

MILESTONES

SUMMER 2017, ISSUE 20

Refurbishment of
Mary Chester House



Our inaugural
Walk to Remember






Making a difference
day to day

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts

MILESTONES

SUMMER 2017, ISSUE 20

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CEO'S REPORT



Since our last *Milestones* there has been significant changes no matter from which lens you view it.

The Federal Government reform in aged and disability services presents opportunity and challenge in equal measure. Our commitment to our members and those living with dementia is that our single focus will support the development and delivery of leading edge programs and services by specialist dementia experts.

To ensure we are prepared for the changing environment, we have revised our corporate statements of purpose, vision and culture. An examination of the strengths of our work has resulted in the choice of 'the dementia experts' as our tagline. We will be by the side of those on the dementia journey. For service providers, we will help them become dementia experts too.

Our plan going forward is to work where we will have the greatest impact on the lived experience of those with dementia. Alzheimer's WA continues to have strong relationships and partnerships with Federal, State and Local Governments. We work extensively across the aged and disability sectors and have formal partnerships with more than 50 providers across the State.

We have a group of remarkable people who make up the staff and volunteer team. Whether working in the office or isolated in the field, Alzheimer's WA has a team to be proud of and who uphold the reputation of the organisation each and every day. I am grateful to each of them for their commitment, passion and the quality of their work.

We are and will continue to be an organisation united by our shared passion, driven by the guidance of our clients and focussed on our sustainability to make a difference for as long as we are needed.

If you would like to speak to someone about the services we can offer, call 1300 66 77 88. Alternatively you can visit our new website alzheimerswa.org.au

Thank you to all of you who share our mission. We look forward to delivering on our mandate for all those living with dementia in 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rhonda Parker'.

Rhonda Parker
Chief Executive Officer

Alzheimer's WA - new name, new colours, same focus on people living with dementia

On 1 July 2017 Alzheimer's Australia WA Ltd commenced trading as Alzheimer's WA with a new brand, logo and vision for the future. As the dementia experts, Alzheimer's WA works with clients and their families, and other organisations to have the greatest impact on the lived experience of those with dementia. We get involved where our expertise can best be put to use, where the challenge for families is greatest, where there is a gap in services, where partner organisations need our help, where we can find best practice to bring home, and where our voice on behalf of and with those on the dementia journey is best heard.

Our Vision

A world where people with dementia and their families are supported and valued on their dementia journey.

Our Philosophy

Dementia is a lived human experience rather than just a biological condition. We therefore embrace and support a holistic, person-centred approach that respects the individuality and the experience of those living with dementia.

Our Purpose

To improve the lived experience of those on the dementia journey through our advocacy, leadership, innovation, education, partnerships and holistic, person-centred care and support, and to support the pursuit of risk reduction, treatment and cure for dementia.

Our Values

Our passion to improve the experience of those living with dementia is supported by our values of:

- » Understanding the unique needs of people with dementia

- » Recognising people as our greatest strength
- » Investing in partnerships
- » Treating people with respect and dignity
- » Encouraging innovation and creativity
- » Being transparent, accountable and sustainable

New Brand, Website and Customer Service Support

As a truly Western Australian organisation, our new brand uses the vibrant blue of the Western Australian sky and Indian Ocean, the rich ochre of the North West and our outback with a backdrop of white representing the pristine white sand of the beaches from Kununurra to Esperance.

These colours represent the commitment and focus we have to the State and people of Western Australia, and the promise that we will continue to care, support, educate and advocate for all Western Australians living with dementia.

Our new website, alzheimerswa.org.au, is a valuable resource for information about dementia, our services and the latest news of Alzheimer's WA.

Our new Customer Service number, 1300 66 77 88, provides a point of contact for people living with dementia, their families and carers and people wanting more information about dementia.

As we move into the future, our strength and reliance comes from knowing we are an organisation united by our shared passion, driven by the guidance of our clients and focused on our sustainability to make a difference for as long as we are needed. We look forward to continuing the proud history of this organisation that started 35 years ago.



AUSTSWIM's Sue Warner (left) and Gary Shaw (right) with Val Henderson.



Val Henderson (centre) with her husband Bill, daughter Nicole, and two of Nicole's children.

Val Henderson is a carer who has also dedicated much of her life to teaching people how to swim, and teaching others to become AUSTSWIM Licensed Teachers.

Two years ago, Val retired from her role as a Swimming Supervisor with the Education Department, and as presenter for the AUSTSWIM Licensed Teacher course, to care for her husband Bill, who has dementia. Val had spent 45 years teaching and presenting.

Her dedication led to her being nominated for, and winning, the WA AUSTSWIM Most Outstanding Contribution Award in June 2017.

The AUSTSWIM award is presented to individuals in Australia that achieve the highest standards of aquatic education excellence.

