



VWA Newsletter

December 2025

VICTORIAN WELFARE ASSOCIATION

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Betty Walters & Kate Rayner CS

AGM CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025

May I welcome everyone on behalf of the Board of the VWA to the 2025 annual meeting.

It is a joy to see everyone today and we look forward to meeting together informally over afternoon tea following this meeting.

When starting to prepare this report part of a verse in Thessalonians came to mind; "In everything give thanks...", and we do indeed have much for which to give thanks at the VWA.

Last year in the Chair's report I mentioned that we aim to make our VWA "... a dearest spot"..., as Mrs Eddy termed home, (Science and Health p 58-12), and we continue to work towards the residence, units and Leslie House being homes of happiness and contentment.

This last year has been one of harmony and growth in every facet of life of our organisation.

Initially may I thank our current Board members for the hours of work they contribute to the VWA? As you will be aware their work

is entirely voluntary but governed by the strict requirements of any Board in the country. This year we have just finalised and accepted new policies for the VWA Board. These are in line with the requirements of the Charities Commission.

Thank you to our General Manager, Wendy Renehan, who leads with joy and enthusiasm, and always with love and a smile.

Now that the policy document has been finalised, our next step is to prepare a new constitution to replace our Memorandum and articles of Association. The current constitution has been in use since our inception. The name at that time was the "Victorian Rest Home Promotion Association". In so many ways, both social, and legal, changes need to be made. A simpler, clearer version is called for.

This year we farewelled June Buck after her years of service on the Board. June was a dynamo and her enthusiasm and knowledge was so greatly appreciated.

In recent times she worked enthusiastically and tirelessly to oversee renovating two units as well as supervising the work of the garden contractors. We greatly miss June's strong metaphysics and vibrant contribution.

The Board were most grateful that Marilyn Hart was happy to join the Board at the time June passed on. Marilyn has brought a wealth of knowledge to the Board table following many years as Manager of the VWA, as well as a wide experience in other fields.

This has recently meant a Board of five members which the Board plans to recommend in our new constitution. There are a number of organisations within the Christian Science community needing positions to be filled such as the VCSNSA, City Reading Room and the like. As our field is currently facing diminishing numbers to fill these important positions we think it wise to keep to this number.

We are so incredibly grateful for the wonderful staff members that work at the VWA so lovingly. Our gratitude is expressed for all that they contribute to make here a true and happy home.

When reading and hearing via the media of retirement village residents having many concerns disregarded, I find so affirming that here, at Glen Iris, residents are free and welcome to talk to the General Manager. The office is open to unit holders, and wherever possible, problems are resolved as quickly as possible. Matters of policy or large expenditure are brought to the Board for consideration, and if not immediately acted on, they will be put onto the budget for further discussion and prioritisation.

In recent times, all Leslie House tenants rental collection and maintenance issues have been delegated to our property agents. This means that if a tenant has an emergency maintenance issue out of hours, such as over a weekend, the agency can quickly find the appropriate tradesperson whereas the VWA is

not in the position to provide twenty four hour maintenance coverage.

Josh Kenworthy has now been at the helm as Care Coordinator for a year and he has brought his warmth and love to everything he does. Josh has also been working on updating in- house procedure manuals, a mammoth task, as well as training staff and updating equipment where needed. We are especially grateful that Josh's training as a Christian Science nurse blesses our organisation.

"A grateful heart a garden is..." (Christian Science hymnal no.3) we sing in church, and our gardens are definitely showing reasons for gratitude. This year we have a qualified gardener supervising our gardens and gardening contractors which is a pleasing step forward. The gardens at Leslie House are a haven to sit in, while the gardens at the Heights continue to give joy. Tree care and upgrades of watering systems have been two major garden undertakings this year.

Renovations and maintenance are important throughout any year. This year each unit in Glen Iris has been fitted with a smart new security front door, safely allowing for ventilation on summer evenings. Improved security lighting is now in place and as part of our upgrading programme another Heights unit has been renovated. Leslie House has had a roof repair as well as the upgrading of switchboards and the replacement of hot water services.

