)  
E. Smalles  
Dr F. Thompson

## 1989/1990

Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Chairman)  
L. B. Bates (Vice-Chairman)  
B. O. Fenton (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
R. Bellerby  
T. Hancock  
R. E. Heale  
N. Lockwood  
Dr P. J. Miach  
Mrs A. A. Mummé (Secretary)  
G. A. Pepperell  
A. M. Rodger (Treasurer)  
Mrs M. Robertson  
K. W. Thompson (Secretary)  
C. G. Ullin

## 1990/1991

A. M. Rodger (Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
R. Bellerby  
B. O. Fenton  
T. C. F. Hancock  
R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
N. Lockwood  
Mrs A. A. Mummé  
G. A. Pepperell  
Mrs R. B. Stott  
K. W. Thompson (Secretary)  
C. G. Ullin  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden

## 1991/1992

A. M. Rodger (Chairman)  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Vice-Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
R. Bellerby  
Mrs A. Cox  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs N. Fone  
T. C. F. Hancock  
R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
N. Lockwood  
Mrs A. A. Mummé  
S. C. Price  
D. J. Reece  
Mrs R. B. Stott  
K. W. Thompson (Secretary)

## 1992/1993

A. M. Rodger (Chairman)  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Vice-Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates  
R. Bellerby  
Mrs A. Cox  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs N. Fone  
T. C. F. Hancock  
R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
N. Lockwood  
Mrs A. A. Mummé  
S. C. Price  
D. J. Reece  
Mrs R. B. Stott  
K. W. Thompson (Secretary)



## 1993/1994

A. M. Rodger (Chairman)  
N. Lockwood (Vice-Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
L. B. Bates  
Mrs N. D. Bates (until November 93)  
R. Bellerby  
Mrs A. Cox  
B. O. Fenton  
Mrs N. Fone (until November 1993)  
C. C. E. Gahan  
T. C. F. Hancock  
R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
Mrs D. M. King (from November 1993)  
Mrs A. A. Mummé  
S. C. Price  
D. J. Reece (until November 1993)  
Mrs R. B. Stott (until November 1993)  
K. W. Thompson (Secretary)  
J. Treyvaud (from November 1993)  
Mrs W. M. Vears  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden

## Appendix 4:

# MECWA Boards of Management from 1994 to 2008

### 1994/1995

A. M. Rodger (Chairman until July 1995)  
N. Lockwood (Chairman from July 1995)  
S. C. Price (Vice Chairman)  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Vice-Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
L. B. Bates  
R. Bellerby  
Mrs A. Cox  
B. O. Fenton  
C. C. E. Gahan (from August 1994)  
T. C. F. Hancock  
R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
Mrs D. M. King  
D. J. Knipe (from November 1994)  
Ms A. A. Mummé  
K. W. Thompson (until March 1995)  
Mrs W. M. Vears (from August 1994)

### 1995/1996

N. Lockwood (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Vice-Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
L. B. Bates (until November 1995)  
R. Bellerby (until November 1995)  
Mrs A. Cox (until April 1996)  
J. D. Elstoft (from December 1995)  
B. O. Fenton  
C. C. E. Gahan  
T. C. F. Hancock  
R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
Mrs D. M. King (until December 1995)  
D. J. Knipe (until July 1995)  
J. D. Moir (from December 1995)  
Ms A. A. Mummé  
Mrs W. M. Vears

### 1996/1997

N. Lockwood (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Vice-Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
J. D. Elstoft  
B. O. Fenton  
C. C. E. Gahan  
T. C. F. Hancock

R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
J. D. Moir  
Ms A. A. Mummé  
Mrs W. M. Vears

### 1997/1998

N. Lockwood (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs M. J. Waller-Ogden (Vice-Chairman)  
J. A. Atchison  
J. D. Elstoft  
B. O. Fenton  
C. C. E. Gahan  
T. C. F. Hancock (until July 1998)  
R. E. Heale (Treasurer)  
J. H. Hood (from August 1998)  
J. D. Moir  
Ms A. A. Mummé  
E. Notermans (from July 1998)  
Mrs W. M. Vears

### 1998/1999

N. Lockwood (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice-Chairman)  
Ms Anita Mummé (Vice-Chairman)  
R. Heale (Treasurer)  
J. Atchison  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood  
J. Moir  
E. Notermans  
Mrs W. Vears

### 1999/2000

N. Lockwood (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice-Chairman)  
Ms Anita Mummé (Vice-Chairman)  
R. Heale (Treasurer)  
J. Atchison  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood  
E. Notermans  
R. Syme  
J. Moir (Retired November 1999)  
Mrs W. Vears (Retired November 1999)

## **2000/2001**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice Chairperson)  
Ms Anita Mummé (Vice Chairperson)  
R. Heale (Treasurer)  
J. Atchison  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood  
E. Notermans  
C. Seers  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms C. Leahy

## **2001/2002**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice Chairperson)  
Ms Anita Mummé (Vice Chairperson)  
R. Heale  
J. Atchison  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood  
E. Notermans  
C. Seers  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms C. Leahy

