

VWA Newsletter

December 2020

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Karl Berberich and Angie Parkyn



Angie Parkyn with Amelia Alvis

VICTORIAN WELFARE ASSOCIATION

General Manager's Update

Karl Berberich stepped down as VWA Board Member earlier this year, after seventeen years of loyal service. Betty Walters graciously filled the gap on our Board, and Kerri Callaway took on the Chairmanship from John Bruce, who had faithfully held that position for six years.

Since February this year we have held nine of our meetings via zoom, and just three in person at The Heights. There have been a few technical hitches, but otherwise we have managed very well.

In the Residence and the community areas of the village we were required to implement additional procedures to comply with the government restrictions and across the board all of our staff happily carried out these extra tasks throughout each week.

The restrictions did not prevent the renovation work continuing with the renovation

of unit 11 or the instillation of the lift, and you will see from the photos that the works are now completed with very pleasing results.

Now that we can accept all visitors in small numbers to The Residence and the village, you are very welcome to make an appointment to view our upgraded facilities. Just phone or email to arrange a time.

Amelia Alves has been our new Care Manager since July this year and she has embraced her new role with enthusiasm. She works in The Residence five days a week, and is able to work closely with both residents and care staff and keeps me very well informed.

2021 will be a very promising year for us all, I am sure.

Angela Parkyn

VWA Annual General Meeting

Chairman's Report April 2020

John Bruce

A warm welcome to you all today and thank you for joining us to review our activities in 2019. Last year we welcomed Kay Coady as a new unit resident. This year we are to welcome Janet and Mark Pilkington as new Unit Residents. Mark of course has given years of service on the Board and is our current Treasurer. But this welcome to them is as residents – Welcome Janet and Mark.

As a Board we have again this year been active, and I will endeavour to share with you an outline of some of our involvements during 2019. Financial aspects of course will be covered in our treasurer's report to follow.

LEGALS

Last year I reported to you that Government Legislation passed in 2017 aimed to protect residents from some commercially based arrangements that disadvantaged residents. Close inspection by specialist Lawyers that we engaged to assist us, showed that the changes brought in did not affect our arrangements which are so much more resident supportive than many commercially based homes. However, their research did highlight a number of areas that needed clarification and adjustment to exactly relate to Government "wording" and so a total revamp of our documents has been made to satisfy the minutia of wording outlined in Government legislation. We have also taken the opportunity to ease some of the detail to the benefit of all unit residents. In particular the time for repayment of Unit Security Bonds has been reduced from 6 months to 90 days, perhaps a minor detail, but one aimed to assist the individual or their family should they vacate their unit. (In some

commercial Villages the waiting time can run into years).

A further legal area calling for attention is the proposed "Discrimination Act" currently in process. We have been in contact with our COP and, through David Weil, with the legal Department of The Mother Church about possible challenges to our restrictions of entry to The Heights to Christian Scientists. It is not clear at this stage as to the full implications of the proposed law but it is a matter for ongoing attention.

PROPERTY WORKS

Last year's report included details of major work that had been necessary on the front veranda of the main residence. This work was finished in June 2019. We also foreshadowed work to upgrade our concrete paving areas. If you have visited The Heights this year you will have been able to see the outcome of this work on the paths and paving. It has given a real lift to our environment and we can rejoice at the kind and generous gift that covered these expenses. This gift also included finance to cover the cost of a lift to enable easier access to the upper floor of the residence. Work on site is underway, completion is expected in July. The removal of the old stair chair lift has also opened the way to restore the Victorian stair to its true beauty and function. I must note that this new lift is not designed for wheelchair access, as the law always requires always alternative means of escape, and we have no way of providing for alternative access for wheelchairs from the upper floor. The lift will however provide easier access to upper floor rooms for



This year's AGM via Zoom with all the Board - A very different look for the event!

permanent and short- term guests who, in an emergency, can use the stairs for exit.

