



# VWA Newsletter

July 2024

## VICTORIAN WELFARE ASSOCIATION

### AGM CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2024

**A warm welcome to the Victorian Welfare Association's Annual General Meeting. It is wonderful to see the many supporters here today.**

This is my first annual meeting as chair of the VWA. May I initially express my appreciation to the past chair, Kerri Callaway, for all the time she committed to the VWA with such thoroughness and grace.

Likewise I would like to thank all the Board members who over the year have worked tirelessly and enthusiastically.

I particularly would like to acknowledge the devoted service that Mark Pilkington gave to the VWA over many years. His knowledge and experience were incalculable and much appreciated; especially when in recent years he was Treasurer.

The Heights also benefitted from Mark's love and commitment to his fellow residents. Mark was always ready in a selfless manner to assist others, both metaphysically and in deeds. The Heights is the richer for Mark's love and contributions.

We farewelled John Bruce from the Board last year. He has given so much to the success of The VWA

over so many years. I believe John with his wife Ellie, helped to clear blackberries on the future site of Lesley House.

Ever since that time, John has been tirelessly contributing to this organisation. His skills as an architect



Deborah Packer & Chair Betty Walters

have been invaluable. He possesses an encyclopaedic memory of numerous codes and regulations. John has the most amazing filing system that can produce information from many years past as well as original drawings. He also has a wondrous shed that frequently was the source of items that saved the day. We thank you John for your extreme generosity and love for this cause.

Last year we welcomed Robert Kitchingman to the Board. Rob brings experience in management and, more

#### Contents

Chairman's Report	p1
Treasurer's Report	p4
Metaphysical Address by Deborah Packer	p7
CS Nurses AU Conference	p10
Membership Renewals	p12



specifically, property management to the Board table. Now we are delighted that Rob has accepted the important role of Treasurer.

I would also like to particularly acknowledge the quiet, often unnoticed contribution to The Heights given by Leonie Tidd. For years Leonie has produced accurate and timely minutes for every Board meeting and her knowledge from years of working here in the past, and as a Board member, have been invaluable.

At the end of last year we farewelled Dianne Dallas-Selover, who until recently served in the role of Care Coordinator. We thank Dianne for her contribution to The Heights and wish her every success in her new business venture.

Recently we warmly welcomed Josh Kenworthy as our new Care Coordinator. Josh, originally from Western Australia, has trained and worked for some years as a Christian Science Nurse at the Chestnut Hill Benevolent Association. We are delighted that Josh is bringing his skills, compassion and wide experience to The VWA.

This gives me a chance at this point to mention that there is a need for more care staff to work in the Residence. Full details are readily available from the General Manager, Wendy Renehan.

The Board thanks all the staff at The Heights who have given such loving and committed support to the VWA. Visitors frequently comment on the warm and welcoming atmosphere when they visit The Heights, and this is largely due to our wonderful staff. We are truly blessed.

We have a warm relationship with the Victorian Christian Science Visiting Nurse Service and are fortunate that, the visiting Christian Science nurse, Ruffine Matzenbacher, lives here at The Heights. This is such a blessing to all residents.

From time to time we also call on the services of interstate Christian Science Nurses and their loving contributions are also so much appreciated.

I would like to mention the wonderful meals served in our dining room. Under the guidance of our Kitchen Coordinator, Sarah Haycox, a team of dedicated kitchen folk produce the most delicious meals. At a time when there is so much concern in the wider community regarding catering in care facilities, the meals served here in our dining room are not only homely, but also cooked freshly every day, on site, by our lovely team of cooks.

Let me read to you a random week's menu, which is published each week in the Height's newsletter, Height's Happenings.

\*Sunday: Roast chicken dinner / Chocolate and hazelnut mousse cups  
\*Monday: Garlic chicken / Val's baked custard  
\*Tuesday: Corned beef / Fruit salad  
\*Wednesday: Old-fashioned rissoles with gravy / Creamy rice pudding with fresh plums  
\*Thursday: Hungarian goulash / Sticky date pudding  
\*Friday: Leek and parmesan tart / Treacle tart  
\*Saturday: Turkey shepherd's pie / Peach crumble  
\*Sunday: Baked fish / Lemon cheesecake.

Every few weeks there is even a genuine fish and chips night.

These are seriously yummy meals! Time to come to live at The Heights?

Unit residents are also welcome to dine in for lunch as well as buy frozen meals at a very reasonable cost.

