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Manningham Centre Association

# MCAnews



## Official opening of Grevillea Overnight Respite Cottage

Grevillea Overnight Respite Cottage was officially opened in the afternoon of Friday 28th September 2007, by the member for Menzies electorate, The Hon. Kevin Andrews MP, and the Mayor of Manningham, Cr Ron Kitchingman. The cost of constructing and furnishing the purpose-designed building was more than \$450,000.



*Cutting of the ribbon. L to R, Cr Grace La Vella, Hon. Kevin Andrews MP, Cr Bill Larkin, Cr Ron Kitchingman.*

Generous grants from many philanthropic foundations and Trusts contributed \$267,000 towards this cost.

More important than the building, however, is the service provided within its walls. The National Respite for Carers Program (an Australian Government initiative), provides generous operational funding to enable carers of people with dementia to have a break for a night, or several nights, on

a regular basis or in an emergency. Along with a day placement in Grevillea Planned Activity Group for the client, carers can be released to take a holiday away, attend to other family business or have their own medical needs addressed. This vital support helps to keep carers and their loved ones together- and at home in the community - rather than the person with dementia having to be placed in residential care.



*Kevin Andrews shaking hands with Peter Buuts and Cr Bill Larkin looking on.*



*Cr Ron Kitchingman with the opening plaque.*

NRCP Funding

2

Community Development  
Grants

2

Capital Works

3

Profile: Neil Guppy

4

## What's happening around MCA?

### NRCP DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FUNDING

The 2007/08 federal budget provided \$35.4 million over 4 years under the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP), to create respite demonstration centres in both metropolitan and rural areas across Australia. These demonstration centres will offer flexible day care in residential aged care facilities, to enable carers to attend to personal business, without leaving their loved ones unattended.

They will also research and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of various models of respite care as the basis for further innovation. Thus, they will provide a lead to the aged care industry as a whole.

The target group for this service is primary carers (spouse, adult offspring, other relative) of frail older persons with high/complex care needs, who are generally co-resident with the person requiring care - they may work part time, be studying or they may be daughters/sons or spouses involved in a virtual full-time caring role who need a regular break so they can quietly stay at home to rest or to attend to their household chores.

Given the interest of MCA in developing services to meet community needs and the two existing successful NRCP services operated by Grevillea House, the Board resolved to apply for this new service to operate within Cassia House. Verso Consulting was engaged to help us assemble and lodge the application for this demonstration project funding.

Applications were assessed by the Department of Health and Ageing on the basis of the organisation's capability, responsiveness to client needs, innovation and value for money. We were subsequently advised in late October that our application was successful!

MCA was one of only 30 sites nationally - and just six sites in Victoria - selected for this new initiative. The scheme begins on 1st January 2008, and runs through to 30th June 2011. Funding over the project's life will amount to \$840,747 including an establishment grant of \$30,410. Details of the project are as follows:

- It will provide flexible day respite between 7am and 7pm for three days a week (notionally Thursday, Friday and Saturday)
- Five clients per day for flexible, full-day sessions (six-12 hours) or
- 10 clients per day for flexible, half-day sessions (four-six hours)
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner, morning/afternoon teas provided as needed
- Innovative dual focus catering for clients with high physical care needs and complex health/nursing care needs, as well as clients with dementia (including those with challenging behaviours)
- Staffing incorporates a Program Coordinator (22.5 hours a week), Diversional Therapist (22.5 hours a week), two Care Assistants (one at 22.5 hours a week, the second at 13.5 hours a week) and an Administrative Assistant (eight hours a week)
- Allowances have been made for leasing a vehicle and transporting clients as well as for establishment costs including lounge/dining furniture, recreational and activity equipment, food service items, office equipment and minor refurbishments

This now brings to 10 the number of services MCA operates, with five of these services begun in the past three years.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT

One of the highlights of 2007 was the successful start-up and operation of a community playgroup for local families. Held in Cassia House's activity areas on Tuesdays, the group has struck a chord with both family participants and Cassia residents — it is a delight to see and hear the sound of young children at play, and observe the obvious interest of those residents involved. To help adequately resource this new group, MCA lodged an application for equipment funding under Manningham City Council's 2007/08 Community Development Grant Program. This program represents a significant investment by Council in supporting a vibrant local community.