## **2002/2003**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price (Vice Chairperson)  
Ms Anita Mummé (Vice Chairperson)  
J. Atchison  
J. Elstoft (Treasurer)  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood  
E. Notermans  
C. Seers  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms C. Leahy

## **2003/2004**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price  
Ms Anita Mummé (Vice Chairperson)  
J. Atchison  
J. Elstoft (Treasurer)  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood (Vice Chairperson)  
C. Seers  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms C. Leahy

## **2004/2005**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price  
Ms Anita Mummé (Vice Chairperson)  
J. Atchison  
J. Elstoft (Treasurer)

B. Fenton  
J. Hood (Vice Chairperson)  
C. Seers  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms C. Leahy  
Ms S. Barton

## **2005/2006**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairperson)  
J. Elstoft (Treasurer)  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood (Vice Chairperson)  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms S. Barton  
Ms D. Coe  
G. Phillips

## **2006/2007**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
J. Elstoft (Treasurer)  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood (Vice Chairperson)  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms S. Barton  
Ms D. Coe  
G. Phillips

## **2007/2008**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
S. C. Price  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairperson)  
J. Elstoft (Treasurer)  
B. Fenton  
J. Hood (Vice Chairperson)  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms S. Barton  
Ms D. Coe  
C. Squires  
Mrs A. Court  
Ms M. Macleod

## **2008/2009**

R. Syme (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairperson)  
J. Hood (Vice Chairperson)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms S. Barton  
Ms D. Coe  
Mrs A. Court  
Ms M. Macleod  
Ms C. Spain



## Appendix 4:

# MECWA Boards of Management from 2009 to 2018

### 2009/2010

R. Syme AM (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
J. Hood (Vice Chairman)  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Ms S. Calwell  
Mrs A. Court  
Ms D. Coe  
Ms. M Macleod  
Ms C. Spain  
Ms V. Rogers

### 2010/2011

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms D. Coe  
Mrs A. Court  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
Ms M. Macleod (until April 2011)  
Ms V. Rogers  
Ms C. Spain

### 2011/2012

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms D. Coe  
Mrs A. Court  
J. Elstoft  
B. Fenton  
Ms V. Rogers  
Ms C. Spain

### 2012/2013

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms D. Coe  
Mrs A. Court  
Ms E. Dimitriadis (from May 2013)  
J. Elstoft (until February 2013)  
B. Fenton  
I. McHutchison OAM (from May 2013)  
N. Rogers  
Ms V. Rogers (retired October 2012)  
Ms C. Spain (until March 2013)

### 2013/2014

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms D. Coe (returned from sabbatical June 2014)  
Mrs A. Court  
B. Fenton  
N. Rogers  
Ms E. Dimitriadis  
I. McHutchison OAM

### 2014/2015

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Ms S. Calwell  
Mrs A. Court  
Ms D. Coe  
B. Fenton  
N. Rogers  
Ms E. Dimitriadis  
I. McHutchison OAM

## 2015/2016

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Ms S. Calwell  
Mrs A. Court  
Ms D. Coe  
B. Fenton  
N. Rogers  
Ms E. Dimitriadis  
I. McHutchison OAM

## 2016/2017

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
I. McHutchison OAM  
Ms S. Calwell  
B. Fenton  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Mrs A. Court  
N. Rogers  
Ms E. Dimitriadis  
Ms D. Coe

## 2017/2018

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Mrs A. Court  
B. Fenton  
I. McHutchison OAM  
Ms E. Dimitriadis  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms R. Au (from October 2017)  
Ms D. Coe

## 2018/2019

J. Hood (Chairman)  
J. Atchison (Vice Chairman)  
C. Squires (Treasurer)  
Ms S. Barton AM  
Mrs A. Court  
B. Fenton  
I. McHutchison OAM  
Ms E. Dimitriadis  
Ms S. Calwell  
Ms R. Au  
Ms D. Coe

## Appendix 5:

### Life Governors

Cr Ernest Johnson	appointed at AGM 1974
Cr Edward Armstrong	appointed at AGM 1989
Mrs Mary Moline	appointed at AGM 1991
Mrs Joy Waller-Ogden	appointed at AGM 1993
Leon Bates	appointed at AGM 1993
Neil Lockwood	appointed at AGM 2002
Ross Heale	appointed at AGM 2002
Simon Price	appointed at AGM 2008
Robin Syme	appointed at AGM 2011
Jorgen Elstoft	appointed at AGM 2014

## Appendix 6:

### Chief Executives

Anita Mummé	1985 – 1986
Barry Cook	1986 – 1991
Mary Barry	1991 – 1995
Nancy Hogan	1995 – 2001
Judith Congalton	2001 – 2007
Michele Lewis	2007 –



“

Kindness is the language  
which the deaf can hear  
and the blind can see.”

– Mark Twain

---

mecwacare Corporate Office  
1287 Malvern Road  
Malvern VIC 3144

May 2019



*mecwacare*