

2009 Annual Report



Creating choices and building inclusive, sustainable and compassionate communities

VILLA MARIA

Villa

Contents

About Villa Maria	1
President & CEO Report	2
Strategic Plan Key Result Area Achievements & Highlights	4
Disability Services	6
A place to call home	7
Having a say	8
Education Services	9
Friendship & understanding	10
Time for fathers & children	11
Community Services	12
Wheels in motion	13
Residential Services	14
Fun & friendship	15
People Services	16
RMIT Diploma of Management	17
Community Involvement	18
A treasured gift	19
Governance	20
Management	21
Financial Performance	22
Acknowledgements	23
Service Directory	24

Our Vision

Creating choices and building inclusive, sustainable and compassionate communities.

Our Mission

Villa Maria will deliver quality and innovative disability, education and senior service options that empower and enrich individuals and communities.

Our Values

***Compassion:** we care about the needs of others and seek to understand their life and spiritual journey.*

***Accountability:** we take responsibility for what we do and are honest in the way we do it.*

***Respect:** we recognise the value and uniqueness of each person.*

***Courage:** we have the quality of spirit to act in accordance with our convictions.*

Villa

About Villa Maria

Villa Maria is a not-for-profit, values-based organisation providing quality services and life enhancing opportunities for older people and people with a disability.

From humble beginnings as the Catholic Braille Writers Association in 1907, Villa Maria has grown to become one of Victoria's largest providers of disability, education and senior services, with more than 60 programs supporting 5,000 people in 42 locations.

The services we offer range from specialist education and early childhood intervention for children with disabilities or developmental delays, to community based and in-home support services for older people and people with a disability, carer respite options and residential aged care.

For over a century, Villa Maria's rich tapestry of services and programs has evolved from our willingness to continually review, grow and adapt to meet the changing needs of the individuals and communities we serve.

Every day, our 950 staff and 300 volunteers respond to the unique needs of the people and families we support with openness, innovation, creativity and flexibility.

Patrons-In-Chief

*Professor David de Kretser AC, Governor of Victoria
and Mrs Jan de Kretser*

Patron

The Most Reverend Denis Hart, Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne



VILLA MARIA

Villa

President & CEO Report



Dr Angela Atkin

President



Valerie Lyons

Chief Executive Officer

Villa Maria is a truly unique organisation. Few community organisations have the service depth and diversity of Villa Maria; nor can they claim such a long and proud tradition of service delivery – one that spans more than a century.

Over the years, Villa Maria's service development, innovation and growth has been shaped by our external environment and coloured not only by the care and support needs of the community, but by our strong sense of mission, spirit and values.

The challenges faced by people from past generations framed the types of services we offered and required us to respond with vision and with courage. Our commitment to equity and social justice and our belief in providing choice for all, has also been a fundamental driver of Villa Maria's services.

The challenges faced by current and future generations lead us to adapt, to innovate and to reframe. In June last year, we introduced Villa Maria's three year strategic plan 'Achievements and Aspirations 2008-2011' in order to provide a sound framework for Villa Maria's future growth and development and importantly, to secure our long-term sustainability.

Addressing the issue of sustainability is critical, not just for Villa Maria but for the entire disability and aged and community services sectors. Our daily reality is one of juggling the constraints of systemic government underfunding and lack of appropriate indexation, with the regulatory and consumer demands of delivering quality services and securing funding to meet unmet service need.

Villa Maria has been a strong advocate for change in this regard. With leadership representation, we have worked closely with sector peak bodies and organisations: Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA), Aged and Community Care Victoria (ACCV), NDS (National Disability Services), the disability services Inter-Agency group, Catholic Health Australia, Catholic Social Services and the Catholic Education Office. Collaboratively and individually, we have actively lobbied state and federal governments to take urgent action to address aged care and disability services concerns.

In March 2009, Villa Maria personally presented its submission to The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration enquiry into Residential and Community Aged Care in Australia. Our submission focused on addressing issues related to funding, indexation, user equity, service pricing and service gaps.

We clearly expressed the view to the Australian Government that annual indexation must increase to cover the cost of providing care, in addition to increased access to capital funding to enable construction of much needed accommodation for older people.

We have taken a proactive stance and lobbied MPs in relation to the Victorian Government's proposed compulsory Portable Long Service Leave Scheme for community organisations. While not opposed to the scheme in principle, we are opposed to its introduction in the absence of any government funding to offset the significant payroll cost impost to organisations.

And in the lead-up to the 2009 Victorian State Budget, we joined with NDS and the Inter-Agency Group to place pressure on the government to redress chronic short-falls in service pricing, amounting to \$52.5 million across the sector; and to provide realistic annual price indexation of 4.2% for the 2010 financial year.

Yet despite the best efforts of Villa Maria and our sector colleagues, the outcome of the federal and state budgets was extremely disappointing. The implications of systemic underfunding and lack of appropriate service indexation is immense and effects every service Villa Maria provides.

Fallout from the global economic crisis has also significantly impacted the Australian community financially and socially. For Villa Maria, it has affected our investment returns and reduced the value of our investment portfolio at a time when essential capital investment in our infrastructure is required. It has also created additional pressure, affecting our capacity to self-fund innovative programs and provide the 'extras' that make a real difference to people's lives.

Fortunately, Villa Maria has in place the strategies and the governance and management capacity to tackle these challenges. During the year we made steady progress towards our service delivery, growth and development targets.

We expanded our respite services in Western Victoria and achieved success in the 2009 Aged Care Approvals Round announced in June. We received a further 19 community care packages enabling us to extend our services in regional Victoria and to commence

services in southern New South Wales, as well as enabling us to provide a full continuum of care in the Eastern Metropolitan Region.

Villa Maria expanded its Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) in the City of Yarra; became a Panel Provider for the Helping Children with Autism Program and opened Outer Encounters – an after school and vacation care program for children with a disability in Melbourne's outer east.

Villa Maria's four residential aged care facilities again achieved full three-year accreditation, reflecting the quality of care delivered by our Residential Services team. We also received the endorsement of the Knox Council to proceed with the major re-development of our Wantirna site and received town planning approval to proceed with the construction of Austin Street – our 'my future my choice' funded initiative to provide a housing alternative for young people with high level, complex care needs who are currently living in nursing homes.

These achievements are testament to the significant amount of hard work and development by staff from across all of Villa Maria's services and business support teams. Robust systems and processes have been established to underpin current services and future growth. A full review of our client management, finance and payroll systems was completed during the year – a thorough process engaging many Villa Maria stakeholders and resulting in the Board of Directors approving a significant investment in systems infrastructure to improve operational efficiencies.

The Board of Directors continued to reinforce its commitment to best practice in organisational governance, undertaking an internal 'good governance' review, participating in training around the new disability services legislation and actively pursuing Board committees and the strategic planning process.

We were delighted to welcome Mr Richard Gray to the Board. Richard has a wealth of experience and expertise in the disability and aged care services sectors and is currently Director, Aged Care Services with Catholic Health Australia and a Director of the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency.

We also wish to acknowledge the contribution of Mr Tim Daly, Mr Paul Rizzo and Mr Ian McEachern, who resigned as Directors during the course of the year. Their expertise and wisdom will be missed. We would particularly like to acknowledge Ian's length of service as a Director of Villa Maria. Appointed in 1998, Ian was an active member of the Board and Chair of the Strategic & Proposed Developments Committee.

The extensive contribution, made on a voluntary basis, by all Board Directors of Villa Maria is reflective of the commitment and dedication of the many volunteers within our community and for this, we are extremely grateful.

We were also delighted to welcome Professor David de Kretser AC, Governor of Victoria and Mrs Jan de Kretser as Patrons-In-Chief of Villa Maria. They join fellow Patron, The Most Reverend Denis Hart, Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne.

In February 2009, Ms Cheril Dewhirst joined Villa Maria and the Executive Leadership Management Team (ELMT) as Executive Manager – Education Services and Principal of St Paul's College. The contribution of Ms Anne Muir, Manager – ECIS, as a new participant within the ELMT, has also been appreciated. Unfortunately Deputy CEO, Janis Klavins was diagnosed with a serious illness in April. Everyone at Villa Maria wishes him well. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Janis' contribution to the implementation of Villa Maria's risk management system and for his expertise in quality systems and residential aged care and accreditation. The Board would like to extend its appreciation to Ms Beryl Raufer, General Manager – Community Services for taking on the additional role of Acting Deputy CEO.

What sustains Villa Maria as an organisation is the engagement and contribution of our staff, our volunteers and our community supporters. Thank you for all that you do. Together we share a vision of creating choices and building inclusive, sustainable and compassionate communities. We are driven by a desire to celebrate the human spirit and to deliver services that unleash the potential for all people – whether young or old – through innovation and inclusion.

The year ahead promises to be both challenging and rewarding. It will certainly be an opportunity for us to realise our desired future.