Each application was reviewed on a case-by-case basis by a community

panel, which consisted of Cr Pick (Chair), Keith Butler (Assistant Principal of Doncaster East Secondary College), Senior Constable Susan McLean (Doncaster Police Station) and Nicole Meinig (Health Promotions Officer, Women's Health East). A total of 31 organisations were awarded funding, with \$94,000 in grants allocated. The Manningham Centre Playgroup was awarded a grant of \$2,630 to buy activity and educational materials, such as art mats, dolls, washable paint and equipment — including tables and chairs, a music player and a fold-up slide.



*Certificate of recognition presented by the Mayor, Cr Ron Kitchingman to Ross Dawson and Sharon Gammon.*

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MCA held its 23rd annual general meeting on 3rd October in Cassia House Plaza. Three Board members whose terms had expired were renominated, and subsequently re-elected to the Board for a further 12-month term. These members were Cathie Culbard, Julie Eisenbise and Barry Mernagh.

### RETIREMENT OF LONG SERVING BOARD MEMBER BILL WHITICKER

Bill Whiticker, long serving Board member advised that he would retire from the Board at the Annual General Meeting of the Association. Bill has had a lengthy involvement in accommodation and services for older people.

Before retirement from the paid workforce, Bill was employed in the Aged Care area of the Commonwealth Public Service at a senior level. For many years Bill was a leader in allocating

Commonwealth approvals and funding applications for accommodation and service delivery options for older people.

In the early 1980's, Bill was appointed Chairman of Council's Advisory Committee on the Ageing. Both as Chairman of the Advisory Committee and by personal representation, Bill had a major impact on convincing Council of the need for a Nursing Home facility in the then City of Doncaster and Templestowe.

Bill was a member of planning and fund raising committees prior to the establishment of the Board of Management in 1984. He was appointed to the inaugural Board, serving first as Board Member and subsequently being elected Vice Chairman in May 1988.

Bill also took on the role of establishing and over sighting Council's Home Maintenance Service operating out of a specially designed and constructed workshop at the Centre and managed by MCA. He was also a major contributor in establishing the original nursing home for 30 residents at Manningham Centre and the later expansion of services. Today the Centre is the largest single aged care provider in the City of Manningham and has a budget of approximately \$10 million in 2007-08.

Bill's dedication, aged care knowledge, experience and sense of humour has been a great asset to the development of MCA. Thank you Bill for over 25 years of planning, supporting and governing Manningham Centre.

### CAPITAL WORKS

Over the past six months, several capital works projects have been completed in and about the Centre:

- Parking pressures around Cassia House were eased with 17 new car parking spaces constructed, along with the associated landscaping. This was funded by the balance of a grant received from the Australian Government in 2004
- The original nurse-call system in Cassia House's Banksia area was completely upgraded in July, at a cost of \$17,000. This was sparked by its limitations and possible risks to residents and staff
- Passageway air-conditioning has significantly improved the general

environment in Cassia House's Banksia area during hot weather. The system was installed in September, at a cost of approximately \$19,000. MCA is investigating a similar arrangement for Doncaster Melaleuca Lodge

- Brand-new sun blinds have further helped residents and staff to cope with hot weather in the Erica and Acacia areas of Cassia House. The blinds were installed on exposed north and west-facing windows in resident rooms and one dining room



*The old and new car park.*

### STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

With the assistance of a facilitator, Vicki Davidson of Quest Consulting, the Board and senior staff took time out on 26th and 27th October to participate in a workshop considering key background issues that will shape MCA's strategic plan for the next five years. The outcomes and options arising from the workshop are now being considered and prioritized by the Board in preparation for drafting the plan for discussion and approval in early 2008.

