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Manningham Centre Association Inc.  
Support Services for Older People

# MCAnews

## Some Words from MCA's Chairman



The Annual Report and the earlier copies of MCA News provide details of the solid progress we have made during 2014 in all of our operations. The new Aged Care funding model that applies from 1 July, 2014 has given us some challenges, but our Management team is coping well with these and we are pleased to see that MCA continues to be the Centre of choice for many in the Manningham community.

On this note, I would ask that all members of the MCA community act as Ambassadors for MCA and that

you advise all of your friends, relatives and acquaintances of the array of residential, home care and support services we provide to many, many people in Manningham every day. We are very pleased with the quality and variety of the services we provide and hope that you will help us to increase the community awareness of these.

We are all proud to be associated with a caring, well-run and financially stable organisation committed to assisting the needs of the aged and aging residents of Manningham. I know that the Board, our valuable volunteers and all of the dedicated people who work at the Manningham Centre want to continue to be in a position to expand and improve the services we provide for many years ahead. We have many substantial long-term projects planned, which will improve the standard and the ambiance of our residential facilities, and we are keen to commence these.

However, our ability to implement these plans is restricted by our short-term tenure as the manager of the two residential aged care facilities on the site. Accordingly, a substantial amount of our time over the past year has been devoted to seeking a longer-term management contract from the Manningham Council rather than the short 4-year term contract we currently have. We are well advanced in our discussions with Council and are confident of resolving this issue early in the New Year.

Finally, as we near the end of the year, I would like to take the opportunity to wish each of you and your families a safe and happy Festive Season and a prosperous and healthy New Year.

*David Meiklejohn AM*

## Annual General Meeting

On 19<sup>th</sup> November, Association Members and other members of the MCA community came together at our Annual General Meeting to hear about MCA's progress over the last year.

The Members elected three directors, Nusia Krolikowski, John Shaw and Lyn Sowersby all of whom have previously served on the Board. Following the meeting, CEO Ross Dawson gave a presentation of upgrading plans for Cassia House and Doncaster Melaleuca Lodge.

Manningham Centre Association always welcomes new Members. To inquire about membership, please see our website: <http://www.manninghamcentre.com.au/mca-home-page/about-us/association/>



MCA Members in attendance at the AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> November at Cassia House. Photo taken by Mike Fard



## Introducing John Farlow

– **Manager Corporate Service**

### **Describe your professional experience in Finance & IT.**

I am a qualified Accountant and Company Secretary and have been a CPA for over 35 years. I have worked as an Accountant for 22 years. Senior accounting roles have been held with Bridgestone Tyres, Brambles Security, ANZ Bank and Salta Properties.

I have worked in the IT roles for 20 years. For the past 15 years, I have operated my own software consultancy providing bespoke database design and development. I have completed IT based projects for companies such as BHP, Westpac, ANZ, NAB, Kraft Foods, RTA of NSW, SEC of Victoria, Shell, Western Mining Corporation, Alcoa, FlyBuys, Ansett Transport Industries and Jetstar.

As the IT Manager for Austock Brokers, I was responsible for developing the Exempt Market Share Trading Platform to provide competition to the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) an initiative of the Australian Federal Government.

### **What are the challenges facing aged care providers today?**

I think the challenge for MCA as a not-for-profit is providing a safe and enjoyable environment for the residents/clients while navigating the constantly changing landscape of support for aged care services

provided by the government. No matter what side of the fence the government is on, support for aged care seems to be a portfolio that is continually tinkered with to save the government money. Given the ageing population in Australia, I think this issue is going to get more difficult as the government of the day struggles to provide sufficient funds to meet the basic needs of an ageing population.

### **Tell us about an interesting hobby or interest you have.**

Lorraine and I have clocked up many kilometres on our travels around Australia including crossing the Simpson Desert, the Ningaloo Reef, Kakadu and Lysterfield National Parks, the Flinders Ranges, Freycinet National Park and as far north as Cooktown. Planned destinations include the Kimberleys, the Gibb River Road and Cape York.