As mentioned in previous years, a range of activities is organised for our house residents as well as for unit holders. For example, on the same week as the menu I read out, there was a Labour Day barbecue arranged by Kay Coady, one of our unit holders.

A recent series of Bible Studies has been generously run during the year by Pauline Hutchinson and Robin Clarke. We are so grateful for their contribution.

Our welcoming atmosphere is in part because The Heights is a home. As Mrs. Eddy says in Science and Health, "Home is the dearest spot on earth..." (p: 58-12) Our aim is for The Heights to always be our residents "dearest spot".

Elsewhere, in Miscellaneous Writings, we read, "Pure humanity, friendship, home, the interchange of love, bring to earth a foretaste of heaven." (p100:22-24).

This may be time to mention that at the moment there are only two, two bedroom units and one single bedroom unit available for life lease.

In an organisation such as this there is always a constant need for maintenance and upgrading of facilities.

Our gardens are a joy and we appreciate the work that many unit residents contribute to their upkeep. Under Board member June Buck's supervision we now employ a gardening company to work in The Heights gardens fortnightly. Although it is for



only a few hours a month it has certainly made a difference. Thank you too, to the devoted garden and maintenance workers who contribute so much to both of the VWA properties. Currently work is being undertaken to check and upgrade our watering system at The Heights.

In 2023 all units in Glen Iris were fitted with new ceiling insulation, carefully supervised by Mark Pilkington, who once again quietly and generously assisted.

At Lesley House we continue to refresh flats as tenants leave, as well as providing maintenance work as it becomes needed. Following the major plumbing works some time ago, the gardens and surrounds are now looking refreshed and this is in no small part thanks to the care of the gardening and maintenance folk.

Glen Iris units are being upgraded as new lease holders join us.

The Board is currently looking at long term maintenance planning. An excellent system has now been instigated to manage all maintenance tasks.

In the months ahead further management systems will be initiated or refined.

We are also looking at governance issues in terms of government requirements. This will be another priority in the year ahead.

As part of this we are planning to bring our constitution into a more appropriate format, and, following legal advice, we are also revising the many policies required for an organisation such as ours.

Thank you to Wendy Renehan for her dedicated leadership and contribution to the smooth running of the VWA. Wendy's calm and loving manner at all times is greatly appreciated.

We are finishing a year of progress with many blessings and we look forward to the following twelve months with joy and enthusiasm.

We thank all the wonderful supporters of this important facility that is here to bless all Christian Scientists from all over Australia.

And finally I would like to quote two verses from hymn number three by Ethel Wasgatt Dennis, found in the Christian Science Hymnal, which perhaps best summarises this gratitude:

*'A grateful heart a garden is,  
Where there is always room,  
For every lovely, Godlike grace,  
To come to perfect bloom.'*

*Grant then, dear Father-Mother, God,  
Whatever else befall,  
This largesse of a grateful heart  
That loves and blesses all.'*

Christian Science Hymn 3

Thank you for coming.

*Betty Walters*  
VWA Chairperson



Wendy Renehan - VWA Manager



Betty Walters - VWA Chairperson



Kerri Callaway

# FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR

## FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2023

We are very grateful for God supplying all our needs in all facets of the Victorian Welfare Association (VWA).

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 with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy.

### Statement of Comprehensive Income

Revenue and Other Income \$1,298,770 (2022 \$1,612,203)

Operating Expenses \$1,175,930 (2022 \$1,168,625)

Surplus \$122,840 (2022 \$443,578)

Other comprehensive income \$488,213 (2022 -\$151,958)

Notes on Statement of Comprehensive Income

#### Revenue

- Income was less than the prior year mainly due to lower donations of \$180,559 compared to the prior year of \$504,056. Part of the decrease in donations recorded was a donation of \$100,000 received from the Christian Science Nursing Services NSW in late December 2023 banked in early January 2024. They generously donate \$200,000 a year. We are very grateful for every donation.

- Rental income for Leslie House and the Residence is greater this year (\$443,208) than the prior year (\$373,954). Rents are now returning to market value after the COVID restrictions. The VWA plays an important role in providing affordable accommodation for Christian Scientists and the community. The increase in rental income was also due to more people staying for a short term at The Heights in the units and the residence.

- Dividends and investment income is also lower this year (\$441,656) compared to the prior year (561,557). Some investments were redeemed to refund life leases which ended.