Villa

Strategic Plan Key Result Area Achievements & Highlights

Villa Maria's three year strategic plan – 'Achievements and Aspirations 2008-2011' – provides a sound framework for Villa Maria's future growth and development. It is the guide we use to direct, monitor and assess our progress and contains 10 key result areas (KRAs). Due to the commitment and effort of all service and business support teams, considerable progress towards Villa Maria's desired future has been achieved during the year with many major accomplishments, some of which are listed here.

KRA 1 : Person Centred Approach

- Enriching lifestyles flourishes in Disability Services and the Circle Network is established.
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation-wide plan developed.

KRA 2 : Business & Service Excellence

- All service areas meet accreditation and legislative requirements, with all four residential aged care facilities achieving full three-year accreditation.
- Australian Business Excellence Framework self-assessment completed.
- Villa Maria's existing quality systems are strengthened through the establishment of an integrated organisation-wide Quality Committee.

KRA 3 : Service Research, Service Development

- Significant progress is made in advancing the unique service model for the 'my future my choice' development at Austin Street and building construction commences.

- Memorandum of Understanding established with Deakin University to undertake research into community aged care and the use of information and communication technology.

KRA 4 : Social, Economic & Environmental Sustainability

- Villa Maria is a consistent and effective advocate for policy and sector reform in aged and community care and disability services.
- Despite a difficult economic climate, Villa Maria achieves a solid financial result while investing heavily in buildings and ICT infrastructure.

KRA 5 : People & Culture

- Villa Maria receives a Victorian Government Fair & Flexible Employer Award 2009.
- Staff members and volunteers receive state recognition: Kath Hill receives a Distinguished Service Award from National Disability Services Victoria; Neil Clancy receives a 2009 Disability Support Worker Award; and Bob Martin is a Finalist in the ACCV State Awards for Excellence 2009 – volunteer category.
- An innovative health, safety and wellbeing framework is established to create a systemic and sustainable safety culture.

KRA 6 : Governance & Management

- Board Directors undertake an internal 'good governance' review.
- An integrated risk management system is developed and implementation commenced.
- Strategic planning and business planning processes are established.

KRA 7 : Widely Acknowledged, Widely Recognised

- The Villa Maria brand and image is developed and rolled out across the organisation.
- Extensive media coverage received with over 60 articles published; finalist in the ACCV State Awards for Excellence 2009 – media category.
- Numerous conference presentations delivered, including the NDS national conference and five presentations at the 18th Annual Tri-State Conference on aged and community care.

KRA 8 : ICT Platform & Systems Development

- Full review, tender and selection processes undertaken for new client management, financial, payroll and human resources information systems.
- Mobile computer training laboratory established to support Learning & Development initiatives across the organisation.
- Investment in an ICT High Availability solution provides greater support for disaster recovery.

KRA 9 : Growth & Expansion

- Early Childhood Intervention Service expands into the City of Yarra and becomes a Panel Provider for the Helping Children with Autism Program.
- Outer Encounters is established – an after school and vacation care program for children with a disability in Melbourne’s outer east.
- Additional community aged care packages gained in the 2009 Aged Care Approvals Round and additional funding from the National Respite for Carers Program achieved.



- Following extensive operational and infrastructure development and marketing, Bundoora Aged Care Residence is taken from 55 per cent to 100 per cent utilisation.
- A property in Lysterfield is acquired in preparation for the relocation of the Carinya Dementia Service from the Wantirna site.
- Significant refurbishment works undertaken to improve amenities at the Bundoora, O’Neill and Berwick residential aged care facilities.
- Villa Maria’s application to redevelop its Wantirna site receives unanimous support from the Knox Council.

KRA 10 : Building, Facilities & Infrastructure

Villa Disability Services

“A plan is not an outcome; the life the person wants is an outcome. The only acceptable reason to plan is to help someone move toward the life they desire.” (Michael Smull)

Despite the ongoing challenge of systemic government underfunding, Disability Services at Villa Maria continues to provide flexible and creative services to more than 500 individuals and their families to assist them to move toward the life they desire.

Operating across three Melbourne metropolitan regions – Eastern, Southern and North and West – we provided services across the whole of life continuum including shared supported accommodation, facility-based and flexible respite, after school care, adult day options, individualised supports, case management and support for ageing carers.

Implementing person centred approaches is a core focus for Disability Services. In addition to supporting people attending the Circle Network, we strengthened and developed the skills of the staff championing the Enriching Lifestyles initiative. Led by Mala Doyle, the champions attended bi-monthly meetings to refine the cultural change work being undertaken across our programs and completed comprehensive training on capturing people’s dreams and goals through the development of a ‘map’ or a ‘path’.

As an extension to our person centred and responsive service, we continued to offer social work support to the individuals, families and carers who access Disability Services.

More than 55 individuals and families received free and confidential support from our dedicated Social Worker on issues ranging from relationships and behaviour, to grief and loss, financial or legal concerns, accommodation and funding applications, anxiety and stress. Services include counselling, casework, referral to external services, advocacy, the provision of information and staff education.

Exploring communication

During the year, three Gateway staff worked with seven people from each of the three Gateway sites on a Department of Human Services (DHS) Changing Days funded initiative. Called ‘Learning and Linking’, the project focused on learning more about people whose communication is very limited and then linking them with things that made more sense to them.

We learnt that concentrated effort in a small area is a very powerful way to bring about larger scale change. People told their stories and we learned much more about how they would like things to be. People have support to communicate more clearly and the way in which others respond to their communication is different; more of people’s communication has meaning and less of people’s communication has labels and assumptions.

Making meaningful community connections

Disability Services, through Bec Cole, has been involved in a 12 month research and community engagement project funded by a DHS grant. Based in the Yarra Valley, we are connecting with people whose access to supports is limited due to location and availability and investigating the local community opportunities that exist.

We are developing partnerships with other community organisations and businesses to build capacity to support people with a disability and supporting individuals and their families to access local opportunities.

Partnerships have produced solid outcomes including: a ‘World Café’ community consultation organised with the Shire of Yarra Ranges, Access for All Abilities and Scope; training on planning for further education and employment aimed at parents and young people; support for the Outer Eastern Inclusion Alliance to develop online networking tools for information and opportunity sharing; support to ‘Arts Out East’ – a community based arts organisation that engages with young people and people with a disability, as well as the broader community; and input into the Shire of Yarra Ranges’ Disability Action Plan.

Finding out what opportunities people are interested in and providing them with on-going support to pursue these opportunities and make the necessary connections, has resulted in excellent outcomes. These include support for a person to plan and pursue an apprenticeship; a young person transitioning to local community education one day per week; a person pursuing local sport and recreation opportunities; and a person pursuing a local volunteering opportunity.

Outer Encounters

In November 2008, Villa Maria opened a new after school and vacation care program in Mt Evelyn called Outer Encounters.

In a great example of parent advocacy, two local parents saw a need in their own lives for an after school program for children with a disability in the outer eastern suburbs. They surveyed other parents and found they were not alone. They enlisted the support of Villa Maria to set up the Outer Encounters program.

Successful in gaining funding from the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs, Outer Encounters provides a respite program for children with a disability aged 6 to 18 years.

Outer Encounters enables the children to make friends, have fun and participate in a wide variety of planned activities after school, while their parents have an opportunity to enter the workforce and work beyond school hours knowing their child is well supported.

In 2007, Villa Maria successfully tendered for government funding under the 'my future my choice' initiative to address the pressing issue of young people in nursing homes.

On 26 March 2009, the first sod of soil was turned on Austin Street, Alphington – the site of Victoria's first purpose-specific home designed to support 10 young people with high level, complex care needs.

It had taken many months of concentrated effort to get to this point: town planning approval processes, design and service development work, fundraising and community consultation.

"This is a long awaited day," said Valerie Lyons, Villa Maria's CEO. "It marks the beginning of a new era; a new way of truly responding to the needs of young people with complex care needs who are currently living in aged care facilities not suited to their specific needs or circumstances."

"As we turn the first sod of soil here today, we are paving the way for a brighter future."

It was an emotional time for the families of the 10 future residents of Austin Street and the nearly 100 people in attendance at the ceremony as Mary Nolan and the Hon. Bill Shorten MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services jointly turned the first sod.

"A big thank you to the Villa Maria staff who worked so very hard to get us here," said family representative Andrew Macready-Bryan, father of James, who will reside at Austin Street.



A place to call home

Future Austin Street residents Chris and Sarah surrounded by family and friends at the sod turning ceremony.

"There has to be healing for the families and for us the opportunity to be part of an initiative like this is a huge part of the healing that we're going to go through as the families of these 10 young people."

"Just to have that relief, to know that when you're not around anymore there's going to be a structure where ongoing care can be given. I can't tell you how important that is. It's huge."

When it opens in 2010, Austin Street will introduce a new care model for these young people; one that blends nursing care with rehabilitation and community inclusion. Importantly it will be a home that reflects the needs, aspirations and life goals of its young residents.

Austin Street is a great example not only of Villa Maria's quest for innovative responses to community need, but its continued focus on providing flexible and

creative services in recognition of the uniqueness and diversity of all individuals.