MAINTENANCE

There is always ongoing maintenance on properties, and I will not go into details of major tree pruning and removal, fencing repairs, gutter guards and cleaning etc, but perhaps I should report on work needed resulting from a major hail storm in January. Some 35 skylights were shattered at The Heights leading to a major insurance claim. We were able to arrange short term patching with plastic sheeting by members of our intrepid team of trade helpers, but because of the extent of the damage, we have had to await direction from the insurers as to the extent of repairs and replacement, and the employment of contractors nominated by the Insurance Company. As the damage was so extensive both on our property and others in the area, there have been considerable delays in the corrective work. The insurance company have been

helpful in their dealings with us and we hope that the corrective work will be completed in the not too distant future.

CARE

But now to the nitty gritty of our main reason for being – our care and support for everyone living at The Heights.

Residence: The Heights residence has been able to provide care and support 24/7 for between three and five (average four) residents this year in addition to a further nine short term visitors. The re-structured extra care room 7 noted in last year's report has been in use 85% of the year.

We have recently welcomed two of our Unit Residents who have now moved into The Residence.

UNITS

Of the 18 units, eleven are life leased, a further 2 have had payments made towards Life Lease Contracts, one is leased to the

VCSNSA for our Victorian Christian Science nurse and one is rented to a member of staff. That leaves 3 units that are available for Life Leasing – one with two bedrooms and two one- bedroom units. In the meantime, these units may be used for short term renting for visitors or staff. There was a total of thirty guests staying in units over the 12 month period.

Social Activities of 2019

The weekly issue of the “Heights Happenings” advises residents, in the house and units, of the outings and activities planned during the coming week as well as the menu for the midday meals. These meals are cooked in the house for our residents and can be ordered by unit residents and other guests.

Activities organised in house include hymn singing, movies, Scrabble, trivia and crosswords. Outings to nurseries, gift shops, coastal villages and cafes have been enjoyed throughout the year, as well as events at Huntingtower School and other local Christian Science lectures.

Unit residents have also organised activities in the Community Room in recent times, to which our house residents are warmly invited.

The Heights bus transports house and unit residents to church services on Wednesday and Sunday, and on most Monday mornings to the local shops and banks in Ashburton.

Listening to the Wednesday Testimony Meeting held at The Mother Church, has been a regular Thursday afternoon event over the past year.

Of course, the current COVID-19 has now placed considerable limits on all type of group activities.

Staffing

We are so blessed with the loving care of

our wonderful staff. THANK YOU to all of you who give your care and attention. And to our dedicated Manager Angie Parkyn, who works tirelessly to guide all our activities to fruition.

There is an ongoing need for more staff, so if you know anyone who may be interested in joining this wonderful team, please ask them to contact our Manager.

We have also been blessed this year by help provided by 2 interstate Christian Science Nurses who have travelled from Queensland and NSW to join our team when needed, However the COVID-19 regulations may make this not possible, and we are having to review very carefully intake of additional residents until further staff can be secured.

As you will know our Manager, Angie Parkyn, has established a format for a potential ‘Care Manager’ to assist with the scheduling and care of our residents, and an invitation for applicants to apply for the position was circulated widely throughout Australia. In the absence of any applications, the position was opened for applicants from overseas. An excellent application has been received from a lady with care experience and recommendations/ references from the USA. She came to Australia at the end of 2019 for on-site experience with us, and currently we are working with Immigration Lawyers preparing our formal application to nominate her for a Work Visa.

Nursing

We are indeed blessed to have living on site the Visiting Christian Science Nurse for Victoria. Kathryn Bouchard West gives our staff and residents care and support that is so valuable. You were advised last year of the proposed Nurses Training Course that was provided by the VCSNSA under the guidance of Kathryn. The two students that took this for the first level of training starting

in October last year are now valuable contributing members of the care staff in the residence.

VWA Board

May I start with an expression of thanks and appreciation for the untiring work of all our Board members. After seventeen years of faithful service, Karl Berberich has given notice that he feels it is time to resign. Karl – A very big thank you for the wonderful and dedicated years of service that you have given to the VWA.

