

20 years of happy memories ...continued from page 3

Alterations were also carried out – and several units demolished – to make room for our new Nursing Home and No.2 Hostel. This was a wonderful improvement. Another welcome addition was our passive recreation area with its gazebo, barbecue area and water gardens.

Our streets were named at this stage. After various managers had come and gone, Mr Neil McConville was appointed as Chief Executive Officer.

It is almost unbelievable the work that has gone on under Mr McConville. A new 32 room Hostel (No 3), the upgrading of No. 2 and redesigning of No. 1 Hostel. The work carried out is amazing – Roofs of units replaced with steel, trees removed, parking areas formed and so much more – air conditioning, enclosed verandahs. Now we are

getting our frontal appearance cleaned up and a new fence is to be built, new wider concrete paths and railings to assist access.

Summing up; where could one find a better place to retire in!! Maintenance cost so low, one could not get accommodation cheaper anywhere. Room around our units (not jammed up like most retirement villages), friendly attention from pleasant staff at all times and in all areas, friendly meetings with exercises and a cuppa, all under the auspices of “Our Val” (Inverarity), the Village Co-coordinator.

My final thought is to thank Kirkbrae and its staff for a wonderful place and environment to live in. I have seen many other units, some costing much more but none can compare with Kirkbrae.

Noel Seletto

## Have you thought of...

### ...Working as a volunteer at Kirkbrae?

Kirkbrae is delighted to welcome offers of assistance from eligible volunteers. Please call lifestyle supervisor, Jennie on: 03 9728 2455.

### ...Making a donation to Kirkbrae?

The Presbyterian Department of Social Services depends to a large degree on the generosity of individual gifts and bequests.

You can make a **tax deductible donation** to Kirkbrae at any time by making out a cheque to the **Presbyterian Church of Victoria Department of Social Services**.

Please complete & attach the form below so we can send you a receipt.

Name .....

Address.....

Amount enclosed (in words) .....

Exempt from Stamp Duty

Donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible. Claims must be made under the title of Presbyterian Church of Victoria Department of Social Services

OFFICE USE:

Received for:

Presbyterian Church of Victoria  
Department of Social Services, Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes

Received by: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## Why be a Volunteer?

### Volunteering has many positive benefits including;

- Sharing existing skills or developing new ones.
- Enhancing Career opportunities.
- Meeting new people.
- Experiencing new challenges

### Volunteers supported with...

- Orientation and induction
- On-going Training opportunities
- Supervision, support & debriefing
- Insurance cover
- References on request

### Who can Volunteer?

Anyone over 18 yrs who is interested in assisting in the care of older people to be active in the community. No special skill or qualifications is necessary.

### How much time is needed?

Whatever regular time you can give will be appreciated.

### Volunteer Selection Process

The Volunteer Intake Process includes;

- An initial Interview
- Completion of a registration form
- 2 References
- A Police Check

Contact our Volunteer Coordinator  
Jennie Inchley on 03 9728 2455  
or email – kirklife@kirkbrae.pcvic.org.au

## Social Services Committee

Mr Ron Patterson – *Convenor*

Mr Ron Spencer – *Secretary*

Miss Rae Anstee

Mr Barry Kilmartin

Mrs Lois Taylor

Mr Dennis Wright

Mr Robert Lowe

Ms Barbara Firth

## Key Staff Members

Mr Neil McConville  
*Chief Executive Officer, Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes*

Ms Bev Stehn  
*Director of Nursing Services, Residential Care*

Mrs Val Inverarity  
*ILU Manager, Retirement Village*

Mr Allan Withers  
*Maintenance Services Manager*

## KIRKBRAE PRESBYTERIAN HOMES

794 Mount Dandenong Road,  
Kilsyth 3137

Phone: 03 9728 2455

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# KIRKBRAE COURIER

THE NEWSLETTER OF KIRKBRAE PRESBYTERIAN HOMES – AUTUMN 2007

## CEO's Report

We are looking forward to 2007 as a challenging yet exciting year, and one of constant change particularly regarding the upgrade of the lower hostel building.

To bring you up to date on the various projects underway and proposed throughout Kirkbrae we advise as follows:

### Lower Hostel Building Upgrade

This is progressing very well, and indications from our builders that the early April 2007 completion date is well on target. The builders are currently connecting the link behind the main kitchen to the new treatment area. Most plastering has been hung and the painters are on site. We anticipate that the extensions to the main kitchen will commence in February 2007 and be completed shortly after that.