Even more outstanding, Val went on to win the national award. The award ceremony was held at the 2017 National AUSTSWIM

Conference in Tweed Heads, New South Wales. Unfortunately, Val was unable to attend the national conference, as she is her husband's primary carer.

Enter Val's daughter Nicole Newman, and Manager of AUSTSWIM's WA Business Centre Sue Warner, who secretly worked together to present the award to Val at her home before the national conference. Val was surprised with a special morning tea, flowers, a house full of family members and two representatives from AUSTSWIM: Sue Warner, and Gary Shaw, Chair of the AUSTSWIM State Advisory Committee, Western Australia.

Congratulations Val! What an exceptional achievement.

If you, or someone you know, has a story to share with Alzheimer's WA please contact memberconnect@alzheimerswa.org.au



160 Attend the 2017 Dementia Partnership Project Symposium

The Dementia Partnership Project is an exciting initiative between the Western Australian State Government, Federal Government and Alzheimer's WA.

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The aim of the Dementia Partnership Project is to enhance the lives of people living with dementia by building capacity within the community care sector. The project works in collaboration with partner organisations, service providers, assessment agencies, clients and the wider community to improve care and support and promote sustainable outcomes with an emphasis on the use of a person-centred philosophy.

The 2017 Symposium

As part of the project, Alzheimer's WA organises an annual Dementia Partnership Project Symposium. The symposium is an integral element of the Dementia Partnership

Project and is aimed at supporting community care providers to implement a person-centred approach in their work with people living with dementia.

The 4th annual symposium, *The WE in Dementia: Achieving Wellness through the Domains of Wellbeing®*, was held on Tuesday, 10 October 2017 at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Keynote speakers at the symposium included: international dementia expert Dr Allen Power; CEO of Meaningful Ageing Australia, Ilsa Hampton; and Dr Cindy Jones, a research fellow with the Griffith Health Institute Centre for Health Practice Innovation. The presentations covered a wide range of

topics including: spirituality, storytelling, creativity, creating dementia enabling environments, and the importance of understanding sexual expression in people with dementia.

Joy Lim, a Clinical Psychologist and Researcher from Singapore, spoke on the positive work she does to maintain the wellbeing of her clients; people living with dementia at home, in Singapore. Joy's work focuses on providing meaningful activities tailored for individual clients, which is then monitored and changed depending on how the client responds.

Also speaking were Dementia Advocates Diann Bates and Dr Bill Jenkins. Diann shared her story of living with Younger Onset Dementia and her 'Survival Tips and Tricks' which help to mitigate the anxiety she feels when going somewhere new.

Dr Bill Jenkins shared an incredibly moving story entitled 'Love and Dementia' centred around the diagnosis of his wife, Heather, with dementia; his role as her carer and the changes to their relationship as a result. He spoke of the way in which a person with dementia can become disinhibited, inconsistent, unpredictable and emotionally detached from their loved one. He then went on to explain the social isolation that can be experienced by both the person with dementia and their carer.

To Find Out More

Dr Allen Power recently presented community workshops in Western Australia. To read more about the workshops, please turn to page 6 of this edition of *Milestones*.

An in-depth article featuring Diann Bates can be found on page 14 of this edition of *Milestones*.

An excerpt from Dr Bill Jenkins' presentation at the Dementia Partnership Project Symposium is featured on page 8 of this edition of *Milestones*.

More information on the Dementia Partnership Project, including the Dementia Champions Program, can be found at dementiapartnership.com.au



Dementia Champion of the Year

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Congratulations to Mandy Homshaw and Sue Keeble from Silver Chain Group who were this year's joint recipients of the Dementia Champion of the Year Award. The Award is presented each year at the Dementia Partnership Project Symposium.

The Dementia Champions program gives community support organisations the opportunity to nominate staff to become a Dementia Champion. There are currently 98 certified Dementia Champions, from 50 organisations, in Western Australia. Dementia Champions undertake specialist training provided by Alzheimer's WA, with the intention of developing a network of skilled and knowledgeable community support staff to enhance the delivery of person-centred care to people living with dementia.



Dr Allen Power welcomed by Manjimup and York communities

International dementia expert and author, Dr Allen Power (USA), recently presented two community workshops in Western Australia. The free workshops, at Baptistcare Moonya Residential Home in Manjimup and Balladong Lodge in York, took place on Monday, 9 and Wednesday, 11 October 2017.

The workshops, titled *Dementia Beyond Disease: enhancing wellbeing*, were well received with all attendees agreeing the content was beneficial and gave them a greater understanding of how they can support a person living with dementia.