Villa Maria would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank Perpetual Trustees, Gandel Foundation, Scobie & Claire Mackinnon Trust, Collier Charitable Trust, Danks Trust, Anti Football Foundation, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, Nelson Alexander, James Macready-Bryan Foundation, the John T Reid Trust and Villa Maria donors for their generous financial support of this vital initiative.

Villa Maria's Disability Services are flexible and creative and recognise the uniqueness and diversity of all individuals. With person centred approaches placing the person at the core of everything we do, our aim is to support people to reach their goals and aspirations.

February was an exciting time for three members of the Villa Maria Circle Network. Gena, Paul and Adam delivered a compelling presentation at the VALID (Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability) 'Having a Say' conference in Geelong. Together they told the story of the journey of the Villa Maria Circle Network.

Paul says, "Having a say is all about speaking up, not being frightened to talk about anything. It's about speaking up for your rights."

Adam adds, "I enjoyed presenting at the conference. We spoke about what we do in the Circle Network, about the aims of our committee and about advocacy."

The Circle Network began in May 2008 with its 11 committee members comprised of people receiving support from Villa Maria. The committee makes a valuable contribution to the organisation and meets every month to discuss topics of importance to them and to discuss the way they want to be supported by Villa Maria. In other words, it gives people an opportunity to 'have a say'.

Lisa Dugdale, Manager of Disability Directions and Individualised Services, says, "What the Circle Network committee does is represent people from our services. They act as their advocates."



Having a say

Making a valuable contribution to Villa Maria are Circle Network Committee members Adam, Paul and Gena.

"They chair the meetings so they're responsible for the running of them and what happens there."

The strength and passion of the committee members is evident by their dedication to the meetings, their participation as guest speakers at conferences, forums and information nights, as well as their eagerness to invite staff members from different areas of Villa Maria to present at their meetings so they can get to know them and what they do.

Gena says about speaking in front of the large 'Having a Say' conference audience, "I'd never spoken at anything like that before and I was so nervous. But it was great, they loved us! We told them about what it was like being on the committee."

Paul agreed, "The audience was fantastic, a lot of good vibes there. It was a good success for us."

"We met lots of people and made some friends. I have very good memories of the conference."

Lisa Dugdale says, "Adam, Gena and Paul have all said the conference has really strengthened their confidence in public speaking and also in talking about their issues."

Gena, Paul and Adam's conference presentation included a video to introduce the other committee members who could not make it to Geelong. The video was a hit and together with Gena, Paul and Adam's brilliant telling of the Circle Network story, they have received further presentation invitations.

Villa Education Services

Education Services at Villa Maria aims to provide children and families with a safe and supportive environment where they can access educational pathways and developmental and therapy services to enable them to reach their full potential within a caring community.

Education Services at Villa Maria includes primary and secondary education through St Paul's College, as well as a range of early childhood services. St Paul's College offers a Bridging Program and a comprehensive educational and therapy program for students with disabilities and developmental delays aged five to 18.

Early childhood services provide a range of educational, therapeutic and community services for young children (0-6 years) with additional needs and their families and include an Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS), the Helping Children with Autism Program and an Occasional Care Service.

St Paul's College

There are many transition points during a child's school life – from entry to prep, to primary, to secondary, to young adulthood and post-school activity. Our person centered approach focuses on the

many transition points experienced by students and their families. Staff worked closely with the students and their families to enable these transitions to be as seamless as possible. Many of our prep students transfer from Villa Maria's Early Childhood Intervention Service which is also on the Kew campus, thus enabling staff from the college and ECIS to work together to achieve successful outcomes for each student.

During the year, St Paul's expanded its role in supporting students and local schools where students have dual enrolment. Part of this service includes our highly successful Bridging Program where we offer a year of additional preparation for entry into prep for students with a disability or developmental delay, which affects their learning.

We consolidated the comprehensive transition program established in 2008 for students in their last two years of schooling. These senior students have the opportunity to undertake supervised external work experience, which this year was undertaken at Salvo Stores. The experience they gain assists students to develop good work habits including focus, independence, sequencing and task completion, as well as specific task-related skills.

Promoting community connection and interaction is an integral part of the St Paul's program and philosophy. Highlights of our college year included the Parents and Friends dinner and the highly enjoyable college social, jointly hosted by the students of Xavier College, Burke Hall. Our students also participated in the local Kew Festival, which this year featured an indigenous art theme.

The spiritual dimension is important at St Paul's. We are a faith community built on love and welcoming and respecting children and families of all faiths. We celebrated the Feast of St Paul (our college patron) and held our Christmas Celebration Mass.

Providing a physical environment which promotes student independence, interaction, learning and wellbeing is an ongoing priority. We were delighted to receive funding from the Federal Government's Building the Education Revolution program (BER). We obtained \$50,000 from the National School Pride component for a variety of works to improve accessibility, safety and maintenance and received \$250,000 from the Primary Schools for the 21st Century component for the refurbishment of our Living Skills facilities.

We were able to install a Liberty Swing through donations from the Newsboys Foundation and The Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund. The Liberty Swing enables students in wheelchairs to experience the many therapeutic benefits of movement.

As a result of significant donations from Catholic Capital Grants, Blake Dawson, Helen MacPherson Smith Trust, Scobie & Claire Mackinnon Trust, Jack Brockhoff Foundation and the James F Roche Trust, we were able to complete major refurbishments to the swimming pool resulting in extensions and upgrades to the change rooms, pool deck and interior.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) continues to be a focus at St Paul's, with significant investment in hardware and software and professional development undertaken this year.

As a result of a generous grant from the Leslie Eric Paddle Trust Fund, we were able to purchase two interactive whiteboards. By drawing directly onto these whiteboards with their fingers at eye level, students are able to improve their hand-eye coordination, fine motor coordination and reduce the frustration they experience when trying to use a pencil or crayon to write, or a mouse to control the computer.

Early childhood

The key aim of Villa Maria's Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) is to offer sustainable, high quality services and programs for children and families. This year we increased service delivery in the Northern Metropolitan Region. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development allocated 23 additional places, which together with 52 places from the Eastern Metropolitan Region, increased our service delivery to 75 places. A number of these places are designated for children from the City of Yarra, where many of the families are recent arrivals from Africa and Asia. As a result, we have seen an increase in the number of people we support from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We have established a close relationship with the City of Yarra and commenced weekly sessions at the Collingwood Neighbourhood Centre.

This year we successfully applied to become a member of the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs' ECIS Provider Panel for the Helping Children with Autism Program. The program follows a brokerage model where families receive funding and use it to obtain services from panel providers. Our inclusion on this panel has increased our services to families.

An integral part of the program at St Paul's College is to connect students with the world and with each other to expand each student's experience of who they are. Learning at St Paul's is also immersed in activity, in relating, in experience and in feelings.

There is great excitement at St Paul's every Friday afternoon as the senior students depart for their regular bowling session with the Year 8 boys of Xavier College's Burke Hall at the ten-pin bowling centre in Victoria Gardens.

"They really look forward to it," says Hygenia Lobo, St Paul's Secondary Level Coordinator. "They love to play bowls with their Burke Hall friends."

"I just really enjoy it," says Jack Anderson, Xavier College Year 8 student. "It gives you a great feeling when you see children with life changing disabilities just enjoying themselves."

"Getting all those Hi 5's and some of them can't give a Hi 5, but there's a big smile that comes over their face. They remember you and they're happy to see you and that's great."

Burke Hall students are assigned to each lane where they assist any St Paul's students who require assistance with their bowling. They also help with getting people on and off the bus.

"One of my jobs is to put into practice what we truly believe," says Peter Ryan, Youth Minister at Xavier College's Centre of Faith and Service. "To use the attributes and talents we've got to help others achieve their talents and achieve as much as they can."



Friendship & understanding

Strike! Xavier College and St Paul's students enjoy their bowling sessions.

"We are also involved with St Paul's in other ways," says Peter Ryan. "We contribute choirs to the Masses at St Paul's with boys from Years 5 to 8 and our Year 7 boys attend and assist at St Paul's annual social in September."

"After the social, the boys will remark on how enthusiastic and happy the St Paul's boys and girls are. They get a lot out of talking with them and mixing with them."

"Initially, some of the boys find it a bit confronting seeing the children. It's a learning process and they develop awareness. Then they just find it fabulous and enjoy the interactions."

Hygenia Lobo says the bowling program breaks down barriers for the mainstream students and helps the St Paul's students. "This has been such a successful program. It helps our students with their socialisation and communication. It gives them more confidence when meeting new people and going to new surroundings."

"For a moment we adults can step back and they've got young people, their peers, to share a joke with or discuss footy or movies with."

"Bowling is an activity that the mainstream students can enjoy and relate to. They see that our students can do as much as they can do, but they do it differently."

Fifteen year old Jack Anderson says, "They are just really nice people trying to have a good time. It keeps bringing me back because we all have a good time."

The Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) enables families to work together with specialist staff to enhance the development of their children in early childhood. It also aims to empower families to access the wider community and to extend their friendship and support networks.

The Sunday Fathers Group is a program that caters to fathers who are often in full-time employment and unavailable during weekdays. The group started in 2008 and meets on a Sunday morning once a month for a session in the pool with their children.

"It provides personal time, personal bonding with your child," says Shane, father of a three year old girl, who has attended since the program began.

"The social interaction is good for the children and the dads too," says Ross, the father of five year old twin boys, who began attending a few months ago.

Anne Muir, Manager of ECIS, says, "This group provides an opportunity for peer support for fathers and an opportunity for bonding experiences with their children. It also gives them ideas for activities they can do with their child within the general community."

"For us, the family is the client and we provide a wide range of family-centred programs for all family members."

"We aim to equip the families with the skills, knowledge and support they need to optimise the full participation of both themselves and their children in their local community."



Time for fathers & children

Fun in the Villa Maria pool for Neil and his son Noah.

The fathers appreciate and feel supported by the staff who facilitate this session on a weekend. They also enjoy the fun aspect of it.

"My boys started slowly with the water but they're both very comfortable with it now," says Ross. "They're more confident and love splashing around in the warm water. It's great fun!"

After an hour in the pool, ECIS staff provide a pizza lunch for the dads and the children.

"It gives us a chance to chat and for the children to play," says Ross. "You can have some in-depth conversations and it's a chance for dads to share challenges they have with their kids."

"Dads are not normally as gregarious as mums," says Shane. "It's good to have a chat with the other fathers."

"Another good thing about this group is that normally you go to an ECIS group where the children have a roughly similar level of development."

"This group has children from a range of developmental ages so you see different people and more of what Villa Maria ECIS does."

Villa Community Services

Adopting a flexible and innovative approach to finding individual solutions for people is a key element in Villa Maria's delivery of community services. These services include carer respite and support services; information and referral; care packages; care coordination and brokerage; rehabilitation; dementia respite and day programs.

All of these services and programs are designed to support older people, people with a disability and their carers to remain active and connected in their community and supported in their choice to age in place at home.

Demand for Villa Maria's community services continues to be high, with our highly skilled and committed Community Services team providing care and support to over 4,000 people this year.

New places

To meet current and ongoing demand, Villa Maria actively sought to expand its services across the state.

- Villa Maria successfully obtained funding in the 2008-09 Aged Care

Approvals Round to establish a new respite service (flexible in-home and community based) in Victoria's Western region;

- we expanded our regional coverage into the Riverina region of New South Wales with the grant of new Community Aged Care Packages;
- we broadened our available services in the Hume region (Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) – Dementia packages), Loddon Mallee region (EACH) and Eastern region (EACH-D); and
- we obtained funding from the ACHA (Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged) program to expand into the Yarra Ranges and Maroondah local government areas.

Villa Maria continues to be one of the largest providers of community care packages in Victoria, with 780 Community Aged Care Packages, 30 EACH (Extended Aged Care at Home) and nine EACH – Dementia Packages.

The expansion of Villa Maria's Community Services programs into rural areas has been particularly beneficial in assisting carers who are dealing with the impact of the drought in addition to issues of social isolation and limited resources.

New spaces

Villa Maria officially opened a new office in Brandon Park, Glen Waverley for Eastern Community Services in November 2008, bringing together the Inner Eastern (Kew) and Outer Eastern (Wantirna) services. The Eastern Community Services team now provides the whole spectrum of community services.

Southern Community Services relocated from Frankston to Dandenong in March 2009 and after restructuring to include Gippsland programs and Avebury House, is now known as South East Community Services.

Avebury House – a day recreational program that caters to the frail aged and people with dementia (including young onset dementia) – celebrated its third anniversary after moving to South East Community Services.

Community partnerships

'Celebrating Life through the Arts,' was a pilot project between Villa Maria, Frankston Arts Access, Chisholm Institute and the Brotherhood of St Laurence, conducted at Cube 37 Gallery between May and August 2008.

This project recognised the tremendous value of the creative arts in improving the mental health and wellbeing of older people. It moved reminiscence programs beyond their traditional settings of the home, day centre and residential care facility to an arts-based setting that enabled people to be involved in a creative arts space where they could experience a number of exhibitions and meet artists through their work.

The weekly reminiscence, journal and scrapbooking sessions enabled participants to complete their own life story books. It also increased social inclusion opportunities, fostered relationships, celebrated people's differences and provided a sense of pride and accomplishment for the participants.

The Aged Migrant Connections Project in north eastern Victoria strengthens the relationship between people from multicultural communities and aged care services. A number of federal, state and local organisations, including Villa Maria, are involved in this initiative of the North East Multicultural Association (NEMA).

Cultural Peer Facilitators from NEMA, who are active members of their local culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD), as well as the general community, received training and information from local services providers including Villa Maria. Topics included respite and social support, residential care and home-based health care. This partnership has led to a significant increase in referrals to Villa Maria services from under-served CALD communities.

Victorian bushfire response

The Villa Maria community was saddened by the terrible loss of life and destruction caused by the Victorian bushfires of February 2009.

Our Northern Victoria Community Services team responded immediately providing various forms of support, including Case Managers, to clients and carers in devastated areas. Other parts of the Community Services and Villa Maria network also provided support. In addition, two Villa Maria staff members who are CFA volunteers, carried all our good wishes and prayers as they worked with their fire brigades to control the fires.

The disaster brought an outpouring of support from the entire Australian community. Staff donated individually to support people affected by the disaster and also through the Villa Maria Staff Giving Program.

In recent months mobility scooters and the safety of their users has been the subject of discussion and ongoing review by the media, government and the aged care sector. Yet for the users of these scooters, they represent an opportunity to maintain active and independent lifestyles.

In mid 2007, June, a Community Care Package client in Ballarat asked her Villa Maria Case Manager to help her establish a Scooter Club. Seeing the social, educational and safety benefits of such an initiative, Villa Maria was more than happy to assist June in her endeavour. Nearly two years later the club has around 13 members who meet on a monthly basis.

June says, "I used to see people ride by on their scooters in the shopping centre but didn't know anyone who had one. I thought it would be good to have a group so we could support each other and also have a bit of fun together."

The Scooter Club is a not-for-profit club that offers friendship, social opportunities and interaction with fellow scooter users. Members range in age from their thirties to eighties. Partners and carers are welcome to attend, as are people who use other mobility aids such as wheelchairs or walking frames.

"Ten years ago, we'd be housebound, now we can go out and about," says Kelvin, another member of the club. "Some of the members were afraid to go far on their scooters but as a group we can explore more and have fun too."

"We share our problems and offer each other support and encouragement," says June.



Wheels in motion

Scooter Club members regularly get together with Villa Maria Community Services Team Leader, Leonie Mills (second from left).

The Scooter Club also gives members the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns, problem solve and address any other issues pertaining to scooter and wheelchair usage.

Since the club's inception, they have welcomed a range of guest speakers to the group including Davis Bus Lines, CFA, RACV and Maxi Taxi.

"We learn a lot from our speakers. We now know that Davis Bus Lines has

disability access and the best way to get on and off the bus in a scooter. The CFA discussed emergency and rescue operation procedures with us and the RACV talked about roadside assistance for scooter users," said Kelvin.

"We talk to others about our issues as scooter users," says June. "However, it's also about educating scooter users that they have responsibilities too about using shared spaces."

In 2008 the club successfully obtained a Community Development Grant to enable it to fund group activities.

"There aren't any other scooter clubs, as far as I know," says June. "We hope others can spring up in the future and we're prepared to give them advice and help."

Villa Residential Services

“How does one begin to thank you all for the outstanding care showered upon all residents... The nursing care, the love, the joy, the encouragement, total respect and dignity is a credit to you all...it is reassuring to know that such wonderful and sensitive staff are there for people when they most need it.”

(Jenny, friend of Villa O’Neill resident)

Villa Maria’s Residential Services team has an absolute commitment to providing the highest standards of residential aged care. Operating 305 beds – high/ low care, dementia specific and respite – all Villa Maria aged care residences in Berwick, Bundoora, Prahran and Wantirna, again achieved the full three-year accreditation period and 100 per cent compliance with the aged care standards.

The Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency assessors were impressed by the systems, documentation and especially the exemplary care delivered by Villa Maria staff. They noted how staff

spoke of residents as if they were family; remarked on how person centred care shone through; and commented that residents’ specialised nursing care needs, especially pain management, were extremely well managed with issues always followed up.

Villa Maria is constantly striving to improve resident amenity, safety and wellbeing and applying evidence-based research and best practice to achieve this outcome. During the year we entered into research partnerships with Deakin University and Yooralla to look at web technology and assistive technologies respectively and how they can be effectively utilised in a residential aged care setting. We look forward to applying the results of the research when the studies are complete.

Villa Maria Wantirna

With progress comes change. Villa Maria’s exciting redevelopment of its Wantirna site necessitated the December closure of the 50-bed hostel and the redeployment, redundancy and retirement of some long-standing staff members.