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## Kirkbrae Takes Shape



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Next Edition (Spring) ... Kirkbrae moves into IT and goes digital

The mission of Kirkbrae Presbyterian Homes is to provide the highest quality care to our residents within the values of a caring Christian community

## The Difference a Day Makes

Merilyn Spratling spends a day finding out what it means to be an aged-care nurse.

Nicole Ashmore has been working in nursing homes since finishing her undergraduate studies. It's an unusual career choice for a graduate nurse but one that she finds immensely rewarding.

"I like the long term nature of it," she says. "I like planning a person's care and putting it into action and seeing the outcome. I like to see the person settle, become happier, begin interacting with others and start being involved in the variety of activities offered at Kirkbrae."

Just before 7am, Nicole signs on for the day's work. She joins the division 2 (enrolled) nurse and four personal care attendants (PCAs) on duty, listens to the night staff's handover and then allocates the day's work.

Amid the cheery greetings from the early risers, Nicole checks blood sugar levels of the diabetic residents before administering their insulin.

Once the "med" round is complete, Nicole begins assessments, first visiting a Mrs. Bell who arrived from the adjacent hostel two days ago. The

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*The difference a day makes ...continued from page 1*

assessment is holistic, but today focuses on the patient's mobility and continence – which are both greatly affected by her lung disease. Nicole notices that a bursitis on the resident's elbow remains red and angry looking, despite antibiotic treatment.

"I need help. Help!" calls a trembling voice from a nearby sitting room. Nicole immediately stops work to investigate.

"What's the matter?" she asks an elderly lady who is struggling to stand up. She helps straighten the woman's petticoat who then settles calmly. It takes a minute, but Nicole's intervention has probably prevented an accident.

During a 24-hour period, a nominated "resident of the day" is selected for a comprehensive health and care-needs review. It's Mrs.



Lee's turn today. She has been at Kirkbrae for five years – well over the average stay in Australia's nursing homes of 32 months – and has slowly succumbed to dementia. Nicole soothingly massages the resident's hands before gently examining her.

In the course of the morning Nicole has found time to assess a student RN DivII with his delivery of personal hygiene care and assisted a PCA with a simple dressing. She has also reviewed the care plan for a palliative care patient and taken a phone call from his distressed daughter who lives in Queensland.

Soon after her break, Nicole learns that Bell's blood sugar is elevated. "Her sugar levels could be high because of the bursitis," she reflects. The doctor gives a telephone order for an immediate dose of insulin.

Lunch time is lively with chatter and banter. Staff share jokes with the residents. The PCAs assist those unable to feed

themselves; many need only a little help. "Mrs. Bell gets tired eating and might need the meal heated up," says Nicole as she redies herself to administer midday medications.

After lunch, Nicole and a physiotherapist briefly confer about a home visit scheduled for the next day. The division 1 nurse at Kirkbrae is responsible for planning all admissions to ensure the needs of new residents, as well as those already at the home, can be met.

Mrs. Bell's daughter asks to talk to Nicole and they converse quietly in the nurse's office. Family support is another important component of the nurse's role.

"The daughter has required substantial time to consult her about her mother's needs and to relieve some of her own anxieties," says Bev Stehn, Director of Nursing.

We have to go very gently but we need information about what Mrs. Bell's family wants. Do they want aggressive treatment? In the event of an acute illness,

do they want her transferred to hospital? We provide, at times significant education, in an informal way. Counseling of families is an important part of our role."

Nurses also actively participate in staff education and today, as the residents are happily involved in "armchair travel" activity with Kirkbrae's lifestyle officer, Nicole presents a session about care for people on continuous oxygen: an update prompted by Mrs. Bell's admission.

Handover to the afternoon shift staff concludes the shift. As she says goodbye to the residents, Nicole reflects on her passion for aged care nursing.

"I am part of a team. I like the stability. I like knowing the residents really well. It's challenging. I get to know the families: it's a family environment because this is the resident's home," she says.

"That's what aged care nursing is all about".

*First published in the Nursing Review. Reprinted with permission*

## Staff Spotlight: Libby Rochford

I consider myself very lucky to be working here at Kirkbrae in these lovely surroundings.