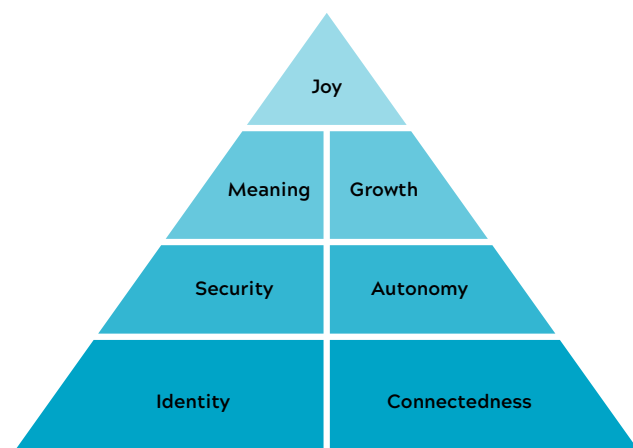
In each session Dr Power explored the latest thinking on living well with dementia, how we can support the wellbeing of people with dementia and the importance of social connection and meaning in our lives. Dr Power also discussed the use of medicines in and outside of care homes.

With seven out of 10 Australians touched by dementia, the need to increase understanding of how the community can support those living with dementia and their families has never been more relevant.

Enhancing Wellbeing

Dr Power explained we need to challenge the way in which we think about dementia, and suggested a new approach where the primary goal is enhancing wellbeing. Just some of the benefits of focusing on wellbeing are that it sees the illness in the context of the whole person, destigmatises personal expressions, focuses on achievable, life affirming goals, brings important new insights and helps eliminate inappropriate use of medications.

7 Domains of Wellbeing pyramid (Power 2014)



Identity and Connectedness

Dr Power suggests that a wellbeing approach can be used for both ongoing support and care as well as decoding distress. It was highlighted that people with dementia become distressed for largely the same reasons that we do. The difference is that they may be less able to verbalise their feelings and needs and remember the information that helps them feel secure and in control.

Security and Autonomy

People with dementia are more likely to become distressed if they feel insecure, frightened or threatened. Examples of how this might occur include: unfamiliar care staff or locations, being awoken suddenly, not knowing what comes next, or difficulty comprehending words. In order to enhance autonomy and security, Dr Power introduced the concept of “continual consent”: explain

and wait for understanding and acceptance with each step of a task or situation.

About Dr Power

Dr Allen Power is a physician, associate professor of medicine, Eden Alternative™ mentor, author and advocate for seniors and an accomplished and enthusiastic culture change leader. His ground breaking books; *Dementia Beyond Drugs* and *Dementia Beyond Disease* have played an important role in changing the understanding of the lived experience of dementia.

Dr Power’s visit was supported by WA Country Health Service as part of the Dementia Friendly Communities project.

References

Power GA (2014) *Dementia beyond disease: enhancing well-being*. Baltimore: Health Professions Press.



Short Stay Respite Services

A home away from home

Our short stay respite service provides an opportunity for you to have a break whilst your loved one enjoys a few days in our world leading dementia-specialist care houses. Each house features enabling design, a wide range of activities tailored to the individual and most importantly friendship and laughter.

We are focussed on ensuring a stay at one of our houses enhances wellbeing and provides the very best experience for the house guest.

This service is offered from:

- » Mary Chester House, Shenton Park, Perth
- » Hawthorn House, Albany

How do I access the service?

To find out more, talk to our customer service team on **1300 66 77 88** or email support@alzheimerswa.org.au

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts

Love, Perception and Dementia Care

By Dr Bill Jenkins

My name is Bill Jenkins. I am a retired academic and psychotherapist. In 2009 my wife, Heather, a professor of special education, was diagnosed with Frontotemporal Dementia. I cared for Heather at home until 2012, when she moved into a Dementia Care Facility. Currently, I am an advocate, a father, grandfather and poet (biljenkinspoet.com). I begin this piece on love, perception and dementia care with a story from my childhood.

I was born and raised in a fishing village in the north of Scotland. When I was a boy, on Friday afternoons after school, my friends and I would rush down to the harbour wall to watch the fishing boats return from five days at sea. The boats had left a minute past midnight on Monday (bad luck to go out on the Sabbath) and they returned on Friday between about three to six o'clock to unload their catch for sale the next day.

The reason we went to the harbour wall was to see who could recognise the boats first as they came over the horizon. It was a vigorous competition. In all the years that I took part in this weekly ritual, I never once recognised a boat first. Why not? I wasn't visually impaired, but the following information might help you understand.

All those years ago, my father was in business and all my friends' fathers were fishermen. Their fathers were on those boats. When I strained to identify a boat, I was looking for physical characteristics, for the name on the prow, where the cabin was placed, colour and so on. I was just looking for things, my friends however, were looking for their fathers.

In 1923, the Austrian philosopher Martin Buber, produced an essay called 'I and Thou'. In this essay he made a distinction about the way we perceive the world. He made a

distinction between seeing other human beings and seeing objects. He named our perception of other human beings as forming 'I - Thou' relationships and our perceptions of objects as forming 'I - It' relationships.

