



Stawell's newest doctor awarded OAM

When Stawell Medical Centre's newest GP, Dr Christine Longman, learned she was one of 15 GPs to receive an award in the Australia Day honours in January, she was taken completely by surprise.

But those aware of her long list of selfless service to the community and the medical profession knew her Order of Australia Medal (OAM) was truly vindicated.

The quietly spoken doctor, who likes to be known simply as 'Chris', is not completely sure which of her achievements ensured her award but she has recently found out who nominated her.

"There are a few things my nominator would not know

about me and only a quarter of the things have been documented in the OAM bio," Chris said.

"I guess what stands out for me is more than 40 years of general practice in Yarraville but also my work with patients going through recovery from substance abuse."

After graduating from Monash University in 1979, Chris began work at Footscray's Western Hospital before moving into obstetrics at Williamstown Hospital. Not long after she started her partnership in the Yarraville clinic.

"I never worked full time at the clinic because I always allowed time to do a number of other jobs as well," she said.

A defining moment for Chris came around 1994 when there was a lot of drug use filtering into the western suburbs.

"I was struggling a bit with patient issues there, so I went to the local drug service and said 'look I don't know what's going on – please help me'.

"Their way of helping me was to give me a job one day a week working with those who were dependent on a range of substances but predominantly pregnant women.

"Following this, I was setting up programs for GPs in the Western Suburbs to try and help them work better with patients

Continued on page 2...

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...Continued from page 1

dealing with substance abuse. You can't just say 'stop using drugs' because it doesn't work like that."

Chris also spent 32 years working in GP training, of which a period was in charge of training practice accreditation and support in the western half of Victoria including Ballarat and Horsham.

She would train doctors to work in General Practice and she often volunteered her time to help doctors who were struggling to get through their exams.

In 2007 she wrote a Masters thesis on why GPs were reluctant

to prescribe opioid treatment to people with heroin issues. She interviewed a number of GPs and wrote the thesis and published several articles from it.

"I subsequently developed an interest in GP research and so I undertook a small study on the role of the practice managers in teaching our registrars."

Chris's choices through life have usually been for the best of reasons and her decision to work in Stawell is no exception. She started working part time at Stawell Medical Centre in January.

"I was asked to consider general practice at Stawell by Dr Andrew Horwood who works at the Alan

Wolff Medical Centre in Horsham. He asked if I would help out as a locum doctor, but I don't like being a locum because you don't form any long-term relationships with your patients.

"I'm so glad I've come here because it's been most enjoyable and the staff are incredibly helpful.

"When Dr Horwood mentioned Stawell, the first thing I thought of was bushwalking because I love doing that. Another plus is that my niece Cathy is an Associate Nurse Unit Manager of the dialysis team at Wimmera Cancer Centre."

STAWELL HOSPITAL AUXILIARY FASHION PARADE

FRIDAY May 3
7:00 PM onwards

Powerhouse
42 Sloane Street, Stawell

TICKETS AVAILABLE BY
CONTACTING
PAM BYRON 0428 598 272
CAROL HUTTON 0408 249 287
MERRILYNE MIDDLETON 0407 561 669



Tarnya grows her career from home

Tarnya Roberts is very grateful that she has been able to broaden her horizons through a program offered by Grampians Health.

Tarnya worked for several years in residential aged care at Stawell's Eventide Homes as a personal carer, when she saw an opportunity to advance her career.

The mother of teenagers has now completed the Wimmera-based traineeship and is working as an enrolled nurse in Grampians Health Stawell's Simpson ward.

Tarnya said she was impressed that she was able to complete the traineeship while still working and maintaining an income.

"I've loved getting that hands-on experience, and being able to work at the Stawell campus has been amazing," Tarnya said.

"The support from the nurses has been above and beyond. I felt a part of the team and valued, despite my limitations, and we were given a big variety of learning opportunities."

The only extended travelling Tarnya and her trainee colleagues did for the course was placements at Ballarat campus which consisted of two four-week blocks.

"The fact that I could do all the training in Stawell where my family is, with only two days a week in Horsham, was the key for me. If I had to travel even three days a week, I doubt that I would have considered the course," Tarnya said.



Tarnya was also full of praise for the support she received from her trainers and managers at the Stawell campus.

"After nine years in aged care, I really enjoyed the opportunity to work on the acute ward and experience a whole other side of nursing."

Tarnya believes her future is working in acute care and has taken one of the positions offered by Grampians Health.

"For anyone who has ever thought about nursing as a career, you need to give it a go because you will learn very early in your studies if nursing is the career for you and that's important because you need to be passionate about helping people and dedicating yourself to care for them."

Grampians Health's Wimmera-based enrolled nurse traineeship is a two-year program that partners with Federation University.

The Diploma of Nursing classes are three days a week with work in the care communities and sub-acute ward two days a week.

Nursing and Midwifery Education's Early Career Lead Teagan Green said the traineeship classes included a combination of online and face-to-face delivery, inclusive of clinical simulation to develop both practical and theoretical nursing skills.