- Provision for unrealised increase in investments is much higher this year compared with last year due to net gain on revaluation of financial assets being significantly greater. (\$531,329 gain in 2023 vs \$115,619 loss in 2022).

#### Expenses

Expenses are relatively consistent with prior year. We note the following expenses which have moved:

- Workcover is higher this year (\$24,513) compared to last year (\$14,383).
- Repairs and maintenance are higher this year (\$129,229) compared to last year (\$109,358).
- VWA incurred legal expenses of \$5,162 in 2023. (Nil in prior year) This expense was for advice given regarding governance and contracts.



Christmas joy in the Heights dining table

- Depreciation expense is higher this year (\$54,669) than last year (\$48,212).

#### Statement of Financial Position

- Bank balance has decreased by \$402,183 primarily due to refund of life leases.
- Trade and other receivables balance of \$107,963 (2022 \$231,030) is lower than last year due to franking credits receivable being lower (\$75,518 in 2023 vs \$213,350 in 2022). The period for assessing each refund is related to the tax financial year for July to June. In 2023 the refund for 2022 and 2023 franking credits was received reducing the amount receivable.
- Financial Assets are higher this year (\$5,986,154) than last year (\$5,772,333) due to a revaluation gain.
- Unit leases liability is lower this year (\$2,429,157) than last year (\$3,044,532) due to payouts of life leases during the year.

The care and accommodation in an uplifting Christian Science atmosphere that the Victorian Welfare Association provides is invaluable. The VWA is happy to provide the venue for the Christian Science

Nursing Conference to be held here in the Heights in June 2024. The conference will be a wonderful opportunity for professional development, sharing of solutions and inspiration and to network with those in the field of Christian Science nursing nationally and internationally. This will be a great opportunity and support to our care staff.

*'Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.'*

*'In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.'*

*'And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.'*

*'And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.'*

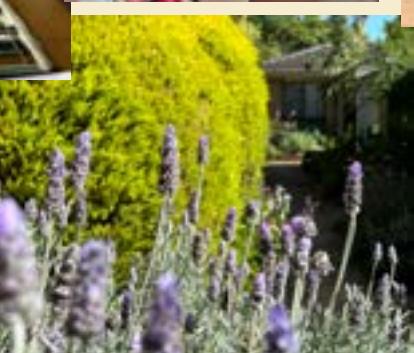
**John.14 Verses 1 - 4**

Thank you all for supporting this work.

Wendy Renahan on behalf of

*Rob Kitchingman*

## OUT & ABOUT - OUTINGS AND ACTIVITIES





A wonderful spread and chat  
after the AGM

# METAPHYSICAL TALK DEBORAH PACKER CS

## SOME THOUGHTS ON LOVE

When I sat one afternoon and asked God what I should talk to you about today, the answer came very clearly: Talk to them about Love. The human Debbie resisted for a moment. Isn't this like taking coals to Newcastle? After all, as a group Christian Scientists are some of the most loving people on the planet! Of all the occupations, the role of Christian Science nurse is one that would seem most obviously and outwardly to demonstrate Love. However, I knew if this was God's choice for today, He would give me the right words.

In praying more I was led to consider this quote about Love by Mary Baker Eddy in Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures. On page 365 she says:

'If the Scientist reaches his patient through divine Love, the healing work will be accomplished at one visit, and the disease will vanish into its native nothingness like dew before the morning sunshine.' (365: 15-19)

Our Leader sets a high bar, doesn't she! The healing work will be accomplished at one visit. Isn't this our desire! Don't we long to do this? How do we do this? Through Love, she says.

Love is the synonym that Mary Baker Eddy says best represents God. It has a special place in all our hearts, doesn't it? We know love don't we? In this human life it has so many shades – shades that hint at the divine: love is seen in kindness, in tenderness, in gentleness, in affection, in generosity, in empathy, in forgiveness, in patience, in tolerance, in unselfishness and in selflessness, in devotion, in respect, in politeness, even in duty and discipline.

Do you recognise these qualities in yourself? If you are honest you do. Don't be coy about it. These qualities are there, not because you are a good person. Jesus reminded us that one only is good and that is God. These qualities are there



*Deborah Packer CS - Our speaker*

because they are God working through you. God expresses them and that expression is you! You are good because He works through you and as you. Knowing this makes all good possible. It makes your ability to love infinite and powerful.

Don't we feel that when we are in the presence of these qualities the world seems OK. Don't we all know that these are the qualities that make life work right? They are the Golden Rule in action. When you are in the presence of these qualities you are in fact in the presence of God. What cannot be achieved when God works through us.

