

Volunteers mark combined 55 years' service

For long-serving volunteers Joan, Liz, Chris and Laura, making a difference in the MercyCare community has been a life-changing experience.

The four were recently recognised for their extensive contribution to volunteering – Joan for 25 years; Liz for 20 years; and Chris and Laura for more than 10 years.

Liz, who resides at Mercy Village in Wembley, began volunteering at MercyCare Wembley Residential Aged Care Home in 2001.

“My husband was a resident there at the time and I used to visit every day. After he passed away, I realised how much I wanted to help the other residents who were there,” Liz, 84, said.

“I started volunteering once a week, I’d help with the crossword group. Then eventually I’d help run Bingo every Monday.”

For Liz, listening to the residents’ life stories is what she enjoys most about her volunteer role.

“I just love talking to people, I’ve met some residents who have led really interesting lives,” Liz said.



Also a Mercy Village resident, 90-year-old Joan began volunteering at MercyCare in the late 1990s.

A former teacher, Joan said one of her most memorable moments was helping an 8-year-old-boy learn to read.

“I just remember how he had told me a year later how he could read, and it was such a lovely moment,” Joan said.

For 92-year-old Chris, his first visit to the Wembley home was as a pastoral minister in the early 1990s.

For the past decade, Chris and Laura have been hosting services for residents at MercyCare’s Wembley chapel, twice a month.

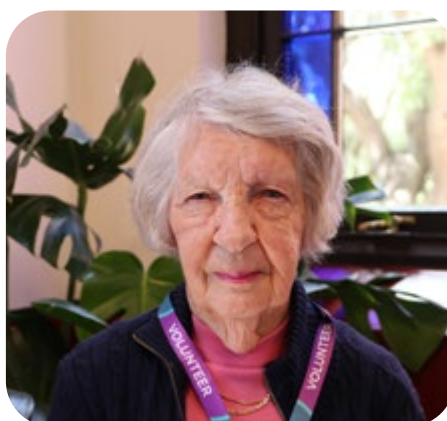
Over the years, many of the residents’ families would ask Chris to host funeral services for their loved ones.

“Volunteering at MercyCare has given me a purpose, to show love and care to great people who have given their best, and now need some care themselves.”

Laura, 91, has also enjoyed the many friendships she has made during the past decade of volunteering at the home.

MercyCare Volunteer Lead Tanya Filevski said the time and effort contributed by Joan, Liz, Chris and Laura over the years is invaluable.

“We are so grateful to have such wonderful volunteers who genuinely enjoy making a difference to the lives of our service users,” Tanya said.



Message from the CEO

Happy New Year to our readers. I hope you, your family and friends enjoyed the festive season.

2022 was a busy year at MercyCare, and despite the challenges we faced, I am very proud of the incredible work of our staff and volunteers.

It is with pleasure that I get to share some of the heart-warming stories from the last year with you today, including a special event that we held in September to acknowledge the invaluable work of our people.

It was nothing short of inspiring.

As we embark on a new year, we look forward to continuing our important work, making deeper

connections with our community, and continuing the Mercy tradition; helping people and communities to thrive.

If you would like to know more about the work we do or how you can be involved, please visit our website mercycare.com.au

Anthony Smith
MercyCare CEO

Birak season

This vibrant painting of a Djiridji 'Zamia' palm by Nyoongar elder Janetia Knapp captures the fiery spirit of the Birak season.

Known as the 'First Summer', this season traditionally falls across December and January and is characterised for its warmer temperatures, hot,

dry easterly winds in the morning and afternoon sea breezes.

The striking red, yellow and orange hues of this painting are reminiscent of the heat, and it's also a time for young animals to emerge and start to explore their surroundings.

Our 2022 Annual Report out now!

This year, the theme of our Annual Report - Everyone has a Story - has taken inspiration from the passionate people who work or volunteer across our many diverse services at MercyCare.

Every one of our 1,350 staff and 174 volunteers has their own personal connection to

MercyCare, and their own reason for dedicating their time to the people we support, during what has been a challenging period.

Read more about the remarkable work done by our staff and volunteers at mercycare.com.au/annualreport22



Support worker Stephen marks '15 years and counting' at MercyCare

"I love what I do, and I'll continue to do it for as long as I can".

For support worker Stephen Peake, working at MercyCare for the past 15 years has been a rewarding and meaningful experience.

Working in MercyCare's Community and Home Support Services, Stephen provides support to seniors to help them lead a quality, independent life at home and in the community.

Along with his caring nature, Stephen also draws from his qualifications as a Christian counsellor to understand his clients' individual needs.

"In this role, it's very important to have that caring aspect and build trust with your clients," Stephen said.

"What motivates me in this job is knowing that I am

making a difference to peoples' lives by helping them live in their home for longer.