You will have noted on the Agenda that we have recently been joined by Betty Walters. Knowing Betty's broad experience as former chairman of the VCSNSA and her experience in the wider world of corporate/ Council responsibilities we were so grateful when she accepted the invitation to join our Board.

We would also add our thanks to David Weil for his

ongoing guidance in the world of 'Law'.

And again – thank you to all our supporters and to you who have been able to join us on this day of review.

And may I close by quoting from Hymn 199 in the Christian Science Hymnal:

*"Now thank we all our God
With grateful hearts and voices
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom the world rejoices;
Who from the days of yore
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love
And still is ours today."*

John Bruce 



Residents of the units put on a splendid afternoon tea in February

Spring has sprung!



Financial Report For The Year

Ending 31 December 2019

Mark Pilkington

A warm welcome to our VWA family and friends. Thank you for joining us today in reviewing the last year.

May I start with a verse from Hymn 350 from the Christian Science Hymnal

*We expect a bright tomorrow,
All will be well;
Faith can sing through days of sorrow,
All must be well;
While His truth we are applying,
And upon His love relying,
God is every need supplying,
All, all is well.*

It is very pleasing to be able to report another operating surplus for the past year. This surplus is much smaller than that of 2018, I will explain the reasons later in this report.

The Statement of Financial position for 2019 shows the VWA's total assets as \$7,064,015 as compared with \$6,394,037 in 2018. This increase in value is in no small part a result of a significant increase in the value of the share portfolio in the latter half of 2019. The value of share markets continually fluctuates, lately we have seen a substantial decrease in value of our share portfolio as a result of world events. Although we would prefer the value of our shares to increase, the VWA is a long-term investor and we are not concerned by short term changes in value. Our total equity, ie assets less liabilities or what we as members own is \$4,700,030 – up \$250,000 on 2018.

On the income side, board and rent at The Heights residence for 2019 was \$132,108 that is about \$6,500 more than in 2018.

Of the 20 flats at Leslie House, most are leased to those with an affiliation with the Christian Science community. The tenants who don't have an affiliation with Christian Science are carefully screened, before being accepted as tenants, to ensure that they are compatible with our existing residents. In addition, they pay a higher rental than those with a Christian Science affiliation.

Income earned from our share portfolio this year amounted to \$319,317. This is almost identical to that earned in 2018. We are very grateful for the advice of our investment adviser, Kevin Lowther of Shaw and Partners. We meet with Kevin on a regular basis to review our financial portfolio and seek his advice. Our investment portfolio includes only ethical investments. Our approach is to maximise the income from our investments rather than concentrate on capital growth as we require this income to fund our ongoing operations.

Donations to VWA this year have totaled \$238,350 almost \$350,000 less than in 2018.

In 2019 we received large donations from the following donors:

- \$200,000 from the Christian Science Nursing Service of NSW
- \$24,924 from the Victorian Christian Science Nurses Support Association

Equally importantly we received a large number of individual donations totaling \$13,426. Every donation, no matter how small, is greatly appreciated and valued, and has helped us achieve an operating surplus in 2019.

The most important income sources for 2019 were in order:

- Income from our investment portfolio – 31% of total income
- Donation income – 23% of total income
- Leslie House rental income – 21% of total income and
- Resident house income – 12% of total income

These four sources account for 87% of the VWA's income.

Staff costs are still the largest expense for the VWA at \$684,189. This is almost \$16,000 less than in 2018. In 2019 we continued to employ interstate nurses to make up for a shortfall in the number of local care staff.

Overall, our total income was \$1,083,926 against total expenses of \$1,081,842 giving a surplus of \$2,084. While this is a very modest result, it must be remembered that donation income in 2019 was substantially down on that received in 2018. In 2018 we received a large donation which was earmarked to be spent on repair work to the buildings and grounds at the Heights. A large portion of that donation was spent in 2019 with the remainder to be spent in 2020. This meant that 2018 accounts showed a large influx of income and thus a large surplus while 2019 showed a major spend of the 2018 income resulting in a modest surplus.