"Grampians Health educators and Federation University staff team-teach into the program for a collaborative approach," Teagan said.

Traineeship teaching days are delivered in both Ballarat and Horsham with trainees working across Ballarat, Stawell, Horsham, Edenhope and Dimboola.

Advertising for the February 2025 intake of trainees will start in August 2024.

Added comforts for Stawell Medical Centre



Stawell Medical Centre nurses Sherridan Parry and Vicki Ottrey with a new wheelchair and new portable ECG machine

Patients of Stawell Medical Centre will now find plenty of great improvements to the clinic.

A Public Health Network grant provided through the 'Strengthening Medicare' initiative, has ensured the centre has been able to make a number of purchases, the most important being a portable ECG machine.

Stawell Medical Centre Registered Nurse, Vicki Ottrey, said the grant money had given them the chance to freshen up the doctors' rooms.

"We were able to purchase a portable ECG machine, new cryo canisters, new stethoscopes, diagnostic equipment, thermoscans, scales, blood pressure monitors, suction ear syringe, wheelchairs and waiting room chairs with the \$27,500 grant," Vicki said.

"These purchases have allowed us to update all the equipment in the doctors' rooms and also get some brand new equipment like the portable ECG machine.

"Now patients can safely come in to the medical centre and no matter which room they are in they can have an ECG done, not just in the treatment rooms."

Vicki said the new chairs have already proven a winner.

"Every patient talks about how lovely and comfortable the new chairs are and they fit in beautifully with the colour scheme. We've got bariatric chairs for bigger people and they also come in handy for mothers with a small child who might want to sit with Mum.

"The wheelchairs we were previously using were over 30 years old, so it's great to have the new ones."



Allied Health exercise programs

Cancer Wellness Program
Wednesdays
9:45am - 11:30am

10 week exercise and education program. Individual exercise prescription with a focus on strength and fatigue management for those who have completed active cancer treatment or are receiving ongoing cancer treatment.

Better Balance
Mondays & Wednesdays
2:45pm - 3:45pm

10 week exercise and education program. Balance and strength exercise focus to meet goals and prevent and reduce falls risk.

Tai Chi for Health
Wednesdays
11:00am - 12:00pm

10 week exercise program. Gentle program focussed on improving flexibility, strength, balance and reducing falls risk. 12 Tai Chi movements are taught over the duration of the program.

GP or self-referrals accepted

For further information about the programs we have on offer or to enrol, please contact our Allied Health team on 5358 8507

Humble Jim steps down from Foundation dedication



After 25 years of devoted service, Jim Barham has stepped down from his role as a Stawell Hospital Foundation trustee.

His retirement marks the end of an era filled with unwavering commitment to enhancing healthcare in our community.

The 'almost retired' Stawell real estate agent is far too humble to discuss his achievements over his tenure but anyone who knows Jim, knows he doesn't run on idle.

When asked about his achievements Jim wanted to talk about the Foundation colleagues who inspired him.

"I joined the Foundation when it was in its infancy and back then we had a regular notice in the paper keeping the publicity going so people were conscious of our importance all the time," Jim said.

"As soon as we informed them of a project, we would be

getting all sorts of big donations of up to \$20-25,000.

"Our biggest advantage was the professional people we had on the committee like solicitor Bill O'Driscoll and accountant Kerry Rosenow.

"They ensured a very high standard for the Foundation to operate and that made things run a lot smoother."

Jim said the loyalty of the Foundation members also inspired him to continue for this long.

Stawell Hospital Foundation is well-known for its dedication to championing innovative medical equipment. As a testament to the foundation's success, an astounding \$1.4 million has been raised since its inception in 1989.

Jim has been instrumental in furthering these goals.

"I appreciate having been given the opportunity to serve and assist the Stawell Hospital and the various deliberations we have had as a group in determining how we might support the hospital.

"It is a most important asset to the community and in my view the Foundation has greatly assisted the hospital in many ways," he said.

As Jim embarks on this new chapter, he leaves behind a remarkable legacy of dedication and compassion.

The Stawell Hospital Foundation will continue its vital work, with the impact Jim has had on healthcare at Stawell being felt for generations to come.

Foundation chair Graeme Ellen said Jim's ability to balance business acumen with genuine empathy is what has made him a remarkable trustee.

"His retirement will leave a void that will be challenging to fill," Graeme said.

The Barham family owned and operated the Marnoo general store from 1922 to 1974, a business that included services in real estate, stock and insurance.

Jim sold the general store portion and moved the other services into Stawell in 1987, managing it until it was purchased by Elders Ararat in February 2021.

For more information about joining the Stawell Hospital Foundation, please contact Grampians Health Stawell on 5358 8500.

Stawell in better air



[L-R]: Shevahn Healy, Clinical Nurse Educator; Michelle Dunn, ANUM Perioperative Services; Pam Byron, Stawell Hospital Auxiliary; Glyn Treadwell, Marnoo Lodge; and Merrilyne Middleton, Stawell Hospital Auxiliary.

Medical and Nursing teams at Grampians Health Stawell campus can be better trained in airway management thanks to a donation from Freemasons.