A special event was held in December to celebrate Wantirna’s past, present and future. It was an opportunity to pay tribute to the staff and volunteers who have worked at the site and to acknowledge the wonderful team effort and the careful planning that ensured the smooth closure of the hostel and the successful transition of residents to a facility of their choice, with most residents choosing to move to Villa Maria Bundoora.

The closure of the hostel opens the way for Stage 1 of the redevelopment to commence; the nursing home and all

other community services on-site continue to operate as normal. Knox City Council unanimously approved Villa Maria’s planning application in April 2009, however a number of issues with Vic Roads are currently being worked through before construction can commence.

Ultimately, the development will provide a 96-bed residential aged care facility offering ageing in place and extra services facilities amidst a community hub with independent living apartments, extensive community facilities and day services.

Home improvements

Villa Maria invested in significant capital works and improvements across its residential services during the year. Considerable works at Bundoora, including new floors, internal and external painting, the installation of new blinds and concrete paths around the residence, enabled the facility to reach full service capacity.

Villa Maria Berwick had new flooring and new curtains installed throughout, giving it a fresh new look, while Villa O’Neill renovated a spare area into bedroom space for two residents, upgraded the air-conditioning and put in new floors and blinds.

The Estate of the Late Irene E. Reid Trust provided funds towards a multi-sensory room at Villa O’Neill to make a big difference to the lives of the people who live there.

New palliative care wing

A 16-bed palliation wing is being created at Berwick to provide specialised palliative care to individuals and support to their families. With well-trained and

experienced staff on hand, Villa Maria Berwick works closely with family and medical personnel to ensure a person’s wishes, dignity, comfort and clinical needs are met. Further support for residents, families and carers is provided through volunteers trained in palliative support and through our pastoral care team.

Enhancing emotional and physical wellbeing

Villa Maria Berwick introduced an innovative project aimed at enhancing the emotional and physical wellbeing of residents.

The project featured music therapy, relaxation techniques and Mandalas – circular designs and symbols drawn for many centuries by people from differing cultures and beliefs. Apart from their use in religious practices, Mandalas have significant psychological dimensions, promoting reflection, healing and personal growth.

Initially, the program was offered to residents experiencing isolation, anxiety and depression, with a weekly group session of relaxation, music and imagery, group discussion and Mandala.

As the program progressed, many surprising results were clearly evident in relation to resident interaction with their friends, staff and family and their physical wellbeing. At the end of the program, residents expressed feelings of greater happiness and peace and a significant number thereafter used measurably less medication such as PRN analgesia and anti-anxiety PRN.

We have initiated a research project to identify the effects of this innovative program across a range of wellbeing measures.

Villa Maria's Residential Services team wanted to organise a fun, life affirming event that would promote community connection among residents, their families and staff, while creating opportunities for enjoyable activities and friendships to develop. With this aim in mind, the Progressive Spring Festival emerged.

Held over four days in October 2008, each of the homes arranged their own function and invited people from other Villa Maria residences and programs to attend.

Villa O'Neill kicked off the celebration with a 'Make and Take' day of craft activities.

Jo Bozin, Activities Coordinator for Villa O'Neill says: "Our theme was 'Make and Take' and our guests certainly did. In one area, we offered card and paper making activities, in another, a veritable smorgasbord of beads and findings to create an original piece of jewellery, but the most popular proved to be designing your own cup-cake. All our guests were offered a show bag to carry their treasures home, but I believe that not all the cup-cakes made it that far! The residents were very excited to host such a fun day and are still wearing the jewellery made amongst friends."

Villa Maria Wantirna's 'Food for Spirit and Body' featured a moving memorial service followed by a delicious BBQ lunch and entertainment from the local primary school, while Villa Maria Bundoora chose 'Bundoora Show Day' as their theme.

"As we drove into Bundoora, we could hear the music and festival atmosphere even before we got out of the bus. There were animals, musicians and the smell of the BBQ cooking was very inviting. We sat outside in the sunshine and were entertained by the Parade College students," said Jo Bozin.



Fun & friendship

Activities Coordinator Jo Bozin (centre) with O'Neill residents, Danica and Franc, making the most of the Progressive Spring Festival.

Villa Maria Berwick held 'Halloween at Berwick' as their day fell on 31 October. Guests wore fancy dress and the residence was decorated accordingly. There was spooky music, Halloween decorated cup-cakes and a witch handing out lollies from a black cauldron.

Jo described the day as colourful, fun and scary! "Four of our residents dressed for the occasion and joined staff in a memorable day with the residents at Berwick. We were welcomed by ghouls and witches offering us 'eye of newt' as light refreshment. The decorations were

great and everyone really felt as though they'd stepped into a different world."

Julianne Cooper, Activities Coordinator for Bundoora says: "The festival was a lot of fun and the families enjoyed it as much as the residents."

Marija, whose mother is at Villa O'Neill, says: "My mother had the best time ever. The day was sunny, and the atmosphere was happy and colourful. There were people enjoying the day all around us, making jewellery, greeting cards, and icing cakes. It must have taken so much

organising to make such a successful day for our families. It is beautiful that we are provided with the opportunity to do such wonderful things with our mothers, and we see how much they appreciate what is done for them here."

"This was just one of the many special memories that I will always have of my mum at Villa O'Neill. We both look forward to seeing what excitement next year's Spring Festival will hold for us all."

Villa People Services

The People Services team at Villa Maria provides a comprehensive range of support services across the organisation, including human resources, payroll, learning and development, health, safety and wellbeing, volunteer resources, community connections and pastoral care.

Despite the global recession of the past year, there continued to be shortages of skilled staff in the Australian aged, community care and disability services sectors coupled with increasing consumer demand for these specialist services.

An explanation for this is the changing demography of the Australian population. According to social trends data produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there were five working age people (15-64 years) for every older person (65+ years) in 2007, but by 2056 there will be less than three working age people for every older person.

The People Services team adopted a range of innovative and creative workforce strategies to deal with this challenge and to attract and retain staff. As a values-led organisation, it is a priority that Villa Maria's 950 staff and 300

volunteers feel engaged, supported and closely aligned to the organisation's vision, mission and values.

Attracting good staff and ensuring they live these values is a balance that needs to be achieved and Villa Maria has in place a culture that enables this to happen.

Villa Maria has completely reframed 'training' to create a learning and development culture where education and skills opportunities are embraced and career development is achievable.

Our aim is to ensure staff enjoy a challenging and fulfilling long term career, where they can see the difference they make to people's lives each and every day.

Fair and flexible employer

Villa Maria was one of 16 employers to receive a Fair and Flexible Employer Award from the Victorian Government in June 2009.

The awards recognise employers who have developed and implemented innovative programs that lead the way when it comes to providing a healthy work and life balance for their employees.

With a commitment to fairness and equity, Villa Maria has implemented a range of flexible work arrangements to help staff balance the changing demands of their work and personal life. These include: 48/52 leave arrangements, flexible hours, working from home, job share, part-time hours, carers leave, combined leave entitlements, six weeks paid maternity leave and phased return to work.

These practices have resulted in improved performance and productivity and increased Villa Maria's capacity to attract and retain staff.

Creative recruitment

While the great diversity of services at Villa Maria means there is much to offer potential recruits and existing staff, a competitive labour market still requires the development of creative recruitment strategies.

In response, Villa Maria developed a unique assessment centre approach utilising group recruitment techniques. This selection process has enabled Villa Maria to successfully recruit for attitude and values and train for skill in entry level roles. It has proven to be a timely and inexpensive selection process reaping outstanding results. Over the past 18 months, six group recruitment sessions have led to 90 new staff (representing Gen Y to Boomers), to be employed within Villa Maria's Disability Services casual workforce.

Darren Mannix, Manager HR & Learning, and Liz Ely, General Manager Disability Services, were invited to give a presentation on this successful recruitment process at the National Disability Services Conference in Hobart in May 2009.

Safety is no accident

Over the past year, Villa Maria has developed and implemented an innovative health, safety and wellbeing framework in order to create a systemic and sustainable safety culture.

Villa Maria's values provide the foundation for the organisation's Health Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan which is premised on the view that compassion does not cost, compassion reduces cost.

Taking a top down approach, the action plan engaged the Board and Executive to prioritise and resource OHS strategies, to review injury statistics and to provide quick and targeted action. A 'caring for employees' approach was mandated, with comprehensive induction, training and wellbeing programs introduced.

As a result, Villa Maria has reduced injuries through an innovative and collaborative return to work program; reduced insurance premiums through risk management and continuous education and training of management and staff; and provided information, support and confidence to staff to be part of the big picture, assisting the organisation to move towards an injury prevention approach and a culture of safety and wellness.

Ongoing learning and career development is part of the Villa Maria culture. Villa Maria's Learning and Development team assists staff with their professional development and training needs in a range of programs and services and in frontline management.

Lisa Robinson is a Senior Case Manager with the Villa Maria Carer Support Program. For Lisa, having opportunities to learn, to be challenged and to develop professionally is extremely important.