On the expenses side of the ledger:

- Salaries and associated costs accounted for 63% of the outgoings
- Repairs and maintenance work accounted for 13.2%
- The other 24% (approx.) of expenses was spread over all other expense categories. Examples of other expense

categories are:

- o council and water rates,
- o light power & heating and
- o household provisions

The VWA has a current liability of \$2,101,519. This money is held in trust on behalf of Life Lease unit holders and is refundable when Life Leases are relinquished. This money is of vital importance in providing ongoing investment income to the VWA.

The Financial Statements also show that our property, plant and equipment are valued at \$2,288,033. The property owned by the VWA makes up 96% of the value of property, plant and equipment. Our property value is based on what is termed “cost value”, that is what the property cost us. The current value of our property is obviously much higher than its cost, however, cost value is what most not-for-profit organisations quote in their audits.

VWA members who would like a full copy of the audited reports may request this through the office at the Heights.

Thanks

The achievement of another surplus this year is due in large measure to the wisdom and dedication of our General Manager, Angela Parkyn supported by her wonderful and hard-working staff. They all give so much of their time and love to this very precious organization. Having our Christian Science nurse on-site is a blessing and her enthusiasm and caring approach are greatly appreciated by both residents and staff.

Our success is also the result of having a dedicated and effective Board of Directors. Their unity and commitment to the VWA makes it a very productive team. All board members serve in an honorary capacity. I would single out two board members. Firstly Karl Berberich, when I joined the Board I

asked all members how long they had served on the board. I was shocked when Karl said that he was in his fourteenth. Karl has now served 17 years and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him personally for all that he has done. Secondly, I extend my gratitude to our Chairman, John Bruce, who works tirelessly to support the VWA and gives so generously of his time. He often works into the small hours of the morning to complete some task. I need to also to thank Ellie for allowing John to work as hard as he does.

A time of renewal

When I think of all that happened in the past year the word that best describes it for me is renewal. This last year, to me, has been a time of renewal. So much has happened and continues to happen at the Heights. Firstly, we can think of developments on the property. As John has mentioned we completed some major projects last year:

- relaying of the paving on the property,
- repairing and painting all the paths and
- completing the repair of our beautiful residence verandah

But the renewal of spirit that I have witnessed in our community is just as important. I have seen a renewed sense of companionship and fun within our community. John has mentioned a lot of the organized activities, but in addition to these the residents have become very active in initiating their own activities:-

- sports events such as croquet and table tennis – hours of hilarity for all who attend whether as participants or observers
- movie afternoons where we watch some of the classic films and
- lately even a community newspaper

But genuine renewal is much more. It is a process of realization, as we become increasingly aware of our unbreakable connection with God. It is a realization that

we are actually the daughters and sons of God, a realization of our unending potential. As renewal takes place, we become better persons, more selfless, loving, charitable, and generous toward ourselves and others.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to share the words of hymn 199 from the Christian Science Hymnal.

*Now thank we all our God
With grateful hearts and voices
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom the world rejoices;
Who from the days of yore
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love
And still is ours today.*

*We know our gracious God
Through all our life is near us,
To fill our thoughts with light,
To strengthen us and cheer us;
From His eternal care
We never shall remove,
Encompassed by His grace,
Enfolded in His love.*

We at the VWA are delighted to share this “blessing from above”.

With much gratitude,
Mark Pilkington



Metaphysical Talk - 'Home'

Fay Pyatt CS Nurse.



Good Afternoon everyone. Isn't this fun being together on a Zoom meeting. We can be so grateful to modern technology.

Thank you so much to the Board for inviting me to speak to you this year.

Little did I know how apt the subject of Home was going to be. We are all spending much more time at "home" right now. As I spent five years at boarding school, the concept of home is very precious. I came to realise that Home is a spiritual idea.