Getting back to the harbour wall, my friends were looking at the boats in 'I - Thou' terms, personal terms, as the possibility existed that the father they loved and missed 'might' just be on board. They were looking for a beloved person; I was just looking for things. Different motivations!

I make this distinction because it points to an extremely significant issue in my experience of dementia care.

During the year or so leading up to Heather's diagnosis, I had been aware of various subtle changes in Heather and in our relationship. She was less emotional than she had been, more likely to share personal details of our life together, even with strangers, and she appeared to have lost interest in some of our shared interests. As a couple we had been very close and we had been married for 35 years at the time of the diagnosis. We loved each other and we knew each other very well. But as a consequence of the emerging dementia our mutual and loving relationship came to an end. However, something significant happened once the dementia became well established and I had been caring for Heather for a year or so.

The development of dementia is usually seen as progressive loss of function: mental confusion, incontinence, recognition failure, apathy, memory loss, irritability, aphasia, dysphasia and so on. This increase and gradual progression in our partner's dysfunction can change the way we perceive our loved one. It is largely insidious, it creeps up on us.

Being totally embedded in caring for my wife Heather, I was completely unaware that my perception of her had changed. I had stopped seeing her as my loving partner, and started seeing her as an object of care. During my caregiving the way I saw my wife had shifted from an 'I - Thou' relationship to an 'I - It' relationship, without me being aware of the change.

One day I had a brain snap and realised what was happening. Memories of my time as a student of philosophy, in particular of the work of Martin Buber broke through the fog of dementia care. I had been thinking of Heather largely in terms of her deficits, and my care in trying to help compensate for them.

I didn't fall in love with Heather forty five or so years ago because of all the amazing things she could do, I fell in love with a human being, a person, a lovely and wonderful woman and that hadn't changed. I had just stopped seeing it. The dementia had blinded me to the love in my life.

Reflection on this realisation pointed to the importance of not losing sight of the personhood of the individual with dementia. It is such a destructive disease, not only does it deprive the individual of crucial functions, it is destructive of fundamental and mutual love, it also destroys relationships with family and friends. At the core of this destruction is the loss of the perception of the person, where the person becomes seen in dysfunctional terms.

Normally, the perception of who we are, our identity, is firmly connected with what we do, and what others expect us to be able to do. However this experience with Heather taught me that who the person is does not change, even when their capabilities change.

I would like to stress my belief that dementia does not change who the person is despite changes to their functional capacities.

But what about love?

The love that I shared with Heather which was shared mutually had gone, and there was no hope of its resurrection. But when I looked

into Heather's eyes, I loved her still.

This realisation helped me to see Heather in the light of a different kind of love, a love that persists and transcends the circumstances in which we might find ourselves. It is a love that enabled me to focus solely on who Heather is, not on what she could or couldn't do, what she could or couldn't share. So we could say that this kind of love helps us to see our world in a different way, in a way that is solely other directed, not self-directed.

Those of you with knowledge of ancient Greek thought will have detected that I have been talking about two different kinds of love. The mutual love is known as Eros - romantic love, which creates a loving space through mutual physical and emotional attraction. The other is Agape - the kind of love that does not rely on mutuality, it does not need reciprocation. This is the kind of love that saved me from the chaos of dementia.

Finally, in my caring, why did I come to focus on Heather's loss of function, and lose sight of her personhood? I believe that it was self-protection, a way of reducing the focus on the loss of our mutual love, in particular the loss of her expression of loving emotion towards me. However, I suspect, that this may be a more complex issue.

The experience that I have tried to describe above is, I believe, an experience shared by many loving partners when one of them develops dementia.

I believe that it is crucial to not lose sight of the person, it is also crucial to allow oneself to love without the need for reciprocation.

With this kind of love we are able to assert and support the personhood of our loved one, without expecting anything in return.

With this kind of love we are able to support our friends and family.

With this kind of love we are free to open our life and our experience to others.

Finally, with this kind of love we strengthen ourselves so that we can continue to care for our beloved, without being blinded to focusing on who they are by the impact of dementia.



Acclaimed US dementia expert Michael Verde speaks in regional Western Australia

Alzheimer's WA and WA Country Health Service brought award-winning US dementia expert Michael Verde to regional Western Australia as part of the ground-breaking Dementia Friendly Communities project. Michael's speaking tour of Western Australia commenced in Manjimup on Monday, 24 July and concluded in Narrogin on Friday, 11 August 2017.

Michael Verde, an inspiring and engaging speaker, is the creator of the award-winning *'There is a Bridge'* documentary, which explores the power of empathetic attention to keep people with dementia emotionally connected to others.

In his renowned charismatic style, Michael spoke about how every community member can contribute to communities that are dementia friendly by being aware of the emotional needs of people with dementia.

Michael taught community members how to recognise this need, and how to act on that recognition, to help tackle stigma and social

isolation for people in the community living with dementia.