My passion is cars and I have 7. I prefer Volkswagens from the 70's so I have restored a 1970 VW Superbug, a 1974 TS Passat and a 1977 GLS Passat. Sitting in the garage waiting for my retirement is an Mk1 Volkswagen Scirocco. I try to do as much of the work as I can so I have completed some short courses at TAFE to develop the skills needed, including panel fabrication, spray painting, vehicle upholstery and welding.

### **Tell us about yourself.**

My wife Lorraine and I have just celebrated 36 years of married life. We have two daughters who are both married. So far, we have a granddaughter who is nearly 2 and a grandson who is 8 months. We have lived in Donvale for the past 32 years, having re-located from Sydney where both Lorraine and I were born and raised.

### **What does your role as Manager Corporate Service entail?**

As Manager Corporate Services, I am responsible for the accounting, information technology (IT) and human resource functions of MCA. The role is strategic so I focus on the current practices and processes to determine if they meet best practices and if they are based on current technologies.

## *Lifestyle & Leisure in Residential Services*

**D**o you ever wonder how residents spend their day? Both the Lodge and Cassia plan a number of special events during the year, as well as a number of weekly activities. In this issue, we feature Cassia's Lifestyle and Leisure program.

More and more, residents are entering Cassia House from different cultural backgrounds and so Cassia's lifestyle and leisure staff are continuously reviewing its activities to cater to interests of a diverse group of residents.

The Tuesday carpet bowling group is now an Olympic-style competition with teams based on countries of origin.

Residents and volunteers have been working diligently to create an art piece entitled "Lifework." It is a mixed media piece made with paint, paper and fabric and found its home in a corridor of Acacia unit.

The Banksia unit is making significant improvements in the lifestyle and leisure program specifically for residents living with dementia.

Nerida Quin started with MCA at the end of April as a lifestyle and leisure diversional therapist team leader. She is introducing more individualized activities for residents based on the Montessori Method.

Montessori activities are tailored to the individual based on their interests and strengths. Activities try to engage the five senses. Some examples are scooping, sequencing, sensory discrimination, sound and weight discrimination and tool matching.

After introducing these changes, the staff have found residents to be more engaged and for longer periods of time.



## “Today I did something for my community”

At MCA, we have just over 300 staff and about 115 volunteers. Some of these volunteers also work as staff. While many people would want to get home after a long day at work, a handful of people choose to continue volunteering even after finding paid work at MCA.

Kusum volunteers twice a week to help Banksia unit residents with their meals and assist during the arts and craft time. She finds both activities gratifying. For Kusum, residents are like family members. Once she noticed that a resident was having difficulty chewing, so she cut up the meat into very small pieces and mashed it up. Finally, when the resident finished his meal, he said, “God bless you darling.”

When the residents do arts and craft, she sees their face glowing and can tell that they're happy. After both of these

activities, she thinks to herself, “Today I did something for my community.”

Mahile Amini (“Mali”) said her first impression of MCA was that staff and volunteers have a good relationship with older people and tend to be more kind or patient. She volunteered at the Cassia House café and nail salon before finding work at the Lodge. Mali now volunteers to take MCA's small vehicle fleet to carwashes. She calls MCA her family and visits residents and staff at Cassia twice a month.

Mali was introduced to Manningham Centre by Volunteering in Manningham as an opportunity to improve her English and make new friends. She was a practicing lawyer in Iran but could not transfer those credentials to Australia. As a result, she has had to start over but many staff members of

MCA befriended her and encouraged her through difficult times.

MCA is very privileged and grateful to have these two dedicated volunteers amongst our team of 100+ volunteers.

*Pictured left to right: Volunteers Miffy Hogan and Kusum Pandya with staff member Louise Tingate and resident Joan Hope.*



## Mural Art Project Completed!

Following on from the story in the last MCA News, the Mural Art Competition has come to a close. We are pleased to announce that the students from Templestowe Secondary College completed the Mural near Grevillea House.