### SAGA OF THE FLAG POLE

Sitting unobtrusively in the garden area on the slope outside Cassia House was a wooden yardarm flagpole, donated to

the organisation many years ago. When the car parking space was extended recently, this long-serving flagpole had to be removed because it was in the centre of the work area. After removal, it was evident the flagpole had reached retirement age and needed to make way for some new blood. Courtesy of a generous donation from an Association member, a new, tapered aluminium flagpole was bought. A prime location was carefully selected at the entrance to the new car park, and a tractor brought in to drill a suitable hole for the base. At about 50 centimetres deep, the drill pierced the main gas pipe to Cassia House - necessitating urgent and expensive repairs! A mere 15cm to the left or right, and it would have missed the pipe!

Chastised by questions such as "haven't you heard about 'Dial Before You Dig'?", Pipe and Cable Investigation Services was engaged to thoroughly check an alternative location directly outside Cassia House. A spot was marked as being "safe" - although with the parting proviso that "some plastic pipes can't be detected"! Feeling confident in the thoroughness of our preparations second time around, the tractor was once again brought in to sink the hole. Alas, again at about 50cm, it completely severed a waste water pipe laid 20 years ago to service the original nursing home! Following further expensive repairs and a manual extension to this hole, the flagpole was erected - never to be moved again.



*The old and the new flagpole.*



## Profiling Our People

### Neil Guppy, Board Member

Neil is one of our long-serving Board members, having been appointed by Manningham Council in March 1998 as a representative of the war veterans' community. Neil served in the Royal Australian Air Force during the Second World War as an air craft mechanic in Borneo, Darwin and New Britain. Post-war, Neil married Val and they have 2 daughters. The first part of Neil's career was in dairy and food production, after which he moved into engineering, design and marketing.

Neil applied to join the Returned Services League (RSL) in 1945 while still on active service in Borneo. During his 62 years of membership, Neil has been President of both the RSL's Toora (South Gippsland) and Doncaster Sub-branches, plus Treasurer of Doncaster RSL for 12 years. He is a Life Member of the latter branch. In these executive positions, Neil has served on many committees, covering both welfare and fundraising related matters.

In July 2007, Neil was awarded the highest honour in the RSL of Australia: the Meritorious Service Medal. This prestigious honour is awarded each year by the RSL's National Executive as an honour over and above Life Membership. It is on a restricted basis only — nominees and recipients must have at least 30 years continuous membership, including 25 years of outstanding service to the RSL. There have been only 2 other recipients of the Medal in the Doncaster Sub-branch, both of whom are now deceased.



*Presentation of Medal to Neil Guppy by Alan Campbell, Doncaster RSL Sub-branch President.*

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**Doncaster East Community Bank Branch**  **Bendigo Bank**

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## Did you know?

### AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DIRECTORY OF SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The "Australian Government Directory of Services for Older People 2007/08" has been produced as a comprehensive guide to the wide range of services the Australian Government provides for older Australians. The directory includes sections on health (including health risks and preventive care), accessing care and carer support, employment choices, finances and rights.

The 213-page directory can be accessed and downloaded from <http://www.health.gov.au> (click on the "For Consumers" tab, then click on the "Ageing" option). Alternatively, a copy can be ordered from National Mailing and Marketing by telephoning (02) 6269 1080 or e-mailing [nmm@nationalmailing.com.au](mailto:nmm@nationalmailing.com.au)

### DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE

If you ring Telstra Directory Assistance on 1223, the telephone call is free, but you won't be connected to the number you are seeking and will still need to write this down yourself. The Sensis Call Connect service available on 12456 will find the number for you and connect you directly.

However, this service costs 99¢ for the initial connection to an operator and a further 88¢ when you are connected. To have these fees waived permanently, people with disabilities can register with Telstra. You will send a letter confirming your disability and your eligibility for the fee reduction. More information is available from Sensis on telephone 13 23 78. Source: *The Bugle (Uniting Care Community Options)*.

Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.

*Soren Kierkegaard, 19th century Danish philosopher and theologian (1813 – 1855)*