We are delighted that we have welcomed two new life lease residents; this is always such a joy. Also welcomed to the residence were guests from overseas and interstate for study and rest, as well as short term accommodation. Our home is always open!

This year we also opened our home to a Christian Science nurses conference with both accommodation and a venue for the meeting.

In conclusion I would like to finish with two verses from hymn number **146** from the



Christian Science hymnal:

*In God I find a precious gift
That knows no fear, no feud,
That glows so still, serene and pure:
The gift of gratitude.*

*In seamless gratitude I weave
A silent, healing prayer,
With shining threads of ceaseless joy:
For man is God's great heir.*

Thank you for coming.

Betty Walters

VWA Chairperson



FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024



Rob Kitchingman - Treasurer

The work of the VWA will remain on a loving principled foundation as we “Hold perpetually this thought, — that it is the spiritual idea, the Holy Ghost and Christ, which enables you to demonstrate, with scientific certainty, the rule of healing, based upon its divine Principle, Love, underlying, overlying, and encompassing all true being.” p496:15 Science and Health.

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Revenue and Other Income \$1,614,708 (2023: \$1,298,770)

Operating Expenses \$1,429,034 (2023 \$1,175,930)

Surplus \$185,674 (2023 \$122,840)

Additional Income: Profit on sale of shares \$292,766 (2023 -\$43,116)

Revenue

- Income was more than the prior year mainly due to higher donations of \$477,310 compared to the prior year of \$302,958. Donations (and therefore the Surplus) were overstated this year as a donation for 2025 from the Christian Science Nursing Services NSW actually arrived in December 2024. The VWA also received bequests from 3 estates totalling \$162,608. What a blessing. We are very grateful for every donation.
- Rental income for Leslie House and the Residence are slightly higher this year (\$434,931) than the prior year (\$421,435) reflecting the demand for housing.
- Dividends and investment income is also slightly lower this year (\$428,707) compared to the prior year (\$441,656). However, this was offset by higher interest income.

Expenses

Expenses have increased against the with prior year. We note the following expenses which have moved:

- Workcover is higher this year (\$32,564) compared to last year (\$24,513).
- Management and Board expense are higher this year (\$8,648) compared to last year (\$4,196) but included \$4500 consultancy cost to update the VWA Governance documents to meet current legislative compliance levels.
- Repairs and maintenance are higher this year (\$94,232) compared to last year (\$70,356) a reflection of the post covid cost of trades and the desire to maintain and elevate the standard of the facilities and grounds.
- Depreciation expense is higher this year (\$64,826) than last year (\$54,669).

- Salary and wages (and superannuation) is higher this year (\$828,129) compared to last year (\$697,580) primarily due to: award increases, backpay for care staff going back six years and the payout of annual leave and long service leave for retiring staff.

Statement of Financial Position

- Bank balance has increased by \$1,393,994 primarily due to the payment of two life leases and higher donations this year, including a donation that was paid in December 2024 but recorded as income in 2025.
- In relation to the Franking Credits Receivable (\$68,959), the period for assessing each refund is related to the tax financial year for July to June. In 2024 the refund for FY2023-2024 franking credits was received reducing the amount receivable. The refund for the 2024-2025 franking credits will occur in July or August 2025.
- Land and Buildings have been revalued this year to match the Site Value (Land) and Capital Improved Value (Buildings) provided by the council in their rates notices.
- Financial Assets are lower this year (\$5,947,805) than last year (\$6,260,088) due to a disposal of some shares in 2024.
- Unit lease liability is higher this year (\$3,028,772) than last year (\$2,425,532) due to receipt of two new life leases during the year.

Summary

The VWA can subsidise the cost of accommodation and provide very high levels of care thanks to donations (\$477,310), investment income (\$393,924) and profit on sale of shares (\$292,765) without which the VWA would have run at an unsustainable deficit. What a demonstration and how grateful we are for the

support of the field. Thank you. For 2025 the VWA will continue to demonstrate its infinite supply while at the same time looking to grow its life leases by at least another two, and its residential guests by at least another two.