These qualities hint at the divine. If divine Love is present then these qualities must also be present. But, are they all that is meant by 'divine Love'? Mary Baker Eddy says it is 'divine Love' that heals. It's not human love doing the healing. There is a difference.

I've been thinking on this distinction between human love and divine Love for a while now. I'm going to tell you two stories that have taught me a lot and changed the way I love.

The first story is about my son. For privacy reasons

I'm not telling all the details. My son has a PhD in quite a difficult area of endeavour. It is not something that is easily achieved. For the four plus years that he was working on his PhD he had the same supervisor. For most of this time the man seemed to be the most horrendous bully. All my son's projects during this time had to be approved by him and he would send my son off on wild goose chases that wasted many months of valuable time and then ridicule him for going down that path. Daily he would humiliate him in meetings and abuse him publicly in the foulest language. My son is intelligent and very hard working. He knew that nothing in his behaviour warranted correction, certainly not this treatment.

When my son visited on weekends he would tell me of this situation. It was very difficult, as a mother, to hear about this. However, my son is an adult and he insisted he was handling it. He was brought up in Christian Science and he had a strong sense of his spiritual identity and was not cowered by this behaviour. Finally he was running out of time and it seemed that his whole PhD – four years of work – was in jeopardy. At this point, one Friday night, he asked for my prayerful support. I talked to him about there being just one Mind and that we must hold to this in the face of opposing evidence. He was receptive to these ideas. When he left I turned to God and asked: 'What do I need to know about this?'

The answer was clear:

"You must love this man!"

How could I love this man! I had never met him, but nothing I knew about him was loveable. As I said this to myself I realised that I was talking about mortal man and not God's man. It was time I thought like a Christian Scientist and not a human mother. How many times are we told: Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man and this view of man healed! This was my task. I knew I had to let go of my animosity toward this man (not easy) and see only his perfect self.

As I prayed about it I realised that this was not about

a work supervisor, or my son. It was about whether I would allow mortal mind to convince me that there was a man that was not God's man, an Adam. Basically the question was: Am I a Christian Scientist, or not? I am not a Christian Scientist if I only adhere to the truths it teaches when the going is easy. I held to the absolute truths about the situation. God did not make evil so this was an illusion, and I dismissed it. Dismissing the story was not enough I had to really love this man. We never have to love mortal mind, or excuse its bad behaviour. We have to denounce it and see only the real man, perfect in God's image - loving and loveable. I can truly say by the time I went to sleep that night I did love this man. I loved him because I loved God too much to allow that there was anything other than Him and His creation.

When I next saw my son he reported, that from the Monday morning after we spoke, his supervisor was a changed man. He was everything a perfect supervisor should be and more. The PhD was completed harmoniously and on time. Nowadays, several years later, he is still one of my son's closest friends. He is the one my son can turn to for career advice or a professional chat. He always has my son's back. He sings my son's praises far and wide! When I finally did meet him at my son's graduation. We hugged a warm, genuine hug. This was God's man – how could I not love him!

*'This is how I show my love for God – by seeing only His image – and loving it.'*

I've thought a lot about this since this time. I think this is what Mary Baker Eddy meant when she directed us to pray each day: 'Let the reign of divine Love be established in me.' (Manual 41: 19).

She is wanting more than human kindness. She is wanting divine Love – the kind that sees only God's man. The kind of Love that heals. I try to practise this now wherever I go. If I'm in the shopping mall and I see someone who appears to show signs of a disability, or someone that is hugely overweight or underweight, or angry – you know all those claims that mortal mind makes to convince you that man is mortal and not the imagine and likeness of

the perfect One, then I silently deny that this is God's man. I affirm that this is mortal mind's illusion and I will not buy into it.

When I was a teenager someone shared a poem with me that really touched me. I've not been able to find it since but the first line was: 'What went ye out to see?' I ask myself this now many times a day – when I walk into a meeting or an appointment, when I'm out in public, when I pick up the phone. Am I expecting to see, or talk to, God's man? Or, am I allowing that the Adam-man exists? This is how I show my love for God – by seeing only His image – and loving it.

