



HOUSE NEWSLETTER

2020 Autumn Edition

Official Newsletter Gippsland Rotary Centenary House Inc.

Our Purpose: Gippsland Rotary Centenary House Inc (GRCH) provides affordable and supportive accommodation for patients undergoing cancer treatment and other medical services at the Latrobe Regional Hospital and their families. Stage 1 was opened in September 2006 with Stage 2 following in October 2011. Stage 3 then opened in June 2019. The total cost of all projects was approximately \$6.5million financed by grants from the Federal & State Governments, Latrobe City, philanthropic trusts, Rotary Clubs and other community organisations, businesses and the public. GRCH is operated on a non profit basis using volunteers.

HOUSE INFORMATION UPDATE:

Welcome to the latest Gippsland Rotary Centenary (GRCH) House Newsletter.

We are in uncharted waters as we all deal with the COVID-19 virus. The Operations Manager along with the Operations and Governance Sub-committee have put several protocols in place to attempt to maintain a safe place for our guests and staff. These protocols are discussed throughout the Newsletter.

On the good news front, I was extremely proud along with our Operations Manager, Carol Crewe, to accept the Latrobe City Australia Day Award for the most successful Community Service for 2020. The Award is very gratifying for the Committee of Management but most of all for the staff who make our facility the home away from home it is for all our guests. The positive exit feedback our guests provide really does exemplify what we have tried to achieve at GRCH.

On a sad note we said farewell to two GRCH Committee of Management members Cheryl Glowrey, South Gippsland, and Leigh Venables, East Gippsland. Both Cheryl and Leigh are no longer able to commit to their Board obligations. We are very grateful to the work they have done for us and wish them both well for their future pursuits. Leigh will continue to assist us with fundraising in East Gippsland, with the East Gippsland Breakfast a major fundraiser for us in the past. Unfortunately the breakfast had to be cancelled this year but we look forward to it being held again next year.

GRCH is very grateful to our local Rotary Clubs who recently provided marshalling and traffic management for the Traralgon Harriers Community Fun Run up and down Kay street. In particular Morwell Rotarian David McInnes for getting some 20 volunteers together on the day.

A couple of our gardening volunteers, Gavin and Ray, organised a morning tea for the Royal Flying Doctor Service after the Monday morning working bee. Not only was the morning a great social event we raised valuable funds for the RFDS. Volunteers paid \$5 for a gourmet high tea provided by the boys and their ironing lady buddies.



Plants and herbs in pots in the stage 2 courtyard

Finally, due to the COVID-19 virus we have closed down our volunteers until the pandemic is under control. If urgent work is required, the Operations Manager will make arrangements to have limited numbers attend to the matter.

Many thanks to our Staff and volunteers enabling us to keep our doors open during these difficult times. Stay safe and hopefully we can get together on the other side to celebrate maintaining our facility in a safe manner.

Dave Swainsbury
Chairman, Committee of Management
Gippsland Rotary Centenary House Inc.

Centenary House recognised with Award

Gippsland Rotary Centenary House was extremely proud to have been named the 2020 Community Service of the Year by the Latrobe City as part of their Australia Day awards.

This is the second time Centenary House has been recognised as the community organisation of the year. With the first award in 2009 we had only been open for 3 years and had 6 guests rooms dedicated to providing safe, supportive and affordable accommodation to patients and families of the Gippsland Cancer Care Centre and Latrobe Regional Hospital. Since then the facility has expanded twice, now offering 30 guest rooms and having provided accommodation to over 6,000 individuals.



One of the benefits of being recognised by Latrobe City was that it provided us with an opportunity to thank those who contribute to our success. On the day in her acceptance speech, Operation Manager, Carol Crewe was able to thank three significant groups / businesses that allow GRCH to provide such a supportive, affordable service.

Pictured (L-R) Latrobe City Mayor Dan Clancy, GRCH Chairman David Swainsbury, Operations Manager Carol Crewe and Australia Day Ambassadors Dale Potter OAM and Rhonda Renwick OAM at the presentation of the Award.

On the day in her acceptance speech, Operation Manager, Carol Crewe was able to thank three significant groups / businesses that allow GRCH to provide such a supportive, affordable service.

“Firstly, the amazing team of volunteers who give their time so selflessly to Centenary House. Without the dedication of our volunteers we would not be able to support oncology patients from across the region. Our volunteers contribute in a wide variety of ways including through the Committee of management, fundraising, cleaning, gardening, maintenance and administration.