"It also gives me a sense of purpose in life, which I also think is important in your working life."

From providing personal care, social support and domestic assistance, to accompanying clients to medical appointments, Stephen works three days a week supporting up to seven clients on each shift.

"I get to hear all sorts of stories, and I really enjoy hearing people share their experiences of what life was like during the War," Stephen said. "It certainly keeps the job interesting."

Despite starting his support worker role at the age of 55,



Stephen – now 70 – has no plans to retire anytime soon.

Want to join a team of passionate and dedicated people and make a difference in the WA community? Find out more about working with us at mercyCare.com.au/join-us

Strong start to early childhood in Piara Waters

Construction of a new Early Learning Centre in the growing suburb of Piara Waters began in late 2022.

Situated on the corner of Wright Road and Tuberosa Road, the purpose-built centre will accommodate 96 children.

Much like MercyCare's modern, custom-built Banksia Grove Early Learning Centre – which was opened in 2019 – the

Piara Waters centre will carry a contemporary aesthetic with a homely feel and has been designed to blend with the surrounding community.

Nature playgrounds are also set to be a feature in the centre's outdoor spaces, drawing from MercyCare's early learning philosophy of play-based learning.



Construction of the centre is set to be completed by August 2023, with the centre expected to open in September 2023.

Read more at mercyCare.com.au/piarawaters





Staff and volunteers recognised in Excellence Awards

In September 2022, the passion and dedication of MercyCare staff and volunteers was celebrated in a glittering night of fun, colour and energy at MercyCare's Excellence Awards gala.

More than 300 staff and volunteers from across MercyCare's diverse services came together at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre to recognise those who have gone above and beyond, embody MercyCare's values and provide a positive and quality experience for service users.

Held during Mercy Week – a significant event that celebrates MercyCare's rich history and heritage – the gala was hosted by colourful entertainer Famous Sharron, who brought her unique sparkle to the room.

Dr Richard Walley OAM joined an immersive musical performance alongside local group, En'Coda.

The Honourable Dr Anne Aly MP, also took to the stage to deliver a

powerful story about her special connection to early learning and residential aged care.

She then shone the spotlight back on MercyCare staff, acknowledging the extraordinary work that they do both behind the scenes and on the frontline to support the most vulnerable members of the Western Australian community.

Finally, our Chief Executive Officer Anthony Smith took a moment to share his deep appreciation for every staff member and volunteer and their significant contribution to MercyCare before the award winners were announced.

More than 90 staff and volunteers were nominated by their peers across seven Excellence Award categories.



Passion to make a difference inspires Gloria's studies



MercyCare case worker Gloria Mavhunga's passion for helping others inspired her to further her knowledge and skills in social work.

With more than a decade of experience in the Human Services sector, Gloria said it was the "stigma and lack of mental health awareness" that prompted her to get into social work.

"It has always been my passion to make a positive impact in people's lives," she said. "Growing up in a society where people would discriminate against those with a mental illness, I always wanted to know how the human mind and behaviour works."

Born in Zimbabwe, Gloria immigrated to Australia in 2018 after a stint working in the UK.

Upon settling in Australia, Gloria quickly realised that mental health was more widely recognised, which gave her a better opportunity to pursue her dream of helping others.

"Through conversations with people, I realised that people in Australia talk openly about mental health, there is no shame in having a mental illness," she said.

"I remember one day sitting and chatting with my husband about how I wanted to be an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker and he was very supportive."

"I enrolled into studying Master of Social Work in 2019. It wasn't an easy journey, I was working full-time and studying full-time, but the hassle was worth the tassel."

Recently completing her Masters in Social Work, Gloria wants to bring what she has learnt to her role as a Case Worker in MercyCare's Family Wellbeing team.

"As a Family Wellbeing Case Worker, I offer practical counselling using Trauma Informed Practice and evidence-based approaches to support children, young people and their families who are experiencing diverse life issues that are making them feel sad, stressed, angry or anxious," she said.

Making a difference in peoples' lives is what Gloria loves most about her role at MercyCare.

"I love my job because it allows me to make a difference in people's lives," she said. "I love interacting with young people and building rapport and this allows me to support them in a way that helps them achieve their goal."

CaLD Employment Expo

Multicultural Support Services worked in partnership with Status (Workforce Australia) and the City of Stirling to deliver a very successful CaLD Employment Expo in Mirrabooka.

Multicultural Support Services with its employment liaison officer Jacqui Whelan successfully linked many refugees and asylum seekers directly with employers.

Over 300 people attended the expo throughout the day, with our Talent team on hand to share employment opportunities with MercyCare.

Also present were Local MP Meredith Hammatt, City of Stirling Mayor Mark Irwin along with local Aboriginal Elder Len Yarran.

Thank you to Status and City of Stirling for the wonderful partnership.