I'll share my second story with you. This incident occurred when I was out having coffee late one Sunday afternoon with a friend. It was one of those coffee shops that spilled out into the mall area. My friend was recounting something to me when suddenly she winced and said, Ouch! That must have hurt! She was looking over my left shoulder so I turned to see what had caught her attention. A woman was lying on the ground and not making any attempt to get up. A man, I presumed to be her husband, was standing looking down at her. He had been pushing a shopping trolley. People were passing by on either side and no one was attempting to help her. Usually in situations like this I am not one to jump in and help humanly. I stay quiet and pray. This time there was a very clear directive: This one is yours. Go to her! As I stood up to obey I had an overwhelming sense of God's love surrounding us all. I lost all sense of self. I never thought about what I would do or pray, I was just impelled by Love. I felt the allness of God. I knew that because only God was there, only God's man was there. I felt tenderness for her because I knew I was dealing with God's precious child – never touched by human circumstances. I bent down to her and she said that she had badly hurt her ankle and couldn't get up.

Forty years earlier I had been a Christian Science nurse's aide in Sydney and somehow this training just kicked in. I pulled a café chair over and lifted her onto it. I put another one under the leg she said was injured. I wasn't thinking about her ankle only that I wanted her to feel loved. I wanted her to feel wrapped in this great Love that I was feeling. Shortly she said she would try to stand up but she fell back onto the chair in tears and said the pain was too great. I still felt nothing but a wonderful sense of God's love impelling us both and I reassured her that all was well. After a moment, again she said she would try to stand up. This time she said she

was fine. She thanked me and walked off with her husband (who had not moved or spoken this whole time.) She walked without any sign of a limp.

This feeling of being wrapped in and impelled by divine Love stayed with

Manual 41: 19

me. During this brief episode I had no sense of a personal Debbie. God was the doer and I was His instrument. In this moment I loved God, and therefore His image, more than I loved any limited sense of myself. I think this is what Mary Baker Eddy meant when she said we are to reach the patient through divine love. When mortal mind says: 'Not my role' or 'I'm not up to this', or 'This is a complicated one', or all those other excuses we can give ourselves, do we love God enough to put these suggestions aside and be the instrument of divine Love? I want to be in the instrument of divine Love all the time, don't you?

So each morning when you pray: 'Let the reign of divine Love be established in me', remember this is what you are praying – for the love that refuses to see anything other than God's man. If we know what this entails and really mean it then 'disease and all ills will vanish into their native nothingness like dew before the morning sunshine.' And God's Word will have governed and enriched mankind through you.

God bless you in this holy work.

# CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSES AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE AT THE HEIGHTS JUNE 14-16



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*'... drink with me the living waters of the spirit of my life-purpose, - to impress humanity with the genuine recognition of practical, operative Christian Science.'*

*Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896,  
Mary Baker Eddy, p. 206:32*





- 1 Christian Science Nursing Activities:  
Audrey Sentinella, Manager  
Vanessa Campbell, Assistant Manager**
- 2 Sancy Nason CS - Addressee**
- COP work around Australia:  
3 Ariane Newton CS and Edwina Aubin CSB**
- 4 CS Nurses Conference organisers:  
Karen Bartley, Sharon Rooker-Brade &  
Meg McCauley**

**The VWA is grateful for the opportunity it had in mid-June, to host the Christian Science Nursing Conference for Christian Science nurses and supporters from Australia and New Zealand.**

The theme of the conference was  
**“Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God” Isaiah 40:1**

It was a happy and strengthening meeting, with presentations by various Christian Science nurses, Christian Science practitioner Sancy Nason, and the Committee on Publication's Edwina Aubin and Ariane Newton, covering an array of subjects, ethics and skills.

We were also grateful that Mother Church representatives Audrey Sentinella and Vanessa Campbell from the Office of Christian Science Nursing Activities, were able to attend the conference to get an on-ground view of the needs of our field in order to better support us.

Participants reported feeling that their individual Christian Science nursing practices are rejuvenated, and they feel joy to have connected with old friends and to have made new ones.



Take a  
video tour

[www.vwa.net.au](http://www.vwa.net.au)

## Are you a Financial Member of the VWA?

Thank you to all supporters who renewed their subscriptions for 2024.

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 2025 will be sent out in March next year with the invitation to the 2025 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 2024**

Chair  
**Betty Walters**

Treasurer  
**Robert Kitchingman**

**Merilyn Hart**

**Kerri Callaway**

**Leonie Tidd**

CG

### **ADMINISTRATION STAFF**

General Manager  
Company Secretary  
**Wendy Renehan**

Care Coordinator  
**Josh Kenworthy**

Administrative Officers  
**Jaci Todd**  
**Katy Hood**

CG

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