In his time in Western Australia Michael was able to connect with hundreds of community members, including carers and families of people living with dementia, business owners, active community members, and people living with dementia themselves.

Some feedback from community members after connecting with Michael:

"You have transported me to a whole new level of understanding. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

"Michael imparts so much in such a short time. So engaging and heartfelt, magic - thank you!"

"Inspiring, reflective, thank you for coming to rural areas."

As part of his tour, Michael visited and presented in Manjimup, Margaret River, Donnybrook, Collie, Harvey, Lancelin, Northam, York, Kellerberrin and Narrogin.

Research study for nutritional supplement, Souvenaid

A nutritional supplement called Souvenaid, developed for use by those with newly diagnosed Alzheimer's disease, has been on the market for a number of years now.

A recently concluded research study on the effectiveness of Souvenaid was published in the Lancet Neurology research journal on 31 October 2017. The study examined the effect of Souvenaid in people with very early Alzheimer's disease where symptomology may be very minor and where it is too early to give a definitive diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease (this is known as prodromal Alzheimer's disease). Often this is given as a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment.

During the two year study participants showing mild cognitive impairment, who were also showing abnormal amyloid build up through positron emission tomography scanning, were randomly placed into two groups. One group was given Souvenaid and the other a placebo.

Results of the Research Study

A series of tests were used to study the two groups, including psychometric testing and brain scans. While the study was found to

not have significant impact in the cognitive function tests, there was a significant difference in the amount of brain shrinkage between the two groups.

This study is the strongest we have seen so far of targeted nutritional interventions at very early stages of the Alzheimer's disease progression, and showed that it may have significant benefits in slowing down the impact on brain changes.

It is important to note that this is not a cure but may benefit people with early Alzheimer's disease development. The results are an average and will differ from person to person. The study is only relevant to Alzheimer's disease, not other types of dementia. Alzheimer's WA advises people with questions about Souvenaid to contact their medical practitioner to discuss the use, side effects and potential benefits before starting any treatment.

A link to the article that appeared in the Lancet Neurology journal is available at: [thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanneur/PIIS1474-4422\(17\)30332-0.pdf](http://thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanneur/PIIS1474-4422(17)30332-0.pdf)



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Backyard makeover at Mary Chester House

Refurbishment of Mary Chester House - overnight respite now available

On Saturday, 18 November 2017 Alzheimer's WA held an Open Day at Mary Chester House to celebrate the changes that have been made to the house during 2017.

Establishing Overnight Cottage Respite in Perth

Recently, Alzheimer's WA received funding from the Commonwealth Government to deliver overnight short term respite at Mary Chester House, Shenton Park. Alzheimer's WA has provided this service in the Great Southern at Hawthorn House, Albany for over 10 years. It is a great opportunity to be able to offer this service in Perth.

Built in 1993, Mary Chester House has been providing day respite for people living with dementia for over 23 years. Thanks to donations received we were able to refurbish the house to offer three bedrooms available for overnight respite.

Based around the Enabling Household™ model, our community wellbeing houses

in Perth, Albany and Mandurah provide an evidence based environment that seeks to maximise wellbeing in the person with dementia. Providing a wide range of activities based on the person's strengths, identity and interests, the houses provide meaningful engagement, stimulation and friendship in specially designed dementia enabling environments.

Our Shenton Park and Albany houses provide an opportunity for members to spend the night with us on a short term basis. The overnight respite service uses the same philosophy behind our day respite households enabling our clients to live well with dementia.

For more information about our respite services please contact us on 1300 66 77 88 or email us at support@alzheimerswa.org.au.



Backyard Makeover

Early in 2017, Alzheimer's WA partnered with the team at Bunnings who were eager to provide support to Western Australian's who have been touched by dementia.

Bunnings hold an annual Mother's Day campaign supporting local charities throughout Western Australia. Alzheimer's WA were incredibly fortunate to be chosen for this campaign two years in a row.

Throughout 2016, Bunnings provided over \$5,000 worth of donations, services and products to people living with dementia.

This year Bunnings offered their help in making some major changes to Mary Chester House. For those of you who have visited Mary Chester House, you would know that it offers people living with dementia an opportunity to be part of the household and socialise with others, partake in arts and crafts, learn new skills and feel safe doing so with dementia-qualified and experienced coordinators by their side.

After a visit to Mary Chester House, the Bunnings team developed a long list of areas that needed to be repaired and renovated. On Tuesday, 30 May 2017 a team of 15 volunteers arrived to begin crossing off items from the list and what an amazing job they did!

The Bunnings team transformed what was a small courtyard into an open-plan garden and relaxation area filled with a brand new outdoor setting, shading and storage shed. New garden beds were filled with plants and vegetables, creating a beautiful, picturesque centre for members. The Bunnings team even provided us with materials and equipment to maintain the new look, including a brand new lawn mower, whipper snipper, blower vacuum, high pressure cleaner, trowels and gardening gloves.