Harman Park Seniors extend kindness to children's charity

Wheelchairs For Kids has become the latest charity to benefit from the kindness of seniors from Harman Park Community Centre.

Wheelchairs For Kids representatives met with seniors at the centre in Belmont recently to receive 53 care packages to gift to children supported by the organisation.

Thoughtfully hand assembled by a group of around 20 seniors, the care packages comprised a mix of bought and handmade soft toys and blankets.

"It's so rewarding that Harman Park provides a place for our clients to come together and form friendships," Harman Park Activity Coordinator Linda Taylor said.

With the support of more than 800 dedicated volunteers, Wheelchairs For Kids has

produced more than 54,000 wheelchairs since its inception in 1998 and now ships to 90 locations across the globe.

Bebby, who has been a Wheelchairs For Kids volunteer for the past 24 years, was humbled by the kind donation.

"All of the teddy bears and rugs are made by people from WA along with a group in Melbourne. I can't thank those people enough," she said.

Gifting care packages to community organisations has become a regular act of kindness for the Harman Park Seniors, who have previously donated packages to new parents at King Edward Memorial Hospital and MercyCare's Family Wellbeing and Fostering team.

Little Aussie Bugs launch

Recently five Educators across our Early Learning Centres took part in a project called Little Aussie Bugs.

The project, coordinated through Edith Cowan University (ECU), uses children's books to help Early Childhood Educators deliver important health messages to children aged two to four years.

Educators attended a workshop to receive training on how to use the books and provide learning opportunities to children. They then used the books at their services to provide practical feedback to ECU.



Maddington under construction

MercyCare's new Residential Aged Care Home in Maddington is continuing to take shape.

The steel frame at Maddington is currently being constructed on the first floor while bricks on the face of the site on the ground floor are also almost complete.

The focus will soon be shifting staffing, rostering and procedures.

This home has been designed to give residents and their family a sense of belonging and connection, looking at ways to create a homely atmosphere.

It will feature safe, continuous walkways, private gardens and carefully thought-out spaces for essential care services.

Located off Maddington Road adjacent to our existing aged care home, the new design, to be home to 108 residents, is based on the small house model of care, which features six small houses spread over two levels which are home-like in appearance.



The first residents are expected to move in early 2024.

Read more at mercycare.com.au/newmaddington



Award-winning efforts to keep people safe

Keeping our staff and residents safe is paramount in all of MercyCare's aged care services, with the COVID-19 pandemic presenting some of the toughest challenges we've ever faced.

In 2021, like all aged care services nationally, our Residential Aged Care staff were required to receive one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by September that year.

An eight-week COVID-19 Vaccination Uptake campaign was developed, with support from Devahasdin Marketing, using trusted and relevant sources to dispel any myths and misconceptions surrounding the vaccines.

A Vaccine Project Team was assembled who played a key part in rolling out the program across our Residential Aged Care facilities and ensuring its success.



Thanks to their extraordinary efforts, this campaign was recognised at the 2022 Australian Marketing Institute Awards for Marketing Excellence, in the WA Social Change Marketing category.

Affordable and Accessible Aboriginal Accommodation in the West Kimberley

Our Broome and Derby Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation sites continue to make a difference in the West Kimberley, fulfilling a steady demand for accommodation every year.

In the last financial year, 4,038 guests stayed at our Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation in Broome and Derby, adding up to a total of 30,337 bed nights.

Our Broome site (BASSA) accommodated 2,479 individual guests, who came from more than 105 different remote Aboriginal communities. At our Derby site (DASSA), we accommodated 1,199 guests who travelled from over 21 remote Aboriginal communities.

BASSA and DASSA provide a homely, family-friendly environment that is culturally-

safe, secure and welcoming to guests, who may stay for up to 28 days, with access to meals, fresh sheets, wifi and links to support services in town. Accommodation options are a mix of family, double bed and single bed units, and we are accessible for people with disabilities.



Days Gone By...

A group of residents from Mercy Village in Wembley recently joined students from John XXIII College to create a unique book of stories called Days Gone By.

Students from Years 7 to 9 interviewed the residents, asking questions about their lives and in the process learning about how much the world has changed.

Residents shared memories and stories that made a deep impact on the students, including tales of farm life, adventure and overseas travel, careers, love, and even a recall of the day that John F. Kennedy was assassinated.



The benefits of intergenerational programs are widely recognised, with students learning to treat older people with respect and compassion, and residents enjoying the social and health benefits that come from an experience that brings them joy and interest.

The Days Gone By project was a one-off project organised between Village Manager Michelle Smith and Daisy Farley, the Magis Gifted and Talented Coordinator at John XXIII College.

"Life has a funny way of working itself out – just go with it",
Lorraine Dibden – Days Gone By participant.