I commenced my employment here at Kirkbrae in April 1991 as a PCA in the "old" 20-bed nursing home, which is now known as the upper hostel and was lucky enough to be involved with the "new" nursing home which opened in 1994. I worked as a PCA for 5 years and then transferred across to Admin as Receptionist/Accounts receivable, my next move will be to a cottage!!

Working in admin. I am able to maintain my contact with the nursing home and hostel residents as well as the "village people" and their families.

I am an OH&S rep and also involved in a "No falls" exercise program with the cottage residents which is a falls prevention program, such an important issue



with older people.

No two days are the same, my work is certainly varied. I also run the "Footy Tipping" competition for the staff, residents and families, which is a lot of fun (even though the CEO follows Carlton). The residents take it very seriously!

I have 3 children, Luke, David and Hayley. I became a grandmother 2 years ago, I didn't realise how much joy Charlotte would bring into my life, unfortunately her parents, Luke and Erin,

have transferred to the Gold Coast for 2 years with work but it gives me somewhere to visit! David lives locally and has just become engaged, so I have a wedding to look forward to in November. Hayley is nursing at Darwin hospital; another place to visit! I enjoy catching up with friends, and "getting-away" on 4WD trips.

I have made many friends here over the years and have formed some close friendships with staff members, many who are now becoming grandmothers themselves, and enjoy our "social" nights out and have even had some very "memorable" weekends!!

I too find my work very fulfilling and would like to thank all residents, their families and staff for making Kirkbrae such a unique place to work.

*CEOs Report ...continued from page 1*

### The Boardwalk

The new boardwalk between Constable Drive House and the Upper Hostel has been completed and security access panels installed. Currently the user group are meeting to discuss plantings and other features requested by residents and their families. We anticipate these works to commence during February 2007 and be finalised well before autumn ends. This will give all residents, resident's families and Kirkbrae staff free and secure access to this area and will be an additional feature at Kirkbrae.

### The Main Car Park

Works will commence to upgrade the main car park from gravel to a hard surface late February early March 2007, and additional

car parking around the new lower hostel upgrade works is being considered. During this time new parking arrangements will be temporarily put into place. Please abide by the temporary signage and refer to memo's that will be regularly posted on all the notice boards.

### Nursing Home

The gardens around the Nursing Home are being regenerated and refurbished and it is proposed to path this area for easy access to residents, resident's families and Kirkbrae staff. The area will be secured and a small gazebo installed for your comfort and use.

### Upper Hostel

We are currently exploring a way of securing the area between the upper hostel

and the gazebo to allow safe access for residents to this area and the garden area. We will keep you informed of developments.

### New Phone System

We wish to advise that during April 2007 we will be moving from an analogue based phone system to a digital base system, as the old system will no longer be supported by Telstra. The new system will give greater flexibility and access particularly after hours for residents, resident's families and staff. We will keep you advised of developments.

Above are just a few of the proposed plans and changes for 2007. The most anticipated change will be the finalisation of the Lower Hostel and transferring residents to these renovated



rooms. Activating the provisional 30 high-care bed licenses in Constable Drive House should then occur by no later than end of November 2007.

Once again 2007 will be a

year of change, improvement and progress ensuring that Kirkbrae is able to continue to deliver a high standard of care to our residents.

*Neil McConville  
Chief Executive Officer*

## 20 years of happy memories at Kirkbrae *by Noel Seletto*

My wife and I were first introduced to Kirkbrae by a resident who invited us to lunch. We got back home and decided there and then that it was just what we were looking for.

We went straight to see the Manager and applied to come here. I was interviewed by the then Acting Manager, John Eckersley. After filing my application, I (we) waited approximately 18 months before getting the unit we were in.

The rough average age of residents at this time was between 70 and 75 years – younger than the current average. We, the residents, even put on shows in the "Hall". Juin (my wife) and I, after about 5 years here, put on luncheons in the hall – two course with sweets and cordials \$6.00 (Chicken Tropicana, Cold Collation and even spit roasts all with fruit salad & cream as our dessert). The lowest attendance was 79 persons, the highest 103. We made about

\$150.00 – \$200.00 each time and all money made went to the Resident's Committee to help subsidise our outings etc.

Coming in to Kirkbrae up until recently, one came in to any empty unit. It would be painted inside but the resident had to provide floor cover etc. This situation gradually changed and as units were vacated they were upgraded with modern kitchen, bathroom, carpets and so on.

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