

The Villa Maria story unfolded



Celebrating
100 1907-2007
years
Thousands of Stories Millions of Possibilities

2007 – Villa Maria celebrates 100 years of service to the Victorian community. Young People in Nursing Homes tender awarded to Villa Maria to build permanent accommodation for 10 young people with high level disabilities. Northern Victoria Community Services opens a respite House in Shepparton while Western Community Services establishes Hope House, a smaller scale project for younger people with disabilities.

1907 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2007

1907 - At the insistence of Louisa Fawkner, the Catholic Braille Writers' Association was founded in the parish of St Mary's, East St Kilda by Fr. John Barry, assistant priest of the parish

1928 - Rev. Br. Patrick Gildas O'Neill, a member of the Congregation of the Christian Brothers joined the association. Br. O'Neill had lost his own sight at the age of 40

1931 - Rev. Br. Patrick O'Neill was elected President, a position he held until his death in 1968

1938 - Villa Maria Hostel opened in Prahran - our first residence for blind people – with the assistance of a bequest left by Mrs Mary Ahearn. The Donald Street property was donated by Mrs. Mary O'Connor for the purpose and was opened by His Grace Archbishop Mannix. It was home to 16 people

1948 - Name of the Association changed to Villa Maria Society for the Blind, as the Villa Maria Hostel became known to an increasing number of people. The Hostel itself was so named for the religious connotation as well as to perpetuate the memory of Mrs O'Connor and Mrs Ahearn

1950 - Villa Madonna Nursing Home officially blessed and opened by Archbishop Mannix. The property adjacent to Villa Madonna was purchased a few months later to expand the nursing home

1957 - St Paul's School for the Blind was established with Br. O'Neill as Principal

1968 - Br. O'Neill suffers a stroke and passes away on 14 October

1972 - Villa O'Neill Nursing Home in Prahran was built and opened for 32 people

1979 - Villa Maria Centre Wantirna, comprising of a Nursing Home Hostel and Day Hospital (now Wantirna Community Rehabilitation Centre), was officially opened

1980 - St Paul's School reconstructed

1982 - St Paul's Respite Care, now known as Gildas House, in Alphington is acquired and modified

1986 - Camberwell House acquired, modified and established as a Community Residential Unit (now known as Shared Supported Accommodation - SSAs)

1988 - White Road Adult Day Centre at Wantirna was established

1990 - Villara, Older Persons' Units, in Wantirna opened and Wantirna Day Hospital extended

1992 - Villa Madonna, now Villa Maria Bundoora Aged Care Residence, was opened for 40 people

1995 - Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA) program was introduced

1996 - Carinya Dementia Services opened. Wantirna Gateway Adult Day Program commenced

1998 - Acquisition of Eloura Homes saw the attainment of SSAs in Burwood, Highett and Nunawading

1999 - CACP program introduced into the Gippsland, Grampians, Hume and Loddon Mallee regions

2000 - SSAs opened in Braybrook and Taylors Lakes. Ageing with a Disability program (now Mature Choices program) commenced

2001 - CACPs programs introduced Victoria-wide. SSAs opened in Bayswater, Bulleen, Cheltenham, Endeavour Hills, Moorabbin, and Wantirna. Disability Services provide Homefirst packages, (now the Individual Support Program) for the first time.

2002 - Opening of new children's respite houses at Croydon, Lilydale and Studley House in Kew, which was relocated from Esmonde House on the Kew site

2004 - First allocation of Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) packages

2005 - Awarded Commonwealth Carelink and Carer Respite Centre in Hume Region, major presence now established in Shepparton

2006 - Avebury House opens in Berwick offering a respite program for working carers of older people with dementia. Base Camp, a men's shed project at Wantirna, is opened by Bud Tingwell