Secondly, the supporters who provide financial donations, both large and small. This funding allows us to provide accommodation to Gippslanders at a subsidised rate that is affordable and does not increase their burden at an already stressful time. It also ensures we can operate and maintain Centenary House to a high standard that contributes to the wellbeing and comfort of our guests.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge the ongoing and generous support from Latrobe City. The leasing arrangements for the land on which we built the house and the exemption from fees contribute to our success.”



The award on display in the Centenary House foyer

LATROBE CITY 2020 AUSTRALIA DAY COMMUNITY SERVICE OF THE YEAR AWARD - GIPPSLAND ROTARY CENTENARY HOUSE

Since 2006, Gippsland Rotary Centenary House has provided accommodation to more than 5500 individuals while either them or their family members accessed specialist medical services at Latrobe Regional Hospital (LRH).

Centenary House supports patients and families through a stressful and traumatic time by providing easy access to accommodation and helping reduce the financial burden on families. The community owned not-for-profit facility provides safe, supporting and affordable accommodation to patients and families of the Gippsland Cancer Care Centre and LRH.

The facility has expanded several times since it was established with Stage 3 opened in June 2019. There are now 30 guest rooms available to Gippsland families.

Centenary House is manned by a small number of paid staff Monday to Friday. The organisation also uses volunteers in a broad range of activities, such as governance, fundraising, cleaning, linen, guest support, and gardening and maintenance tasks.

The facility acknowledges the ongoing support from businesses, community groups and individuals whose donations that allow the provision of affordable accommodation.



The recognition in the Latrobe City booklet.

GRCH's response to Covid-19

The current Covid-19 virus has resulted in significant challenges for the community as a whole, and in particular health services. Centenary House is no exception.

Local hospitals, medical clinics and community services have had to implement a range of strategies in an attempt to protect their patients and visitors during this difficult time.

Gippsland Rotary Centenary House staff have been working closely with the staff at the Gippsland Cancer Care Centre and Latrobe Regional Hospital to ensure that we are contributing to the safety of our staff, volunteers and guests.

Centenary House has implemented the following strategies in response to the Covid-19 crisis:

- ◆ Access to the facility has been restricted with all new guests and visitors arriving through the reception door;
- ◆ Hand sanitiser has been provided at all main doors for use by guests and visitors;
- ◆ Staff have provided all guests with information on basic hygiene and cleanliness actions that can minimise the risk of spread;
- ◆ Additional cleaning regimes have been implemented by staff in communal areas and guest rooms;
- ◆ Additional cleaning products have been distributed through the House for use by guests as needed;
- ◆ Guests are being encouraged to self isolate in their rooms as much as possible;
- ◆ All booking requests are being reviewed in an attempt to minimise risk. This includes providing accommodation for patients requiring treatment or essential visitors only;
- ◆ All bookings in the GRCH Community Room have been cancelled. At present this includes all events and meetings until the end of June 2020. This will be evaluated in mid June and the restriction may be extended depending on the advice from governments and the hospital at that time;
- ◆ The Fundraising sub-committee has cancelled or postponed all events;
- ◆ Projects or working bees involving external groups have been postponed.
- ◆ All routine shifts by volunteers have been cancelled for the foreseeable future. This is a strategy to protect both our guests and our volunteers. As the majority of our volunteers are in the age brackets recommended to take additional precautions by the State Government we felt this was the safest option. Individual members of the gardening and maintenance team will continue to attend to undertake urgent tasks, however, this will be arranged via the team coordinator to minimise any risk to the volunteers.
- ◆ The GRCH Committee of Management has commenced meeting via an online format. Centenary house has purchased a licence through Zoom to facilitate meetings over the internet. The initial Zoom Committee meeting was held on the first Wednesday in April, with nearly all members logging in. The Committee and GRCH sub-committees will use this format until restrictions are lifted.

Additional strategies may be implemented as the situation changes. We hope all of the above actions will contribute to a safe, healthy and reassuring environment for our staff and guests.

If you have any queries about staying at Centenary House please contact staff on 03 51711600.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO READERS: We can save money by e-mailing this newsletter to **you**.

Please contact Carol with your e-mail address at **carol@centenaryhouse.org.au** or return the slip on the back page to Gippsland Rotary Centenary House.