The care and accommodation in an uplifting Christian Science atmosphere that the Victorian Welfare Association provides is invaluable. The VWA provided the venue for the Christian Science Nursing Conference in June 2024. The conference was a wonderful opportunity for professional development, sharing of solutions and inspiration for the field, as well as VWA care staff.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning”

The Bible. James 1:17

“Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need. It is not well to imagine that Jesus demonstrated the divine power to heal only for a select number or for a limited period of time, since to all mankind and in every hour, divine Love supplies all good.”

Mary Baker Eddy, S&H 494:10

Thank you all for supporting this important work.

Rob Kitchingman

Robert Kitchingman (Treasurer)

The natural fruits of Christian Science Mind-healing are harmony, brotherly love, spiritual growth and activity.

Miscellany,, p213:1-3



Val Heath had a lovely send off! Val has worked providing wonderful meals for the residents for 21 years. We hope to keep seeing you around Val!



ACTIVITY

We have been enjoying a variety of activities with the residents and staff here at The Heights, always with afternoon teas and plenty of laughs along the way!

Our residents have said they most of all enjoyed the company and delicious homemade cake offered with these activities, making them feel included and at home.

A big thank you to everyone who has helped make these events possible - our wonderful Care, Kitchen, Administration and Management Staff.

- Robyn Saylor

Pauline H, Leonie H-S, Pat W

METAPHYSICAL TALK

KEEPING LIGHT IN OUR PRACTICE OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Ask God to give thee skill

In comfort's art:

That thou may'st consecrated be

And set apart

Unto a life of sympathy.

For heavy is the weight of ill

In every heart;

And comforters are needed much

Of Christlike touch.

I am sure you all know this poem by A E Hamilton, from (Retrospection and Introspection, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 95:4)

This is our calling in life as practitioners of Christian Science is it not? To gain that Christlike touch?

Who wouldn't want a deeper understanding in their practice of Christian Science? To do this we need to allow more light into our practice.

After Class Instruction, I didn't yet feel confident in practicing Christian Science properly, but I knew I had to find my own way with what I'd learned.

That poem by A E Hamilton touched my heart and is full of the light of Love which is always redeeming us to Itself whether we know it or not.

A couple of years ago my husband and I (who work together in our Reading Room) took a few days off to attend our Association meeting. In the time we were away, another branch member stood in for us. He discovered that the Reading Room had been robbed during the day while he was working there. Upon our return to Adelaide, we checked the CCTV recording which showed a young man opportunistically entering the Reading Room. He saw his chance and took it, walking around the back of the counter, checking in the drawers and finally he reached our cash drawer. He opened it and removed

all the cash and left quickly. The footage was provided to the police and the matter reported, but it seemed that nothing could really be done.

It was clear that prayer was needed. I realised that it was important to set the right standpoint for my prayer and work from within the light. I knew it was not effective to just simply deny that the incident occurred. I prayed firstly with the Lord's Prayer to calmly establish the facts of being and quieten my thought. I then considered how God was seeing this situation – by working to look out with God into His creation. I then prayed with the synonyms, considering the problem from each different perspective. The allness and oneness of Mind and its manifestation; the rightness of all spiritual activity.

When I got to the synonym Soul, which I understand presently as the allness of God's identity reflected by His creation, man, I knew I could not take into the prayer any thought of the identity of that man as a thief.

If I was thinking from the standpoint that he was a thief, then I had to be admitting that man has the ability to change the unchanging being of good and that Mind is not always present. I then took the mental stand that God's man neither has the choice, nor the ability to change his identity from a good man to a thief.

I continued through the synonyms. The thought came to me "well what about the money?" I felt I had to deny that recovery of the money was any motive for my prayer. If I was considering the issue through God's view, I could not be using prayer to achieve a material outcome. Then the question came "How will you know if the prayer is effective". By this time, I was considering the case from the perspective of

Truth's activity. Mrs Eddy says in Science and Health:

A spiritual idea has not a single element of error, and this truth removes properly whatever is offensive.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 463:12–13)

And then I just felt peace about the case. The prayer was not (and in fact is never) about changing anything except my own thought about what had gone on. It seemed to me that the leading error in the case was the aggressive thought that man has power, independent of God, to direct and change his own being. I knew God's being was unchangeable so must His reflection be too. So I felt that I could properly leave this to Truth. This peace that I felt, was Love's reassurance of its perpetual activity. I just left the whole matter at the feet of Christ, Truth and the law of Love and went on with my day.