My Christian Science teacher, Rosemary Cobham wrote a poem about 'Home' and it is now set to music and is hymn 497 in the thin grey hymnal. I'd like to read it to you.

The Bible gives us clear views of where "home" is. Paul tells us in Acts 17:28 that "in Him we live and move and have our being". Or we could put it in the words of the Psalmist, Ps.91 that we dwell in the secret place of the most High and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Further on in Psalm 91 (from The New Living Translation) it says If you make the Lord your refuge (I say if you know God is your refuge) If you make the Most High your shelter no evil will conquer you: no plague will come near your home. For He will order His angels to protect you wherever you go. Wow!! What safer place could there be?! What more comfortable place could there be?! What more joyous place could there be?! Aren't we all so much more conscious of this wonderful Psalm at this time? Aren't we knowing this truth for ourselves and the world?

Mary Baker Eddy, the discoverer and founder of Christian Science explains in her book Science and Health, that "Metaphysics resolves things into thoughts, and exchanges the objects of sense for the idears of Soul". So as Christian Scientists we're metaphysicians and used to "resolving things



into thoughts" Science and Health 269:14 Our leader also tells us that "heaven is not a locality, but a divine state of Mind in which all the manifestations of Mind are harmonious and immortal, because sin is not there and man is found having no righteousness of his own but in possession of "the mind of the Lord, as the Scripture says." So reasoning this way, could we conclude that "Home" is not a locality, but a divine state of Mind. Wow!! There's "no sin there," no violence, no virus, nothing harmful. Do you see where this is leading. It covers the insidious beliefs of domestic violence, of homelessness of refugee statelessness. Of physical self-isolation, social distancing. Our world needs our understanding of the true concept of home and where we live. These horrible beliefs cannot find us because the place we live in is unknown to them – known only to Truth Life and Love.

St. John had a wonderful vision of Home, the

Holy city, or New Jerusalem. In Revelation 21 he says, “and there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

The Christian Science nurses’ training also has us turning what seem to be physical activities into spiritual ones. For example, the basic thing of making a bed. It got us thinking what does the bed represent? It is a spiritual idea of comfort, safety, rest, peace, precision, order. You could probably think of more. So, while making the bed we were taught to think in those terms to remove the sheets and blanket in an orderly manner without creating a lot of flapping about. We were taught precision, how to centre the sheets, how to make the bottom sheet taut so there were no uncomfortable wrinkles. (There were no fitted sheets in those days.) We were taught how to mitre them all at the foot of the bed. When a patient was out of the bed for whatever reason, we were taught various folds to make the bed look tidy and to make it easily accessible when it was returned to.

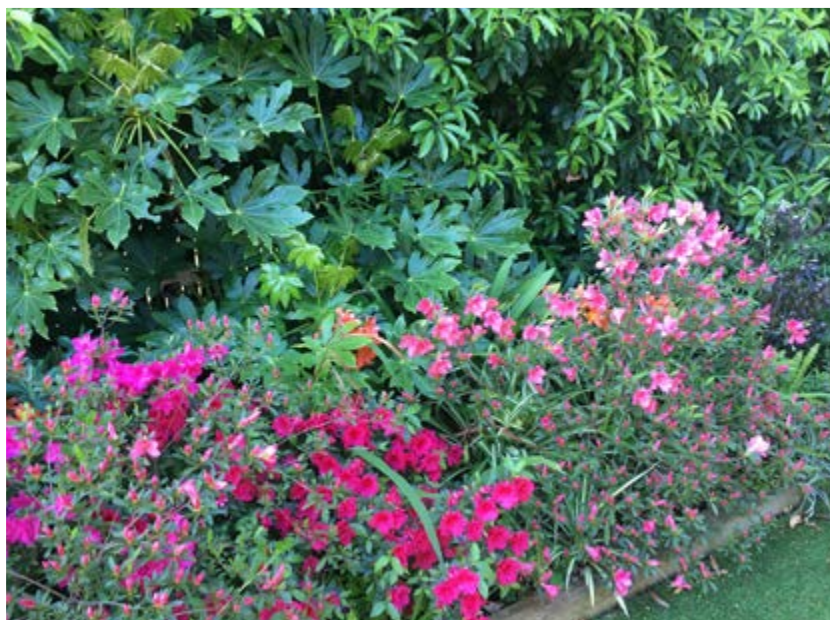
Food preparation and eating is a metaphysical activity. The word nurse comes from the word to nourish. It is important to know who is doing the nourishing. Psalmist, David knew he was fed by his Shepherd. Eugene Peterson in *The Message* puts that part of Psalm 23 this way “You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies. You revive my drooping head: my cup brims with blessings. Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life. I’m back home in the house of God for the rest of my life”