The work transformed the courtyard into a beautiful and peaceful area perfect for holding a barbeque, chatting with your mates or just enjoying the outdoors on a sunny day.

Bunnings have been an amazing supporter of our organisation and we are very appreciative of their support of the 34,000 Western Australians living with dementia. Our relationship with organisations such as Bunnings are invaluable and are the key to expanding and continuing our services.

If you work for a company that would be interested in offering support to people living with dementia, please contact us on 1300 66 77 88.



Diann Bates, Alzheimer's WA Dementia Advocate

Making a difference day to day

Receiving a diagnosis of dementia can be challenging at any age, however things can be more complex for a younger person - particularly if they are still working, paying a mortgage or looking after a family.

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Diann Bates lives with her partner, teenage children and pet dog Timmy. Three years ago, at the age of 47, Diann Bates was diagnosed with Younger Onset Alzheimer's.

“Alzheimer's affects my day to day life in a myriad of ways that you absolutely take for granted... things that have been standard operating procedure... that you have done with your eyes closed for many years. It's often the little things...”

Things as simple as cooking a favourite meal, feeding her dog, and watering plants are a daily challenge for Diann. Before her

diagnosis Diann ran her own marketing business however she had to sell her business last year. Using her creative talent, Diann has created 'Survival Tips and Tricks' to make her life easier, whether it be for cooking, parking the car or trying to remember something.

“I'm still quite active and try to do as much as I can. It allows me to be independent, to keep going a lot longer.”

Diann shares these workarounds with other people diagnosed with dementia through Alzheimer's WA's Advocates Program. As part of the Advocates Program, Diann regularly

speaks at events on behalf of Alzheimer's WA. Most recently, Diann presented at the 2017 Dementia Partnership Program Symposium.

"If I can give back in any way, shape or form, or help somebody in their life... why wouldn't you?"

Diann is trying to remain as self-sufficient and independent as possible. Her mobile phone is full of alarms and reminders, and she uses apps on her phone to keep track of where she has parked her car. She finds preparation makes it easier to leave the house, particularly if she is going somewhere new.

"At times I get quite anxious if I have to go somewhere new or do new things."

Selling her marketing business meant Diann lost a large part of her social network. For the last year she has been attending a 'Ladies Group'. Once a fortnight, women who have been diagnosed with Younger Onset Dementia meet at Mary Chester House in Shenton Park, before going out for the day; picking strawberries, playing Supa Golf, visiting galleries or the Zoo, or having their nails done.

Diann is proud of the fact she can still drive, as most of the ladies who attend the ladies group are driven by a carer. The support of the group is important, with stigma and loneliness being two of the most reported impacts from people living with dementia.

"When I first went I realised I'd never met anyone my age with Alzheimer's. I could see the struggle in their brain that is the struggle I feel in my brain when I'm trying to think something through, or say something, or remember something... and I could just go 'I know exactly how you feel'.

"It's always a lovely day out with the girls. But it's also sad sometimes when you see people continue to deteriorate."

Although still in the early stages of Alzheimer's, Diann recognises how hard it can be for those who are further progressed, their families and carers.



"Alzheimer's affects my day to day life in a myriad of ways that you absolutely take for granted... things that have been standard operating procedure... that you have done with your eyes closed for many years. It's often the little things..."

"Carers need someone like Alzheimer's WA to provide support mechanisms. Alzheimer's WA has touched base regularly with my partner, Greg, but at this stage I'm still capable to keep going.

"I try not to think about where that's going. I live positively in the moment, count my many blessings and make the most of what I can do now."

Alzheimer's WA's Younger Onset Dementia Program provides information and support for individuals, who are under the age of 65 and living with dementia, and their families.

For more information on the Younger Onset Dementia program please contact us on 1300 66 77 88.



Mandurah community digs deep to bring joy to people living with dementia

On Friday, 27 October 2017, Alzheimer's WA's CEO, Rhonda Parker, officially opened the new garden at Ella's House in Mandurah.

Alzheimer's WA was able to turn a dream into reality and build a dementia friendly landscaped garden at Ella's House thanks to a generous donation from H & N Perry Real Estate and Florida Beach Estate.

The garden project was also supported by donations and services from Jo Barker and David Waddell, Village Manager Settlements, Ingenia Communities, the City of Mandurah and local community members.

Ella's House club members were joined at the opening by the Hon. David Templeman MLA, Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts, City of Mandurah Mayor Rhys Williams, Deputy Mayor Caroline Knight, project donors and supporters. Guests enjoyed tea, coffee and cake as they walked around the new garden.

The garden is designed with the unique needs of the people who will spend time in it in mind. Some of the features incorporated in the garden include easy wayfinding, sensory stimulation and social connection spaces.

Be it caring for the chooks, working in the shed or tending the plants there is always something important and meaningful to do.