Although the Mural has not been in situ for long, there have already been many opportunities for the clients to reminisce about past happy memories as generated by looking at the images. For instance, one client told staff he knew the US President John Kennedy personally and told us that he had written a play about him; the picture of the ‘Pucka’ boot polish reminded another client about the old fashioned shoe-shine service that was located at Flinders Street Station, and the girl with the red-checked dress and plaits has led to many happy discussions about how the clients used to dress their children, and about how the change in fashions to hairstyles over the years has been inspired by the Hollywood film stars.

When the clients walk towards the Mural it is the colour that everyone sees and makes it so attractive. The clients can't help but be drawn to the colourful images and this makes them engage with the Mural's themes.



*Year 9 and 10 students and teachers from Templestowe Secondary College in front of the completed Mural near Grevillea House.*

This project was led by MCA's Promotion Advisory Committee conveyor Lyn Sowersby. We thank Lyn for building a partnership that has reached across the generation gap and opened the eyes of secondary students to a historic era though a hands-on project.

Thanks again go to the staff and students of Templestowe Secondary College for the work they did in not only creating the work but also in the research done in its preparation.



## Stories from Cassia Day Respite

**M**y mother, Masako Takeda, passed away at home on Wednesday 22 October 2014 at the age of 87 years. I will never forget the day I took Mum to the specialist to examine her at Epworth Hospital. The doctor diagnosed her with dementia. It was a hot summery day, and we had a chilled drink at a café. I was at a loss how to take care of Mum, who would never be better, but worsen gradually.

After the diagnosis of the dementia, we had a few specialists advise what services and facilities were available for us. We didn't look for much support outside the family because Mum couldn't communicate in English. A Japanese carer visited once or twice a week, but it wasn't enough interaction for Mum, and also I couldn't have any time off at home.

After learning about our respite options from Carers Victoria, we visited the Manningham Centre in 2011. This was the first day of the new passage for Mum to come out from home to interact with other people.

We met Sharon Gammon the manager of Cassia Day Respite, who was very helpful. It was through Sharon that we made a first step forward to open our window to let in a fresh breeze to our lives. I still remember vividly the first day Mum went to Day Respite. In spite of my concern regarding the language barrier, Mum enjoyed herself as a part of the group with the wonderful caring team. She didn't want to leave at the end of the day. We gradually felt comfortable enough to let Mum stay for one week in Residential Respite, and made a big holiday plan after many years.

The Day Respite service is a special place for Mum and us. We were concerned about the difference of the languages, cultures and other social backgrounds when we took this new



step forward. We as the carers needed to be open minded for our loved ones to have a better and happier life. We needed a caring team to trust in order to make a decision to enter respite. And it was Sharon, Helen, Marion and Alena who changed Mum's late life to be happier and to smile again with her beautiful smile. Thank you to Sharon and the team for being with Mum and us all through the last few years.

*Kumiko Toyama,  
daughter of Masako Takeda.*

## CHANGES AROUND MCA

A laneway linking the DML and Cassia House sites was completed in October. This will allow people and vehicles to exit DML if emergency vehicles block the entrance road to the facility. It is currently under trial to allow vehicles from the Lodge an alternative route to turn west onto Manningham Road. Please report any issues you face while on this laneway link via a Have Your Say form.



The portable building across from Cassia House has been recently named Waratah House. Thanks to Carolyn Sadler and Maurice Officer for suggesting the name.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO CASSIA HOUSE STAFF!

In the month of September, Cassia House passed two vigorous external audits. The first was to re-accredit Cassia for three more years of operation and another to validate the funding claims. Both of these audits required the extensive involvement of staff from across MCA. MCA extends its congratulations and appreciation to the staff led by Facility Manager Pat Fernandez for their thoroughness in documentation and reporting.

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*We wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Safe & Happy New Year!*