What does our leader tell us in the last verse of her poem “Love”, she says “Fed

by thy Love divine we live for Love alone is Life. I can remember Karen Bartley and I were making a pastoral visit together. We were encouraging a dear one to take some food that had been presented to her. We were sat on either side of the bed singing all the hymns that came to us regarding nourishment and food. I was amazed at how many hymns relate to this subject. If the food we prepare is done with love, it is appealing and appetising.

Going back a bit to when my husband and I got married we thought carefully about our “home” what we wanted it to represent. We were in England at the time, but we have friends from all over the world. We included everyone who came to the door and we wanted it to be a place of welcome, healing, ease, comfort, freedom from stress, safety, security and inspiration.

We fostered children for 2 years and that was wonderful to be able to welcome them and even their parents at times. Good things happened.



One little baby whose parents were scared of taking him home because the prognosis was not good, came to us over Christmas, what a perfect time. The verse in Mary Baker Eddy’s hymn *Blest Christmas Morn* where she

talks of the Christ as “Thou gentle beam of living Love, and deathless Life! Truth infinite, so far above all mortal strife, or cruel creed or earth-born taint” was often held to as we thought of this little one as that “gentle beam”. Each time they came to visit him I could see the father’s mental barriers come down and do you know the baby went home at their Greek Orthodox Easter. To me this was very significant. Apparently, they go around greeting one another with the words “the Christ is risen”. The Christ certainly did rise in that family’s consciousness. Of course, we know that babe never left “home”, “Heaven”.

There were two occasions in Hong Kong where our home proved its utility.

I got a phone call from a Dad in the USA asking if I could help. His son had gone trekking in Nepal, he’d joined up with three other young travellers from Japan, Malaysia and South America. On their way to Lhasa, Tibet, he started having problems from the altitude. They abandoned their trip and took him to hospital in Kathmandu in the foothills. Once he was in hospital one of the travellers continued on her way. The other two stuck by this young fellow. The German from South America took on the role of “nurse”. He telephoned the parents, the Christian Science teacher and was seeing to financial things, organising a boy to stay at night in the hospital to care for his friend. By the time I got there he had discharged himself from hospital and the two of them met me at the airport and had arranged a room for me at the hotel they had moved into.

I spoke to his Christian Science teacher and was able to relay her message to him. During this time his Dad was on his way to Hong Kong to stay at my home with my husband and daughter. The three of them met us at Hong Kong airport and Dad and son returned to the USA. This young man never left “home” or “heaven”. Hadn’t God sent His angels to protect him?

Later, another American who worked at a USA embassy in China had been injured on holiday. He came to the consulate in Hong Kong to get some attention. He visited the Christian Science Reading Room the following day and knew the attendant on duty. You see how God had ordered his angel to be there. She told him there was a Christian Science nurse in Hong Kong and contacted me, so I picked him up and took him where? Yes, to my home.

It appeared he was working on other things than just the injury. He was in daily contact with his teacher and soon moved back to his job in China. He never left “home” and “heaven”.

I hope you see from these few experiences what a power “Home” is.

As our successive stages of experience unfold those new views of divine goodness and love, home and heaven, we can be of more use to our world. S&H 66:17 Let’s allay the world fear Silently reassure it as to its exemption from disease and danger S&H 41:28.