"Villa Maria has a lot to offer staff that keeps us interested and satisfied. Twenty managers, including me, are currently on a one-year RMIT Diploma of Management course. Not only am I finding out better ways to work and manage from across this organisation, but I am learning from other organisations too."

In 2009, Villa Maria, in partnership with RMIT University, offered Lisa and other first level managers the opportunity to undertake a Diploma of Management course to develop their management skills. In addition to offering industry recognised qualifications, the course is specifically designed for the Villa Maria context in which Lisa and her colleagues work.

Darren Mannix, Manager of HR and Learning explains, "Partnering with RMIT for the Diploma of Management course is a great opportunity for staff to further develop their management skills. There is a good cross-section of our staff undertaking this course and it gives them the opportunity to get peer support in their managerial roles."



RMIT Diploma of Management

Villa Maria staff members Leonie Mills, Lisa Robinson, Deb Cook and David Caruana take up the diploma challenge.

The program provides students with a unique insight into leadership and management roles at Villa Maria through the sharing of knowledge and experience with other students, interaction with experts from various areas of RMIT and Villa Maria and development in a range of critical skills.

Tony Graham, RMIT University Course Facilitator, says: "This course is a validation of their existing skills with the opportunity to measure their skills against national

standards and then build on that. They also gain a greater knowledge of their own organisation."

"The broader skills areas for them are managing systems, managing people in those systems and managing self in relation to both."

"We encourage students to also think about the broader issues of the organisation and the governance environment in which they work in."

The course features workshops to provide an opportunity for discussion and reflection on a range of topics; work-based projects enabling students to apply concepts and theory to develop solutions to a real work problem or activity; and a 'blackboard' – a website forum for students to discuss issues and themes.

The students will graduate at the end of the year and will present their projects to Villa Maria at a special session.

Villa Community Involvement

“Volunteering has broadened my outlook on life. It has made me aware of how rewarding giving up a little time can be. I love being a volunteer, my circle of friends is unending.”

(Maureen, volunteer at Villa Maria Berwick)

Volunteering is embedded in Villa Maria's very foundations. Founded by Louisa Fawcner and a band of volunteers in 1907, this tradition of volunteering continues today with 300 volunteers generously offering their time and talents to support the Villa Maria community.

About half of our volunteers are aged from 55-74 years. Some of our volunteers are retired and some are part-time workers. Some are students or people new to the country, gaining invaluable experience through community activities.

Villa Maria volunteers contribute, on average, three hours per week of their time. They contribute in the main, by offering social opportunities to people who use our services. They act as activity assistants, assist with outings and participate in social visiting across our programs including Gateway, residential aged care and community services and operate our Opportunity Shops. At St Paul's and the Early Childhood Intervention Service they assist teachers and children in classroom activities and in art-related activities.

When asked, Villa Maria volunteers and donors usually express the belief that all people deserve to live life to the fullest. Their values and beliefs often lead them to make a contribution. By sharing their time, experiences, skills or resources, they help empower other people and in the process, gain enormously from the social interaction themselves.

Hampers bring forth Christmas spirit

At the end of 2008, we were witnessing the most turbulent economic times since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Every year, Villa Maria provides Christmas hampers for the most disadvantaged people receiving services from us. In 2007, we packed and distributed 258 hampers for people living in metropolitan and regional Victoria. In 2008, the number of eligible people jumped to 345.

The big jump in the number of people needing hampers meant there would not be enough money to provide one for everyone. In challenging times, it seemed

more important than ever to try and provide Christmas hampers for as many people as possible.

Through the support of Radio 3AW's Drive program we were able to appeal to listeners for help. Businesses and individuals immediately responded with goods for the hampers or money to buy them. Others offered to deliver them for us. We succeeded in supplying a hamper to all the people who needed one.

There is no doubt that community support is vital if we are to succeed in making a positive difference to people's lives. The involvement of the broader community helps us to achieve our goal of building inclusive, sustainable and compassionate communities.

Community connections

“Thank you for giving me my life back,” said a participant of Villa Maria's Community Connections Program.

This rural participant had been caring for her husband 24 hours a day, was extremely isolated and did not have a life of her own. As a result of her participation in this innovative program, she realised the importance of maintaining quality of life for herself as well as her husband.

Community Connections brought together people caring for a loved one or seeking information about available services. They learned from one another's experiences and went on to form on-going support networks with other carers.

Villa Maria funded this program as it saw the value of a person centred, flexible approach that included eight-week group workshops and peer facilitators backed up by professional support and resources. This program operated across the organisation in both rural and metro settings and gave participants enhanced independence and a greater sense of control and social connectedness.

Vital support

Each year, we witness the generosity of our supporters. People who take it upon themselves to host a fundraising dinner in their home, organise fundraising at their golf club, arrange a charity auction or bid at one. Who can forget the outpouring of community support for people affected by the Victorian bushfires? In difficult times, people seemed determined to help, however they could.

Sir Winston Churchill once said, *“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life from what we give.”*

This past year has been tough for many, especially those on the margins of society. Many challenges, such as an ageing population, lie ahead of us. As we work to make the changes and improvements we need to face the future, we are grateful for the involvement and support of so many generous individuals and organisations in our community.

At Villa Maria, we greatly value all of our volunteers for their wonderful generosity of spirit and the time they freely give to make a difference in their community. Bob Martin, a finalist in the Aged & Community Care Victoria (ACCV) Awards for Excellence, 2009 Volunteer Award, is one such volunteer who makes a valued contribution to our work.

Bob volunteers at Villa Maria's Gateway Services Mount Waverley, a day service providing social and recreational opportunities to support people with an intellectual disability, an acquired brain injury or a physical disability. Since October 2001, Bob has attended Gateway every Tuesday and Thursday.

In his role as an Activities Assistant, Bob helps support an all day swimming program on a Tuesday and on Thursday's he helps support a bowling program (league) in the morning and then in the afternoon, assists with a sports program or computer work. That's his official volunteer role. However, Bob does so much more.

Caz Wantrych, Instructor, Gateway Mount Waverley, says: "Bob is a big part of our history, it's impossible to think about who we are and where we came from without thinking of Bob."

"He's been there to help celebrate birthdays, to go to parties and dance 'til the wee hours of the morning. There have been shopping trips in preparation for Christmas festivities. Lunches out, days spent exploring new places, days at the Grand Prix, art galleries, exhibitions, the list is endless."



A treasured gift

Volunteer Bob Martin and Drew share a joke and their computer skills.

Bob spent his entire career in the aviation industry starting with the Air Force then the Civil Aviation Authority and Air Services Australia. After retirement, he looked for volunteering opportunities.

Bob says, "I saw an advertisement for volunteers for Villa Maria about eight years ago and applied. I started with Gateway Hawthorn which is now Gateway Mount Waverley."

"The clients amazed me and continue to amaze me. They always smile and you never hear them complain. We have a bit of fun together. You build trust as you go on."

"The staff have been tremendous, they're so dedicated. You make some good friends and it is like a family."

"Villa Maria is good to volunteers and looks after us well."

Kevin Bond, Team Leader at Gateway Mount Waverley says: "Bob's ability to interact with everyone at all levels and to know just how to spend time with people, is inspiring. He never seems to tire and is always happy to stop and listen or share his sense of humour which is always well measured, timely and inclusive of all...his gift to make each and everyone feel valued is a joy to watch."

Villa Governance

Villa Maria is governed by an honorary Board of Directors with a diverse range of skills and experience. There were 12 independent non-executive Directors in office during the year ended 30 June 2009.

The Board was delighted to welcome new director, Mr Richard Gray and gratefully acknowledges the contribution of resigned Directors Mr Tim Daly, Mr Paul Rizzo and Mr Ian McEachern.

The Board is responsible for establishing the strategic direction of the organisation, identifying and managing key risks and monitoring compliance and organisational performance.

Committed to the highest standards of corporate governance and transparency, the Board undertook an internal governance review and actively pursued the work of the following Board Committees: Board Executive; Audit & Risk; Finance & Information Technology; and Strategic & Proposed Developments.

We are extremely grateful to the Board of Directors for their wise stewardship, commitment and the contribution they make to Villa Maria and the community.