There is strong research that supports the importance of having access to an enjoyable garden space. The evidence shows that access to well-designed gardens leads to improved mobility, improved mood, reduced anxiety and higher levels of wellbeing.

The philosophy of Ella's House is about creating a household that enables, engages and supports the wellbeing of house visitors. The garden plays an important role in this philosophy.

Ella's House, in Mandurah, is a day respite centre for people living with dementia. The house provides care, support and meaningful engagement to help improve the lived experience of dementia.

Alzheimer's WA thanks everyone that made this project a reality.

Wine and Horses Charity Ride – an incredible fundraising event

Maryanne Phillips is a truly inspirational person. With two close family members diagnosed with dementia, Maryanne decided to combine her passion for horse riding and a desire to raise money to support those living with dementia, to create the annual Wine and Horses Charity Ride. The first charity ride took place in 2014.

Three years later, the fourth annual ride took place over the weekend of 7 and 8 October in the picturesque Avon Valley. More than 120 people and horses participated in the ride. Participants chose between a 50km or 100km ride, with an overnight camp at Avon Valley Equestrian Centre in Northam. A percentage of all registration fees were donated to Alzheimer's WA.

An auction was also held on Saturday, 7 October in Northam, with all proceeds donated to Alzheimer's WA. Hundreds of items were auctioned including accommodation and restaurant vouchers, equestrian supplies, beauty vouchers, jewellery and a holiday to Broome.

This year Maryanne and the Wine and Horses team raised over \$37,000, bringing the total they have raised over the last four years to more than \$100,000.

In Northam and surrounds, there are over 300 people living with dementia. Without a medical breakthrough this is expected to increase to over 1,550 in the next 35 years.

The money raised by the event will go towards helping Alzheimer's WA support and improve the lived experience of those on the dementia journey including people living with dementia, their carers, families, friends and support networks.

Many thanks to Maryanne and the Wine and Horses team for their continued support of Alzheimer's WA.



Wine and Horses Charity Ride



Training and services to make
you a dementia expert too

Our highly skilled team has extensive experience in a wide range of areas, facilitating learning experiences which touch, move and inspire participants to transform their practice. Key programs include:

- » Carer Support and Information Program
- » Community Dementia Champions Program
- » Dementia Enabling Environments Project

Further information

If you would like to find out more, please contact our Education Team on **1300 66 77 88** or email education@alzheimerswa.org.au

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Alzheimer's Charity Golf Day

Olivia Holtmeulen has crafted the perfect tribute for her grandfather, Arney, who passed away from dementia in 2013.

Olivia - with help from her dad, Geoff - is the chairperson of the Alzheimer's Charity Golf Day; an annual fundraiser that has managed to raise nearly \$43,000 in only three years! That's a massive achievement for someone who was only ten years old at the time of her first event.

This year, over 100 people flocked to the Araluen golf course for a fun day filled with love, laughter and good-natured competition. 25 teams fought tooth-and-nail to be the one to sink the most golf balls and claim the day.

At five o'clock, shadow-grey clouds flooded the sky and there seemed to be a storm on the rise. With the golfing portion of the day completed, the army of golfers retreated indoors for the remainder of the night's festivities.

An auction was held, with coveted prizes including a West Coast Eagles jersey signed

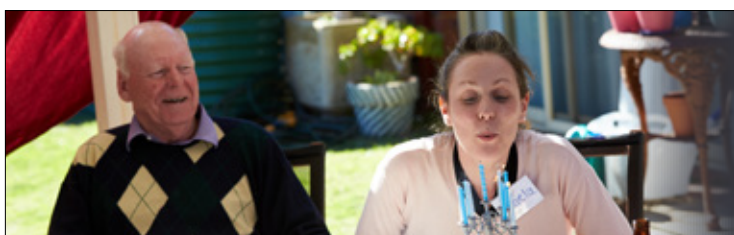
by all the players of the 2017 team, a cricket bat signed by the Australian and West Indies teams, a signed Wildcats jersey and much, much more.

By the end of the day, Olivia and her family had successfully raised \$15,722. Those funds were generously donated to Alzheimer's WA, who will use it to provide help and support to the 34,000 people in Western Australia currently living with dementia.

Olivia is now thirteen and has been hosting this event for three years. Her determination to honour her grandad's memory and provide help and support for people living with dementia has never waned, and she is already hard at work planning next year's Golf Day.

It's a day of celebration, remembering and joy that Arney, no doubt, would have loved.

With passion, commitment and the unceasing support of her friends and family, Olivia was able to make this event, like the others before it, a Round to Remember.



Caring for someone
living with Dementia

Alzheimer's WA recognises that supporting a person living with dementia can be challenging given the complex and changing nature of dementia.

Our Carer Support Program provides eligible carers with an opportunity to connect with others in a similar situation and share their ideas and experiences. Programs are facilitated by Carer Support team members with expert dementia knowledge, who can link you with the support and services you need throughout your caring journey.