I’ll close with the third verse of another hymn from the thin grey hymnal, 499

I Am the Lord

Innocent one, sinless and pure,

Nothing can ever divide thee.

Governed by Love, you’re safe and secure,

I am forever beside thee.

So rest and know where’er you go

Home and heaven cannot be denied thee,

for I Am the Lord, there is none else,

There is no God beside Me.

Thank you.

Fay Pyatt CS Nurse



Are you a Financial Member of the VWA?

Thank you to all supporters who renewed their subscriptions for 2020.

We are grateful to those of you who chose to take out Life Memberships. These members do not need to return the renewal form each year.

Annual Membership is \$20 and Life Membership is \$300.

Renewal forms for 2021 will be sent out in March next year with the invitation to the 2021 AGM. If you would like to subscribe sooner or would like a copy of our new brochure, please email us at the address below, or phone to speak to the General Manager, Angela Parkyn, or one of our administration staff members.

Current Board Members as at December 2020

Chairman/Director
Kerri Callaway

Treasurer/Secretary
Mark Pilkington

John Bruce

June Buck

David Fletcher

Leonie Tidd

Betty Walters



Administration Staff

General Manager
Angela Parkyn

Admin Officers
Wendy Renehan
Jaci Todd

Attention: Retiring Christian Scientists

Thinking about life-leasing a unit at the Heights?

Be Our Guest

Stay in a furnished unit for two nights, free of charge to experience Retirement Village Life amongst fellow Christian Scientists.

Phone 03 9885 2202 and speak to Angela, our Manager, who will arrange a booking for you.



Registered Office: 15 Kerferd Road, Glen Iris, Victoria 3146

Tel: 03 9885 2202 | Fax: 03 9885 0344 | Email: heights@bigpond.net.au | Website: vwa.net.au



U11/15 Kerferd Rd, Glen Iris

This newly refurbished unit is fabulous! With a brand new bathroom and kitchen, fresh paint and carpet who could resist?

It has views onto the garden from all windows. Its beautiful new kitchen has an electric stove, fridge and lots of cupboards is just waiting for its first gourmet creation!

The unit has a A/C for comfortable cooling and heating.

As with all The Heights units, you can cook for yourself, or come and dine in the residence, any day of the week.

Beautifully refurbished unit
NEW KITCHEN - NEW BATHROOM - GARDEN OUTLOOK



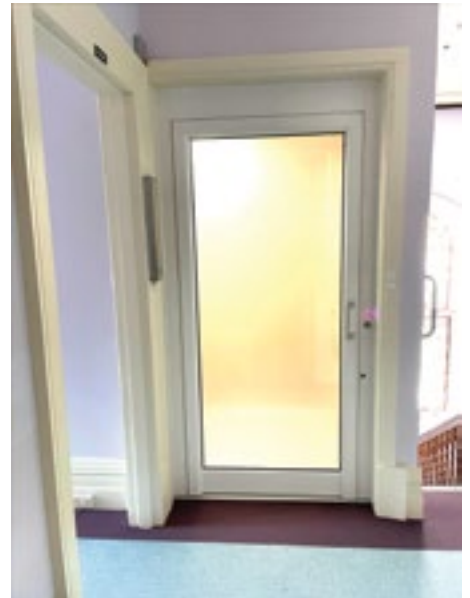
Serviced Rooms 15 Kerferd Rd, Glen Iris

Have the stairs to our upstairs rooms been a bit daunting? Well, now we have a plush lift!

It will take you to our lovely upstairs rooms in our historic residence. Each room has a private ensuite, cozy hydronic heating and lovely views of the garden and beyond.

Tasty fresh meals are cooked in the house every day and your room cleaning and laundry is taken care of, giving plenty of opportunity to study, enjoy the garden, make new friends, or venture into the surrounding suburbs or city.

The bus stop is just across the road, and the Glen Iris train station is a 15 minute walk away.



Easy access to upstairs
-NEW LIFT-

