



Friends of Fernlea

July 2010 Edition

Meet our new Management Team



Welcome back Helen! Welcome Back Rhonda!

The Committee of Management has deliberated long and hard over the management structure of Fernlea. And so we should – this small organization had lost two very fine managers within a year, Helen Pike and Rhonda O'Neill. The job was clearly too big for one person, and required two different sets of skills – the management of the program itself, and the management of the relationship with our financiers, the Department of Health and Ageing. The contractual requirements are complex, and despite Fernlea's size, we are required to comply with them in the same way as much larger organizations with more managerial resources. It came to us that we needed 'a Helen' AND 'a Rhonda', and then it came to us that perhaps Helen and Rhonda might come back as a team. Both were reluctant starters. Helen clearly enjoyed being back

in her temporary role, but thought she didn't want to come back permanently. Rhonda was relishing her retirement after a long career spent entirely in the community sector, and didn't want to come back at all. Helen changed her mind; and Rhonda, after enjoying a couple of volunteer days at Fernlea, finally decided she'd like to come back too.

The members of the Committee are delighted with this arrangement – which we are trialling for a few months. Helen is the Manager, Fernlea House Inc; Rhonda is the Business and Development Manager. We value Helen and Rhonda highly and recognize their respective strengths and skills. We hope the more flexible arrangements will give them both a better chance at that elusive work/life balance.

Rod Brown President
Jenny Lyndon Vice President

Happenings at the House

Welcome back Rhonda! I am really excited about the opportunity of working with Rhonda as I believe our differing skills complement each other beautifully, and it has reduced my workload!

Well another three months has gone by, doesn't time fly when you are having fun. It has been a very busy three months, with extensive work being carried out on our quality assurance system in order to meet our obligations to the Department of Health & Ageing.

The house continues to have an update, with the two offices being painted, new blinds in the front office and the complementary therapy room, a new fridge and dryer being bought and a new dining table on the list. All thanks to the generosity of the Bendigo Bank.

We have had 18 new referrals in the last three months and currently all places in the day centre are taken and we have started a waiting list. The day centre is now open 4 days per week. There are eight clients receiving visits from volunteers on the FERNs program. The first Monday of each month, our Cantonese Group of six guests attend, and we also have a waiting list for this group. So there is no doubt that there is a need for the services we provide.



Our Cantonese group enjoying activities

I recently attended a two day workshop on "Conducting an Audit in your Health

Organisation" which provided some excellent information and will be of great value when we have an audit from DOHA early in the New Year.

Annie continues to give presentations about Fernlea House to service providers in the community, so if you are part of a community group and would like us to present about Fernlea, just ring Helen on 5968 3895.

Helen Pike



One of our friends who joins us each day.

Grants Update

Fernlea House Inc. has recently received two grants and we are very grateful for the support of these organisations.

The Community Enterprise Foundation (Dandenong Ranges Community Bank) gave \$3,047.95 which will be used for an update inside the house. The two offices have been painted, Michael has a new fridge in the kitchen, a new dryer in the laundry, and there is a wall heater in the second bathroom and a dust buster to keep the offices tidy! Our thanks go to the Bank and to Chairperson Peter Marke for their ongoing support and encouragement.

The Angior Family Foundation donated \$1,500 which will be used to buy a new flat screen TV for the house which will benefit the guests and also allow more space in the lounge room as it will be wall

mounted. It will have an inbuilt DVD and the option of being used as a projector for training.



Michael and his new fridge!

A special thanks to Katrina Doughy who completed these two submissions, and to all the other volunteers who have worked on grants this year. The assistance and feedback of Helen Pike has been most appreciated. Sharyn Turney recently joined the sub-committee and has already completed a submission, thanks Sharyn and welcome.

The group continues to make submissions to charitable trusts and organisations for items and projects to complement the existing Fernlea House programs. Applications are currently pending for: community education; a carer support group; group outings for the Chinese groups; a replacement car; and a new bus (for sole Fernlea use). Fernlea is also seeking a grant for website development.

The grants group is in need of more volunteers, anyone interested should contact Fernlea House. Meetings (of an hour) are held two-monthly in Emerald. Work can include researching information or costs of items, writing submissions, or reading/editing. Training is available and volunteers can work together or alone as preferred.

**Jan Lancaster, Secretary
Grants sub-committee**

Hi everyone

Guests, volunteers, and staff, have been very busy over the past few months. We have been shopping at Sassafras, painting a mural, and have been entertained by the Ladybug trio playing their ukuleles.

We have a few ongoing projects. Knitting blankets for aboriginal children, painting, and scrapbooking photos into albums to take home.



Some of our volunteer knitters!



Two of our guests scrapbooking

We have also had the pleasure of a guest piano accordion player called Graeme who held our attention with many favourite songs. Jody has visited us for morning tea, and we have celebrated the 40th and 50th birthday of two of our lovely guests.

Our Chinese guests are very enthusiastic with painting and craft activities. We also visited a nursery at Kallista with them. Guests have been enjoying a variety of Reiki, Bowen therapy, and Reflexology. A

big thank you to these complementary therapists for their kindness and time.

Thank you to all our volunteers for their ongoing loyalty and compassion.

Last week we celebrated Christmas in July. Michael spoilt us with Roast Turkey and Plum pudding.

This weeks theme is a Teddy Bears Picnic and scrapbooking our photos.

**With warm Regards,
Marian Robertson [nurse]**

Visit to SolarisCare Perth

Recently Frances Foletta, Manager of Volunteers, visited Perth and met with David Edwards, General Manager of SolarisCare Integrated Care for Cancer drop-in centres.

SolarisCare opened in 2001 with a purpose built centre focused on integrating touch therapies into mainstream health and medical care (including public & private hospitals.). Currently two centres are attached to hospitals at Nedlands and Subiaco (suburbs of Perth) while recently a stand-alone house was opened at Bunbury (100ks south of Perth) for regional clients and carers.

Many therapies are offered to cancer patients to help manage both emotional & physical side effects. Their carers can also access treatments. Therapies include massage, Reiki, Bowen, reflexology, pranic, experiential art, music & sound, Qui Gong. Counseling is also available. Around 150 people receive treatments each week. These free sessions are offered by professional therapists volunteering either weekly or fortnightly.

Proudly supported by

Dandenong Ranges
Community Bank® Group



More than 100 volunteers support SolarisCare which is funded through individual hospital funding, council and private grants and corporate community partnerships. Their main fundraiser is the Red Sky bike ride which raises around \$250,000 annually.

SolarisCare hope to have a research article published in a medical journal in the near future to show the efficacy of complementary therapies in mainstream healthcare. For more information see their website: solariscare.org.au/home/history/

Compliments/Complaints

At Fernlea, we welcome any feedback from those involved with us.

Please feel free to let us know if you are either happy or unhappy with any aspect of our service.

Most problems and concerns are resolved through discussion with the person directly. If you are not comfortable to do this you are most welcome to speak to the Clinical Services Nurse or the Manager.

Your grievance will be investigated and at any discussion you can invite someone of your choice to support you.

Your complaint will be dealt with fairly and promptly and without retribution.

If you continue to have concerns you can contact the Office of the Health Services Commissioner on 8601 522 or Toll free 1800 136066 which is an independent agency available if you have a complaint about a health service provider in Victoria.

Just a reminder that membership renewal is due. Please consider renewing your membership to Fernlea House on the enclosed form and support the work that we do. Thank you.

“An Australian Government Initiative”.