Marnoo Lodge alongside the Freemasons Foundation have donated an airway trainer via the Stawell Hospital Auxiliary, so the Education team can more efficiently train nursing and medical team members at the campus on effective airway management.

Clinical nurse educator Shevahn Healy said the airway trainer would allow for regular staff training on airway management in an emergency situation.

"This will improve the response to airway obstruction for community members presenting at our Urgent Care Centre or for patients receiving treatment in Theatre," Shevahn said.

"This also means an expected increase in survival chance for patients in cardiac arrest or having breathing difficulties."

The Deluxe Difficult Airway Trainer features a manually inflatable tongue to simulate an obstructed airway and is designed for the training and management of difficult airways.

The device is anatomically correct internally which will help improve the airway management skills of team members using manual

manoeuvres and mechanical devices.

The Worshipful Master of the Marnoo Lodge Glyn Treadwell said Freemasons regularly donate to the Stawell community.

"It has been an honour to donate to the hospital again," Glyn said.

Anyone interested in joining the Freemasons, who meet at the Stawell Masonic Centre, can contact Freemasons Marnoo Lodge secretary John Hart on 0427 581 370.

Join our mailing list

To join our mailing list to continue receiving this newsletter, send your name, email and postal address to communications@gh.org.au

Please also contact us if changes are required to your contact details.

Strengthening support for eating disorder carers

Grampians Health has received a joint grant with Eating Disorders Victoria (EDV) to foster and embed a community-based approach for supporting eating disorder carers in the Grampians region.

The project supports carers to have access to dedicated appointments, face to face group carer workshops and group sessions led by EDV Carer Coaches.

The group sessions will be held online, allowing access across the Grampians region. Throughout the project, the EDV team will be training a Grampians-based Carer Consultant, who will continue to provide this support in the region when the project concludes.

The 'Connecting Carers in their Community' grants program aims to reduce isolation, enhance overall health and wellbeing, and improve connections between carers and their local community.



Stacey English, Paediatric Eating Disorder Nurse Consultant and Tracey Gibson, Enrolled Nurse Specialist Outpatient Clinics

The grant is provided by Carers Victoria and supported by the Victorian Government.

In 2023, Grampians Health opened a new dedicated eating disorder service for the Grampians region providing a holistic approach in delivering physical and psychological care at the same time, supporting all age groups.

If you would like to learn more about this new carer support project or other supports for carers, contact Eating

Disorders Victoria on 1300 550 236 or visit www.eatingdisorders.org.au

To learn more about the new eating disorder service for the Grampians region visit www.bhs.org.au/eating-disorder-clinic or call the Eating Disorder Nurse Consultant on **0438 376 905**.

If you are concerned for someone's mental wellbeing, please call Mental Health Services on 1300 661 323.



ARE YOU OUR NEXT

VOLUNTEER



Grampians Health Stawell are looking for people to volunteer and assist in our hospital and nursing home.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in volunteering with Grampians Health Stawell, please contact Leah Ferguson.

E: Leah.Ferguson@gh.org.au
P: 5320 6931



Scan the QR Code to find out more.

Helping Communities Thrive

Grampians Health strives to deliver quality care for all our communities through safe, accessible and connected health services.

Urgent Care

5358 8522

Fully bulk billed medical service.
24 hours, 7 days a week.

If your condition is serious, or you are experiencing chest pain, you need to call 000 (Triple Zero) for an ambulance.

Acute Care

5358 8517

Provides 24 hour care, with care managed by our experienced nursing staff and Hospital Medical Officer.

Stawell Medical Centre

5358 1410

Open Monday to Friday,
9.00am to 5.30pm

Care Community

5358 8502

At Macpherson Smith Residential Care residents are provided with 24 hour nursing care and comprehensive Allied Health services.

X-ray & Radiology

5358 8680

- CT
- Ultrasound
- General Radiology
- Interventional
- Radiography

Oncology

5358 8556

Treatment available Tuesday to Thursday. Oncologists are available at the centre each week for appointments.

Surgical Services

5358 8524

- General surgery
- Gastroenterology
- Orthopaedic
- Ophthalmology
- Gynaecology
- Ear, nose and throat

Telehealth

5358 1410

Have your appointment without leaving home, by linking with your clinician using a computer, smart phone or tablet.

Community Services

- Hospital Admission Risk Program: **5358 8604**
- District Nursing: **5358 8546**
- Aged Care Assessment Service: **5358 8535**
- Memory Support Nurse: **5358 8551**
- Post Acute Care: **5358 8618**
- Transition Care Program: **5358 8535**
- Social Support Group: **5358 8523**

Allied Health and Community Rehabilitation

5358 8531

Services can be provided in the hospital, at home, or at one of our facilities. Services include:

- Physiotherapy
- Exercise Physiology
- Dietetics
- Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehab
- Occupational Therapy
- Social Work
- Podiatry
- Diabetes Education
- Allied Health Assistants

For the full range of services and more detail on accessing the services please visit www.srh.org.au