Board of Directors

Seated:
Dr Angela Atkin
President
Health/Aged Care/Disability

Peter Walsh
Housing/Community Service

Standing from left:
Richard Gray
Disability/Aged Care

Br Brian Brandon
Education/Property/Finance

Lynette Elford
Marketing/Journalism

Brian Barry
Banking/Finance

Peter Hogan
Vice President
Finance/Strategic Planning

Jenny McAllister
Advocacy/Disability

Absent:
Donna Howlett
Vice President
Health/Business Management

Villa Management

Executive Leadership Management Team

Front row from left to right:

Rebecca Ryan
Executive Manager – Marketing

Valerie Lyons
Chief Executive Officer

Cheril Dewhirst
Executive Manager – Education Services/
Principal, St Paul's College

Carolyn McColl
General Manager – Residential Services

Centre row
Liz Ely
General Manager – Disability Services

Anne Muir
Manager – Early Childhood Intervention
Service

Back row
Graeme Wickenden
Chief Financial Officer / General Man-
ager
– Business Services

Beryl Raufer
Acting Deputy CEO / General Manager
– Community Services

Gaye MacInnes
Company Secretary / Executive Assistant

Russel Chesler
General Manager – Projects &
Development

Helen McPhee
General Manager – People Services

Kay Miller
Executive Manager – Service Integration

Absent:
Shaheen Evans
Executive Manager – Planning &
Research

Janis Klavins
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Villa Maria's capacity to provide quality, innovative disability, education and senior services that empower and enrich individuals and communities is only possible through the skill and dedication of our staff and volunteers.

Their willingness to push the boundaries, to act with compassion, accountability, respect and courage is inspiring.

Together, they have provided care and support options to 5,000 people. We thank each of them for their ongoing commitment and their community leadership.



Senior Leadership Teams

Business Services

Lachlan Bakewell – Manager Business Solutions
Leanne Bell – Manager Finance
(from December 2008)
Cathi Johnston – Manager Systems Accounting
Eva Simo – Manager Finance (maternity leave
from October 2008)
Petra Smillie – Manager Purchasing & Facilities

Community Services

Suzanne Chamberlain – Regional Manager South
East Region
Jeremy McAuliffe – Regional Manager Eastern
Community Programs
Jane Reilly – Regional Manager Eastern
Community Care
Kerrie Reardon – Regional Manager Northern
Victoria Region
Damien Stones – Regional Manager Western
Victoria Region

Disability Services

Yopie Deurwaarder – Manager Service
Development & Transition
Lisa Dugdale – Manager Disability Directions &
Individualised Services
Max Lay – Manager Accommodation
& Gateway Services

Jeanne Poustie – Manager Respite
Sabrina Suhaid – Manager Accommodation

Education Services

Ann Welton – Acting Principal St Paul's College
(August 2008 – February 2009)

People Services

Toni Donia – Manager Payroll
Sue Ferguson – Manager Health Safety
& Wellbeing
Darren Mannix – Manager Human Resources
& Learning
Liz Scarfe – Manager Volunteering Resources

Projects & Development

Angela Roennfeldt – Design Manager

Residential Services

Louise Care – Centre Manager O'Neill
David MacDonald – Regional Manager
South-Eastern
Angelica Oyarzun – Centre Manager Bundoora
(until September 2009)
Tania Surgeoner – Manager Quality &
Documentation Systems
Edda Tandridge – Aged Care Social Worker

Villa Maria

Financial Performance

International financial and credit markets continued to negatively impact on Villa Maria's investment returns, in a year when substantial and much needed investment was directed towards rejuvenating the organisation's infrastructure. This juxtaposition of poor investment markets and essential capital investment in infrastructure has diluted Villa Maria's investment portfolio. However, the organisation ends the year with a strong and conservative Balance Sheet, reflecting the prudent financial governance of the Board and management. A Net Deficit of \$1.3m was reported for the 2008/09 year.

A change in Accounting Standards resulted in Villa Maria determining that movements in the valuation of its investments are more appropriately accounted for within the Balance Sheet, rather than reflecting these movements directly into the Income Statement, i.e. moving from a "held for trading" to an "available for sale" approach. For 2008/09, this policy change makes comparisons to prior years difficult. However, going forward, the readability of the Income Statement will be enhanced as impacts from financial markets (both favourably and unfavourably), will no longer be mixed in with operational financial reporting.

Our investments have continued to be externally managed by BDO Kendalls Wealth Management in accordance with our Investment Policy, which is inherently conservative in its approach. Table 1 shows the returns Villa Maria has achieved over the past five years.

Generally the portfolio has performed in line with the benchmarks set within the Investment Policy. In basic terms, the portfolio has been reduced by \$6.0m over 2008/09. The dual impacts of withdrawing funds to invest in Villa Maria's infrastructure, along with the fall in financial markets, accounts for this fall in the investment portfolio. During the year, \$3.8m was withdrawn from the portfolio to fund a range of key infrastructure requirements including the purchase of a Lysterfield property (proposed Carinya relocation), the major refurbishment of the Bundoora Aged Care Residence, the purchase of new buses and the purchase of information technology infrastructure.

Table 1

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	5-Year Return
Portfolio Value* - \$	15,104,420	20,071,6681	22,391,1481	20,462,172	14,387,294	
Annual Growth** - %	11.98	5.19	6.21	(8.92)	(12.36)	4.21

*Portfolio Value includes inflows and outflows of cash

Downward financial market movements accounted for the balance of the portfolio reduction.

Three major projects dominated the strategic developments for the year:

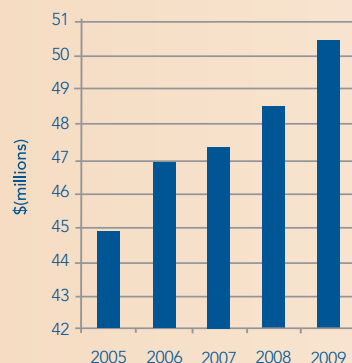
Wantirna Redevelopment. In preparation for the redevelopment of the site, the 50-bed low care facility was closed during the year, with the majority of the residents involved choosing to relocate to our refurbished Bundoora facility. Construction of Stage 1 of the redevelopment, including a 96-bed aged care facility and community and day service facilities, is anticipated to commence mid 2010.

'my future my choice' (Austin Street, Alphington Project). Work commenced on the construction of a 10-bed purpose built home for young people with complex care needs who are currently living in nursing homes. The project is progressing and it is anticipated building works will be completed early 2010.

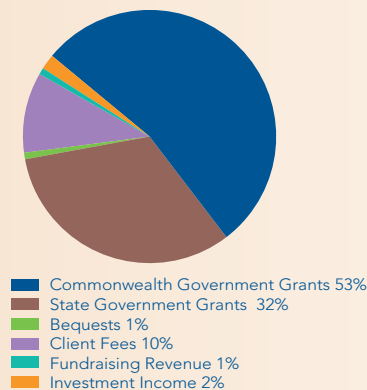
IT System Upgrades. During 2008/09 detailed specifications were developed for the selection of a new Client Management System (CMS), financial system and payroll system. Following a tender process the Epicor led consortium was selected for the CMS and financial component and Frontier was selected for the payroll solution. Detailed project planning is underway, with an estimated implementation of 18 to 24 months. In approving the project, the Villa Maria Board was cognisant of the need to improve existing systems to achieve operational efficiencies and to meet legislative requirements.

Villa Maria's Balance Sheet remains strong, having benefited from conservative but prudent fiscal management. Our liquidity position provides certainty that the organisation has the capacity to meet its current financial commitments, while the net asset position has remained relatively stable despite external financial pressures.

Five Year Operating Revenue Growth



Revenue Summary 2008/09



Five Year Financial Summary

	2005 \$000	2006 \$000	2007 \$000	2008 \$000	2009 \$000
Operational Services:					
Australian Government grants	26,052	26,849	26,868	26,492	28,230
State Government grants	13,690	14,998	15,233	16,658	16,959
Fees and other income	5,131	5,117	5,203	5,320	5,299
Total income	44,873	46,964	47,304	48,470	50,488
Expenditure	44,527	47,997	49,974	51,087	54,414
Operating surplus/(deficit)	346	(1,033)	(2,670)	(2,617)	(3,926)
Other Income and Expenses:					
Fundraising and public relations	492	440	244	565	1,510
Investments and sundry income	1,513	3,530	3,706	(2,261)	819
Abnormal items and capital grants	427	1,400	77	301	315
Total net other income	2,432	5,370	4,027	(1,395)	2,644
Total net surplus/(deficit)	2,778	4,337	1,357	(4,012)	(1,282)
Total Assets	39,970	55,392	57,282	116,944	108,055
Total Liabilities	10,226	9,671	10,203	13,123	13,911
Total Members' Funds	29,744	45,721	47,079	103,821	94,144

Villa

Acknowledgements

At Villa Maria, we truly value the support we receive from individuals and organisations. For over a century we have relied upon such generosity to provide our services to children and adults with a disability and to seniors. In the past year we have relied upon our supporters even more as the global recession has taken a toll on the finances of governments, businesses, charities and individuals alike.

We are grateful for the support of Government Ministers, Members of Parliament and members of local municipalities and for the funding we receive from governments at the Commonwealth, State and Local levels which enable us to run our much-needed programs and services.

We deeply appreciate the donors who responded magnificently to the needs of others in tough times and gave generously to our appeals. And we are grateful to the people who remembered us in their will or from whom we have received bequests; their valuable gift will make a difference to future generations and help us continue to serve the community.