This challenge to thought about what constitutes healing is simply animal magnetism trying to hold us in the material standpoint. In Science we learn that everything we need is already within us (the kingdom within). Nothing is to be gotten from outside. As practitioners we are only ever working on our own thought - moulding and chiselling it – never on any one else's – even when they ask us to pray for them.

Remember Jesus' temptations. These set the basis for his practice and therefore it must in ours.

In the Gospel of Matthew, we find God announcing the newly baptised Jesus as His beloved Son. Immediately we find Jesus off in the wilderness for 40 days finally preparing for his earthly mission.

It was then that the tempter came to him. Neither the temptation nor the tempter, were part of Jesus' being - but it appeared to come from without. It only came to him as a suggestion

in thought – which is the only way animal magnetism ever comes to us. In suggesting that if he was hungry he could make the stones into bread, we perceive a more subtle error.

This suggestion had two parts – Firstly - that Jesus did not need to rely on his Father to supply his human need for food, suggesting that he could rely on matter. Secondly - that he could and should use CS to achieve a material outcome and one for his own advantage.

How many times have we been tempted to do that? To fix something with prayer? This was the first temptation handled by Jesus, and must be ours also. In our practice we are not trying to make anything better – sick matter into well matter, change a human situation – find a home, get some supply. It does not matter what it is that comes to us to deal with in Science, it is only ever in our own thought that we handle it, and this is the reason that prayer is effective.

Our only job as practitioners is to turn ourselves to the right standpoint and see what really is – and yield to the power behind it. And from this standpoint we have divine authority to handle and discard the false thought. Then we leave it to Truth and Love to make any needed adjustments. It is from within this standpoint of light in our Christ consciousness that any error falls away due to lack of witness. All we need is already within. Nothing is outside. This is our only responsibility. Truth and Love does the work and will reveal what we need to handle.

Our daily practice of CS is established in our morning work. With that case of the man I spoke of earlier, I felt that it was my metaphysical work that morning, establishing my own identity within Soul, that set the platform for my prayer to see the man rightly and handle the error rightly. If we set our own right spiritual identity then we already have our anchor in the Shekinah when something comes along to derail us. Sometimes we get caught in the wrong standpoint though, but it can be corrected when we see it. We

want to be working from within the light - within the standpoint of Mind's knowing.

This statement by Mrs Eddy in Science and Health seems to be relevant here:

"If we pray to God as a corporeal person, this will prevent us from relinquishing the human doubts and fears which attend such a belief,..."

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p.13:20-22)

When we find ourselves looking up to God we are looking out from the mortal (as a corporeal person). This includes a presumption of separation between God and man, a belief that there is a problem we have to fix, a see-sawing between matter and Spirit - and no healing results. So if we have that consciousness, it is the wrong one and we sit in darkness with no illumined thought. No light. So, then we turn and we walk into the light as we presently understand it, and we can turn our standpoint to that of God's view – fully in the light.

I guess you would like to know what happened as a consequence of my prayer (and I am sure prayers by others in the church), for this dear man who thought he could change his own identity. Less than 3 months later, I was on roster in the Reading Room when a young man came in and walked up to me. He asked me if we had recently had money stolen. He had to ask me twice as I didn't answer the first time.

When I said that we had, he looked earnestly at me and told me that it had been him. He then said that he had found God, and knew he had done the wrong thing and felt he had to make it right. He handed me a sum of money to pay us back. He then asked for forgiveness. I said we had prayed for him and that he had already been forgiven. I also gave him a copy of Science and Health and a big hug. I have not seen him since.