22nd Harriers DFP Recruitment Latrobe Fun Run & Walk

22 years! What a great achievement for this iconic event. Organising an event of this size is a huge undertaking for the Traralgon Harriers and the 2020 event faced an extra major hurdle; the Corona Virus. With events all over the world being cancelled, we were exceptionally lucky to get the go-ahead, and it turned out to be the last major event in Victoria before the shut down.

The weather was perfect on Sunday 15 March 2020 and people turned out in huge numbers despite the concerns; 48 kids in the 1.5km, 320 runners in the 5km, 368 runners in total. The sponsors, community organisations and business supporters were amazing, the runners were happy, so it turned out to be a wonderful day and a huge success. Supporters and spectators lined the streets and created a festival style atmosphere. There was the Rotary sausage sizzle, doughnut van, Traralgon City Band, coffee van, shoe display from Athlete's Foot, free fruit and even a massage tent. Major sponsors DFP Recruitment handed out refillable sports water bottles branded specifically for the event. It was excellent to see people genuinely happy, whether it was supporting their kids, running in the event themselves, cheering from the sidelines, talking in groups, getting a massage, eating a snag or just being a part of this day; a day that is organised by the Harriers for the community to support a fantastic organisation.

The final acquittal hasn't been done as yet, but no-doubt there will be a solid donation to Gippsland Rotary Centenary House. Part of the Harriers mission statement is to give back to the community and to raise awareness of health and living an active lifestyle, and these are dominant aspects of the event.

Of course there is a race element, and winning the event for the fourth time in a blistering 15:38 was Ryan Wissmer, with second place going to Zac Beasley for the second year running in 16:11 and third (again for the second year in a row) Michael Tripodi in 17:07. In the women's, Emilie Guy smashed it in 17:46, followed by Erika Florez in 18:14 and our own pocket rocket champion Molly Irvine in 18:39 in third place (again for the second year running). Bruce Jeffery attended to present the overall winners with the medals struck in his father's honour, the Richard Jeffery medal.

A full list of results can be found at <https://my.raceresult.com/150067/results?lang=en>.

Our major sponsor DFP Recruitment won the Workplace Team plaque for the greatest number of entries under their banner, whilst Kurnai College again took out the School Team honours, and the Traralgon Harriers (*pictured below*) won the Sports Team plaque for only the 2nd time ever, with a dominating team effort.

We need to acknowledge our major sponsor DFP Recruitment who has been incredible in their ongoing support of this event. They're a wonderful organisation and their on-going sponsorship of the CFR means we can close the street, get in timing and also donate to Centenary House. On top of the money they contribute, they do excellent work to support the event, including promotions, flyer design and printing. They are essential in making this event successful.



22nd Harriers DFP Recruitment Latrobe Fun Run & Walk

We need to thank Gold 1242 for their support in advertising the event, Gippsland Foot and Ankle Clinic for providing place-getter prizes, WINTV for producing advertisements and giving some great news coverage and promotions, Latrobe First National Real Estate for funding the medals, Matt Spark and his team from Athlete's Foot, of course our local Rotary Clubs for the BBQ and for marshalling along the course, Gippsland Coffee Cab, The LV Express, The LV Triathlon Club, Valley Trophy Centre, St. John's Ambulance, Traf Tech Traffic Management, Andrew Hood Photography, Alfies Doughnuts and Joeline from Goodlife Physiotherapy all contributed to making the day a success. We had over \$3000 worth of spot prizes donated by local businesses, to help sweeten the deal for runners, and it was excellent to see the happy faces of the winners, and with 50 prizes, the odds were good.

It was great to see our local polities and councillors getting out and supporting the event as well. Russell Northe manned the turnaround drink station and cheered people along. Mayor Dan Clancy had a run, but was soundly beaten by his better half. GRCH Operations Manager Carol Crewe and Operations Assistant Tania Whitehead (*pictured left*) represented Centenary House on the day. Tania is a regular Harriers runner and also assisted with promotion before the event.

An event of this magnitude does not happen without the support and input of many talented Harriers members, and the support was overwhelming. Most members contributed to the success of the day in some way, everyone chipped in to make it happen and helped to make it run smoothly. Quite simply, events such as this could not be a success without the amazingly valuable contributions.