How do I access the service?

To find out more, talk to our customer service team on **1300 66 77 88** or email support@alzheimerswa.org.au

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2017 Walk to Remember - raising money for people living with dementia

Earlier this year more than 600 passionate walkers spent a Sunday morning walking to raise money for people living with dementia. Alzheimer's WA's inaugural *Walk to Remember* consisted of three events in October and November across Western Australia:

- » Mandurah Walk to Remember
Sunday, 15 October
- » Albany Walk to Remember
Sunday, 22 October
- » Perth Walk to Remember
Sunday, 5 November

The *Walk to Remember* raises money to support and advocate for the 34,000 people living with dementia in Western Australia. The events help us to remember those who have walked beside us, those who cannot walk for themselves and those who are sadly no longer with us.

"Dementia is a lived experience, and with more than 60% of people living with dementia in their homes in the community it is vital to have the support of local communities."

"Alzheimer's WA has been fortunate to have amazing community support in its 35 year history. With ongoing community support we can continue to provide support services and improved facilities to people living with dementia in Western Australia" says Rhonda Parker, CEO, Alzheimer's WA.

The annual *Walk to Remember* concluded with the Perth walk on Sunday, 5 November at Perry Lakes Reserve in Floreat.

So far over \$54,000 has been raised to support people living with dementia. Thank you to all *Walk to Remember* participants who walked in support of those living with dementia and those we have loved and lost to this disease. Events such as the Walk help support people living with dementia in Western Australia, their carers and their families.

Alzheimer's WA would also like to thank Hall & Prior, Terry White Chemmart, H & N Perry Real Estate, Florida Beach Dawesville, Norman Disney & Young, Aussie Natural Spring Water, Moora Citrus and our wonderful volunteers.

If you couldn't attend one of the walks but would still like to help, you can donate to the cause at alzheimerswa.org.au

Dementia Friendly Communities project expands to Manjimup and York

Alzheimer's WA, supported by the WA Country Health Service, is expanding on previous work that has been done in the Dementia Friendly Communities project, bringing its services and expertise to regional Western Australia.

A community that is dementia friendly is a place where people with dementia are supported to continue living with meaning, purpose and value. Each community will be different to the next, but will include at least one or more of the following:

- » Businesses that provide accessible services for people with dementia, including staff who understand the disease and know how to communicate effectively with people with dementia
- » Organisations that provide paid work
- » Volunteering opportunities
- » Sporting clubs and social groups that are welcoming and inclusive
- » Environments that are enabling

Manjimup and York are pilot sites for Australia's first ever Dementia Friendly Community towns in their entirety. Alzheimer's WA is working with people living with dementia as well as local businesses, service providers and the wider community in a whole of town approach. Providing education, support and awareness to the town will address stigma associated with dementia and will respond to the needs and challenges of people living with dementia.

Community Liaison Officers are in place in Manjimup and York, engaging with people living with dementia to help shape the community around their needs and aspirations.



York District High School, Dementia Friendly Community

The scale of these projects are the first of their kind in Australia. Given stigma is so heavily attached to dementia, the importance of these projects can't be underestimated for those living with dementia. We are grateful to the communities for embracing this project. The learnings from these two towns will inform future Dementia Friendly Communities initiatives.

We all have a part to play in working towards becoming dementia friendly. There are plenty of opportunities to get involved if you are living with dementia, a community group, carer, service or business.

For more information, call 1300 66 77 88, email dfc@alzheimerswa.org.au or visit alzheimerswa.org.au/dementia-friendly-communities



**Thank you for your
generous support**

Alzheimer's WA is grateful for the generous support of all our donors and supporters. This vital support allows us to continue our commitment to advocate for and assist people living with dementia as well as drive innovation.

We extend a special thank you to every individual, organisation and fundraising team who raised funds or donated to us in 2017. Your support and generosity is greatly appreciated and has enabled a range of initiatives, some of which have been profiled in this edition of *Milestones*.

We rely on people in our local communities to help us raise both awareness of what we do and the essential funding to deliver our services. This year, over \$115,000 was raised through the amazing, individual efforts of 170 passionate community fundraisers alone.

Thank you to all of you who support our two annual appeals, the Tax Appeal and Christmas Appeal.

Thank you to all those who helped Alzheimer's WA care for families who have been touched by dementia and offer them the support and services they need during their dementia journey, and to work with other health and care providers to build capacity for better dementia care.

When we work together, great things happen.

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1300 66 77 88

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There is a difference between...
forgetting to buy the Christmas
crackers and forgetting who the
people at your Christmas table are

You can make a difference... donate today

Those living with dementia will never stand alone because of the vision and generosity of those who make donations. Please dig deep and help us make a difference to Western Australians living with dementia.

To make your donation:

Phone 1300 66 77 88

Visit alzheimerswa.org.au

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