The wonderful and immediately redemptive power of divine Love was demonstrated so clearly to me in that meeting – and was clearly

felt by him. If I had prayed only for return of the money as an outcome, would I have seen this – or indeed any other outcome? This is the same redemptive power which brought me back and into the public practice of Christian Science healing. If I had heard nothing, I would still have known redemption was taking place in this man, because I felt the peace. Healing is always a feeling. We do not need to check back with matter.

I am grateful to have been asked to address this meeting. My prayer led me to tell this to you. I had not even thought of it for ages and it was a watershed moment in my practice – even before I knew what the end result would be.

Mrs Eddy says...

Guided by divine Truth and not guesswork, the theologus (that is, the student –the Christian and scientific expounder – of the divine law) treats disease with more certain results than any other healer on the globe.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 459:27–31)

We do not need to know what Love has in store for us but we can know that right scientific prayer works rightly every time.

I would like to acknowledge you all for your commitment to Christian Science, for the work you do for your churches, your communities and for mankind.

I will finish today with a short poem by Peter Henniker-Heaton.

REFLECTION NOT YEARNING

***We need not yearn to bless or to be blest.
As, satisfied with Soul's wise government,
We image Love's immeasurable content
With its own nature, perfectly expressed,
We bless inevitably and are blest.***

***January 26, 1957 Sentinel
by Peter J. Henniker-Heaton***

OVER THE PAST YEAR...

Our residents and staff have shared many moments of laughter, learning, and togetherness.

Each gathering has brought something special, whether it was music that sparked memories, stories that made us smile, or simply the pleasure of being in good company. A warm thank-you goes to Kay for her wonderful afternoon teas and hearty soup-and-spuds dinners, which have turned many ordinary days into something truly comforting. Her efforts have made everyone feel welcomed, well-fed, and cared for.

We've enjoyed a rich variety of activities that encourage creativity, connection, and fun. These have included...

- Dance & movement
- Poetry reading
- Hymn singing & reading of hymn words
- Art & craft, including knitting, crochet, painting, and colouring
- Vintage "Show & Tell," with exhibitions and talks featuring clothing, travel items, and toys
- Music from films & music requests
- Documentary showings
- Film showings (Cinema Club)
- Sing-alongs with Rob Simpson on the keyboard, including Christmas carols
- Games such as bowling and "pick the mystery item"

Each activity—whether quiet and reflective or lively and energetic—has helped build a warm, friendly environment where everyone can participate, learn, and share. We are grateful to everyone who has contributed their time, talents, food, and enthusiasm. These moments continue to enrich our community and remind us of the joy that comes from expressing God's love and life.



Leonie H-S and staff



Kay Cody - Unit holder



True gladness is
the treasure
That grateful
hearts
will hold.

Vivian Burnett,
Christian Science
Hymnal, No. 249



Judy P, Pauline H & Christine S



Nick S - Unit holder



Robyn Saynor - Admin



Wendy Renehan - General Manager



Janet P, Jennifer Drysdale (staff), Marion, Meg H



Josh Kenworthy CSN - Care Co-ordinator & staff



Looking back on vintage clothes, 1850's - 1960's



Christmas joys of 2024



Nathanael Kenworthy - Victorian visiting CSN



Ruffine - VVCSN - 2 years of solid service - Thank you

Are you a Financial Member of the VWA?

Thank you to all supporters who renewed their subscriptions for 2026.

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 2026 will be sent out in March next year with the invitation to the 2026 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, Wendy Renehan, or one of our administration staff members.

Are you thinking of life-leasing at The Heights?

Be our Guest

Stay in a furnished unit for 2 nights, on us.

We'd love to welcome you to experience Retirement Village life amongst fellow Christian Scientists.

Phone 03 9885 2202 to speak to Wendy Renehan.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS AS AT JULY 2025

Chair
Betty Walters

Treasurer
Robert Kitchingman

Merilyn Hart

Kerri Callaway

Leonie Tidd

Kay Coady



ADMINISTRATION STAFF

General Manager
Company Secretary
Wendy Renehan

Care Coordinator
Josh Kenworthy

Residence Facilitator
Jennifer Drysdale

Administrative Officers
Robyn Saynor
Elliot Kitchingman



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