The philanthropic community has, as ever, been a great source of ongoing support and we particularly wish to acknowledge the following benefactors:

Bell Charitable Fund
Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne
City of Casey
Collier Charitable Fund
Danks Trust
Estate of The Late Mrs I. E. Reid (Trust Company Limited)
Gandel Foundation
H A Payne Charitable Trust (Perpetual Trustees)
Harold Moreland Oldham Perpetual Trust (ANZ Trustees)
Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
Ida Maud Webster McDonald Perpetual Charitable Trust
Joe White Bequest
L. B. Halpin Charitable Trust (Trust Company Ltd)
Leo Hartnett Trust (Perpetual Trustees)
Leslie Eric Paddle Trust (Equity Trustees)
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
M. J. Polinelli Trust (Perpetual Trustees)
Muffin Foundation
Newsboys Foundation
Percy Baxter Charitable Trust (Perpetual Trustees)
Samuel Nissen Charitable Foundation (Perpetual Trustees)

Scobie and Claire MacKinnon Trust
Victor Russ Pittman Trust (Equity Trustees)
William Angliss (Vic) Charitable Fund
Winifred & John Webster Charitable Trust
Zig Inge Foundation

Est. Patrick J. Daley
Est. James F. Dewan
Est. Noreen A. Donoghue
Est. M. L. Jackson
Est. Lois M. Lawrence
Est. Lady Catherine Lienhop
Est. Beatrice M. Murphy
Est. Beryl Murphy

Our sincere thanks go to our corporate supporters, auxiliaries, community groups, service clubs and other funding bodies who have supported our work. We particularly wish to acknowledge the following:

Mrs Slavka Abraham
Bertocchi Smallgoods Pty Ltd
Blake Dawson
Greenacres Golf Club
Kew Golf Club
Nelson Alexander Pty Ltd
Radio 3AW
Royal Victorian Bowls Association
Seaford Masonic Lodge & the Board of Benevolence of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Victoria
SKF Australia Pty Ltd

Life Members

Mrs J Allen
Mr D Amato
Mr WJ Anderson
Mrs M Arnold
Dr A Atkin
Mrs M Banks
Mrs V Beck
Mr J Bolton
Mrs J Bonser
Ms O Brady
Br BJ Brandon
Mrs C Bryant
Mrs M Butts
Mr R Callinan
Mrs J Cheney
Mrs S Clayton
Lady P Connelly
Mr L Connolly*
Mrs L Cooper
Mrs V Davenport
Mrs M Davey
Mr L Davies
Mrs S Davis
Mrs P Day
Br G Develin+
Mrs M Dossetor OAM
Mrs Dunford
Mr B Dunne
Mr G Dyer
Mrs J Edwards
Ms L Elford
Mrs P Farrar
Mrs A Fitzpatrick
Mrs M Flowers
Mrs P Flynn
Mrs M Fyfe
Mrs B Garlepp
Mr F Gatt
Mrs C Gleeson
Mrs G Gray
Mrs M Greenway
Mrs B Grooby
Mrs R Hadden

Mrs F Hamilton
Miss E Hammond
Mrs AC Hansen*
Mr L Hardie
Mrs R Hardie
Mrs H Hardman
Mr F Hargrave AO
Mrs C Hart
Mr F Hawkins
Mrs J Hearn
Mrs L Hendricks*
Mrs D Henry
Mr J Henry
Ms E Hirsch
Mr S Hoerauf
Mrs M Hyden
Mrs M Jess
Mr J Jess
Mr W Jolley
Mrs B Kane
Mrs T Keeting
Mrs F Langford
Mr P Lesur*
Mr A Linossier
Mrs M Luxford
Mrs B MacPherson
Mr LD Mahoney
Mrs N May
Mrs L McLean
Mrs J McAllister
Mr I McEachern
Mr MJ McKernan*
Mrs A Miller
Mrs B Morgan
Mrs D Mulholland
Mrs H Munro
Br K Nangle
Mrs M O'Connor
Miss D O'Farrell*
Mrs I O'Hare
Mrs P Oldham
Mrs M Perkin

Mrs L Perkin
Mrs C Pickering
Mr C Raven*
Mrs P Reynolds
Mrs V Richardson
Mrs D Robinson
Mrs K Russell
Mr R Ryan
Mr B Ryan
Mrs K Ryan
Mr R Sharp
Mrs B Simpson
Mrs H Smart
Miss B Smith OAM
Mr P Smolka*
Ms A Sternad
Mrs B Story
Mrs R Sukker
Mr M Sullivan
Mrs F Switson
Mrs M Wall
Mr P Walsh
Mrs V Wells OAM
Mrs C White
Mr RJ Whiting
Miss M Williams
Dr B Worsam

*Admitted to Life Membership August 2009
+Emeritus Director

We acknowledge the passing of these Life Members:

Mr K Bryant
Dr W Howard
Mrs B Murphy
Mrs A O'Sullivan
Mr R Staniforth

Villa Service Directory

Disability Services

Gateway Services (Adult Day Options)

13 Fernhurst Grove, Kew 3101

T: (03) 9855 7888

535-537 High Street Road, Mount Waverley 3149

T: (03) 9803 0999

355 Stud Road, Wantirna South 3152

T: (03) 9800 7240

Lifestyle Services

All Metropolitan Regions

13 Fernhurst Grove, Kew 3101

T: (03) 9855 7628

Flexible Respite

Eastern Metropolitan Region

535-537 High Street Road, Mount Waverley 3149

T: (03) 9809 6820

Mature Choices Program

North and West Region

Case Management & Community Options

1424-1428 Plenty Road, Bundoora 3083

T: (03) 9466 9759

Overnight Respite – Adult

Heidelberg Heights

T: (03) 9854 5112

Overnight Respite – Children

Croydon, Kew, Lilydale, Wheelers Hill

T: (03) 9809 6820

Outer Encounters

Mt Evelyn

T: (03) 9809 6823

Shared Supported Accommodation

Bayswater

Braybrook

Bulleen

Camberwell

Cheltenham (2)

Endeavour Hills

Highett

Moorabbin

Nunawading

Taylors Lakes

Wantirna

T: (03) 9855 7616

Education Services

Early Childhood Intervention Service

13 Fernhurst Grove, Kew 3101

T: (03) 9855 7850

St Paul's College

13 Fernhurst Grove, Kew 3101

T: (03) 9855 7700

Residential Aged Care

Admissions

1300 845 526

Berwick

89-93 Avebury Drive, Berwick 3806

T: (03) 9796 2944

Bundoora

1424-1428 Plenty Road, Bundoora 3083

T: (03) 9467 9011

O'Neill

101 Lewisham Road North, Prahran 3181

T: (03) 9529 1059

Wantirna

355 Stud Road, Wantirna South 3152

T: (03) 9800 7220

Community Services

Eastern Community Services

1300 650 615 (24 hours)

Assistance with Care & Housing for the Aged
Carer Services

Carinya Dementia Services

Community Aged Care Packages

Extended Aged Care at Home Packages

Wantirna Community Rehabilitation Centre

White Road Adult Day Centre

Holiday Respite Accommodation

Level 1, Building 5, 540 Springvale Road,
Glen Waverley 3150

T: (03) 9538 4300

Northern Community Services

1300 650 615 (24 hours)

*Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre
Carer Services
Community Aged Care Packages
HACC Emergency Response Service
Kialla House Respite Service*

*Shop 7, 269 High Street, Golden Square,
Bendigo 3555
T: (03) 54 421 966*

*190 Benalla Road, Shepparton 3630
T: (03) 58 328 444*

*27-29 Faithfull Street, Wangaratta 3677
T: (03) 5722 9046*

South East Community Services

1300 650 615 (24 hours)

*Community Aged Care Packages (southern areas)
4/147-151 Foster Street, Dandenong 3175
T: (03) 9238 9600*

*Avebury House
Berwick
T: 9769 9248*

*Community Aged Care Packages (Gippsland)
226 York Street, Sale 3850
T: (03) 5143 6000*

Western Community Services

1300 650 615 (24 hours)

*Carer Respite
Community Aged Care Packages
Homefirst*

*57 Girdlestone Street, Ararat 3377
T: (03) 5352 2317*

*802 Armstrong Street North, Ballarat 3350
T: (03) 5331 2450*

*505 Raglan Parade, Warrnambool 3280
T: (03) 5560 3023*

Opportunity Shops

*6/14f Station Street, Bayswater 3153
T: (03) 9729 0986*

*184 Canterbury Road, Heathmont 3135
T: (03) 9729 3182*

*77 McLennan Street, Mooroopna 3629
T: (03) 5825 4971*

*348 Mountain Highway, Wantirna 3153
T: (03) 9729 2294*

Volunteering Resources

*13 Fernhurst Grove, Kew 3101
T: (03) 9855 7755*

Villa Maria Central Office

*6 Studley Park Road, Kew 3101
T: (03) 9855 7600*

compassion accountability respect courage

Villa

Villa Maria Society
Registered Office
6 Studley Park Road Kew Victoria 3101
Private Bag 20 Kew Victoria 3101

T: (03) 9855 7600
F: (03) 9855 7899
E: villamaria@villamaria.com.au

ABN 32 004 364 103