There were so many great results and stories across the day. There were personal bests, there were special reasons for running, and there were tears of happiness, joy and relief. It was a reminder that running 5km is a huge achievement for many people. The CFR should be a fun event. It should be inclusive and welcoming. It should be an event that our community embraces and supports, not only in participation, but also in unifying together with the common goal of running a wonderful event and raising much needed funds. The CFR is an opportunity to showcase and promote our club and to encourage the greater community to participate, hopefully helping to dispel the myth that the Harriers is only for "elite" runners. I think we ticked all these boxes and we can be justifiably proud of another wonderful event.

By Phill Mayer / Traralgon Harriers President & 2020 Community Fun Run (CFR) Director



GRCH Volunteers support RFDS Appeal

The Monday morning gardening and maintenance volunteer team at GRCH decided to hold a fundraising morning tea for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) as part of the Outback Morning Tea appeal.

GRCH Committee of Management member Ray Scheffer and volunteer Gavan Hodgson organised everyone attending to bring in a plate to share, which provided the Centenary House staff and Monday morning volunteers (*pictured right*) with a feast.

Funds raised on the day through a small raffle and the fee of \$5 per person resulted in a donation of \$110 to the Royal Flying Doctors Service Outback Morning Tea appeal.



Introducing the Committee of Management

“Mike Answerth”



GRCH Committee Member
Mike Answerth with wife Marion.

Each newsletter we are profiling a member of the Gippsland Rotary Centenary House Committee of Management. This edition the profile is of Mike Answerth.

Mike is one of the original members of the Centenary House planning Committee established 16 years ago in 2004 to develop the concept of a lasting project to mark the Centenary of the foundation of Rotary.

The group embarked on the ambitious project of establishing an accommodation facility for patients undergoing treatment at the Gippsland Cancer Care Centre and the Latrobe Regional Hospital without any land or funds and needed to do a great deal of work liaising with local and state government, businesses and Rotary Clubs to get the project started.

Led by the energetic and committed original Chairman, Ken Peake, the committee obtained a long term lease of the current site, raised sufficient funds and donations in kind and opened the first stage of seven rooms in 2006. Two other stages have since been added.

Mike holds the positions of Secretary and Chair of the Promotions Subcommittee. With a background in Public Relations and community liaison in many industries including the SECV, Latrobe Regional Hospital, Gippsland Grammar, local councils, Country Football and Country Racing as well as the Australian Bicentennial Authority and the Gippsland Education Precinct, he has used his promotion skills to advantage in assisting to create the public image of Gippsland Rotary Centenary House. This has included being active over the years in addressing Rotary Clubs and community organisations with information on the progress and development of Centenary House as part of the organisation's drive for ongoing donations. He has been well supported by his wife Marion who also volunteers for Centenary House.

A Rotary member for more than 31 years, firstly with the Hazelwood Club for 25 years and more recently with the Rotary Club of Morwell, Mike has served in many positions including President (twice), Secretary, Public Relations Officer and Assistant District Governor.

A long-term resident of Churchill since 1966, he was active in the formation of the original Churchill Citizens Committee, an organisation set up to act as a voice for the fledgling community to obtain much needed facilities and services.

Mike has also been involved in the Churchill Football Club as Secretary and on the Committee for several years and is a member of the Advisory Committee of the Churchill Community Hub and Chair of the Lumen Christi Parish Council.

Mike says "it gives me a great deal of joy and satisfaction to see the facility we have today through the hard work and vision of many people over the years and the wonderful community support we receive and to know that Centenary House is so appreciated by those who use it."

Upcoming Events to support GRCH (save the date!)

Refer to our facebook page or website for more information about individual events.

- ◆ GRCH Chat & Chew—Saturday 24th October, Grand Junction Hotel, Traralgon (TBC)

Gippsland Rotary Centenary House Newsletter

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Gippsland Rotary Centenary House
39 Valley Drive
Traralgon VIC 3844

Centenary House Updates

- If you would like to know what is happening at Centenary House you can keep up to date by following the Gippsland Rotary Centenary House Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/Gippsland-Rotary-Centenary-House-206290322733733/>

- Or you can go to our website and read the News & Events page to keep up to date.

<http://www.centenaryhouse.org.au/>

- To make an accommodation booking or for all general enquiries please contact Centenary House staff (Monday - Friday 09.00—16.00)

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Fax: 03 5171 1660

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