

# VOICES

Vol. 1, No. 5, November 2016



## Flourish Has Moved!

A reminder that Flourish has moved. The new office is located at 33 Melville St, Hobart. Flourish is on the ground floor just inside the front door. Flourish's postal address and phone number remain the same. Car parking is restricted to one space for the CEO, but there is a car park nearby as well as a bus stop.

## From The Editor's Desk

Welcome to the November edition of VOICES. On 26 October, after much angst and some chaos, Flourish's new office became operational. While Monday 28 November has been confirmed as the official launch date of the new offices, the time remains to be set, but probably 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm. Mental Health Week is over for another year. However, we should not forget that mental health awareness is something we should be practicing every day, not just for one week each year. November is White Flower Memorial month. It is a time when we remember those with disabilities, including mental health, who suffered and/or died as a result of abuse, neglect and maltreatment whilst in institutional or domestic care.

## Flourish's New Office ~ Pressland House

Flourish's new office suite consists of five rooms of varying sizes plus a private courtyard. There is a formal reception area and a large main office. An adjacent large room doubles as a meeting room and semi-social area and kitchenette. Next door is the CEO's office. The courtyard is quite large and fully enclosed with access via the Flourish suites. Since Pressland House is Georgian in design (c. 1820), Flourish has, wherever possible, arranged the décor, furniture, and fittings to reflect that period in history, with some allowances for the Regency, Victorian, and Edwardian eras that followed. The art deco period of the 1930s is also represented.



Images: reception, main office social hub, and informal meeting space.



## Pressland House, Architecture, And Decor

It somehow seems fitting that Flourish, as a community mental health organisation, should have its new offices in a Georgian building (c. 1820). The architecture and décor designs, colloquially known as Georgian, owe their origins to King George III (1760 – 1820). George III suffered from mental illness, including depression. In later years he developed dementia, and his constant rants and erratic behaviour earned him the unforgiving title of Mad King George. In 1810, his eldest son, the Prince of Wales, was allowed to rule as Prince Regent, hence the Regency Period in terms of décor. By 1811 George III was permanently insane. He died in 1820.



In 1837 a young Victoria became Queen of the British Empire. However, it was not until later in Victoria's reign that the design concept known as Victorian emerged. As new and exotic products and ideas flooded into England from far-flung outposts of the empire, the Victorians embraced



them with a passion. They discarded the clean lines and simplicity of the Georgian style for one of clutter and a mishmash of Asian influence mixed with Neoclassicism, and Medieval Gothic revivals. Pressland House was not spared the Victorian makeover. The building was lengthened and Victorian verandahs installed across the front of the building.

Queen Victoria died in 1901 and was succeeded by her son Albert, who ruled as Edward VII, until his death in 1910. During this time, and through to 1914, British architecture and decor was referred to as Edwardian, and was less ornate and more restrained than previous designs.

By 1919, Pressland House was in a dilapidated state and required major structural work and refurbishment. The garish Victorian verandahs were removed and the interior dramatically altered. However, traces of the early building remain. There is even a 'secret' stairway that once allowed servants to come and go without disturbing the occupants. During the late 1920s Pressland House was a prestigious private boarding house, and remained so until the late 1930s.

Images: King George III, c. 1800 (Source: National Portrait Gallery, [npg.org.uk](http://npg.org.uk)); Pressland House c. 1880 and 1900 (Source: [Linc.tas.gov.au](http://Linc.tas.gov.au), UTAS Archives).



## Calling All Cubists, Impressionists, Modernists...

With Flourish now occupying more rooms, we suddenly have lots of empty walls that are crying out to be hung with consumer artwork. So for all you budding artists, please consider donating (or lending) a piece of your art. The piece must be framed and ready to hang. If interested contact Flourish.

Image: Vincent van Gogh 'self portrait', National Gallery of Art, [nga.com](http://nga.com)



## And Who Was Vincent?

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) was a prolific post-impressionist painter whose erratic life was dogged by mental illness. In his lifetime he created more than 2,000 artworks, mostly in the last two years of his life.

Yet for all his efforts, he only ever sold one painting. Sadly, he only became famous after taking his own life. In 1947, it was suggested that Vincent suffered from Bipolar Disorder, which would explain the never-ending bouts of melancholia and mania, which granted him so much energy and creativity. Two of Vincent's most popular works are his 'Still Life: Vase with Fourteen Sunflowers' (1888), and 'The Starry Night' (1889).

Image: The Starry night. vangogh.net; Source: Isabella, P 1947, 'Vincent van Gogh's illness: a case record', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*. 21, pp. 146-172.



## November is White Flower Memorial Month

During the month of November, the White Flower Memorial organisation (WFM) will post the names of people with disabilities, including mental health, who have suffered, and/or died as a result of abuse and neglect whilst in care within institutional or domestic settings. Last year a senate committee recommended a Royal Commission be established to investigate the widespread violence, abuse, and neglect of people with a disability, including those with mental health disabilities. You can follow the WFM on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/WhiteFlowerMemorial>

Image: whiteflowermemorial.wordpress.com



## White Flower Memorial Tasmania 2016

Although not a Flourish event, last year a group of people from Flourish's southern Regional Advisory Group, the Derwent Valley Mayor, local Councillors, plus local residents, gathered at the gates to Willow Court (Royal Derwent Hospital - RDH) to remember the children of the

RDH and Willow Court as a part of White Flower Memorial (WFM) month. Local politician, Cassie O'Connor, was guest speaker. The gathering was a simple, but successful event.

This year Flourish will host the event. Human Rights Week has been chosen as it is a fitting time to remember the children, and the adults, who were incarcerated, and who died while in state care.

The event will be held on Thursday 8 December, beginning at 2:00 pm and lasting about one (1) hour. The site will be outside the gates to Willow Court, The Avenue, New Norfolk. The public are most welcome to attend, and if they wish, to lay a wreath, or a bouquet of white flowers on the entrance gate to Willow Court. For further information, contact the event organiser, Dannii Lane, via email: [admin@flourishtas.org.au](mailto:admin@flourishtas.org.au)



## Remembering The Children

When thinking of asylums and similar institutions, we tend to think only of adults. Yet in Tasmania, hundreds of children were incarcerated in the Royal Derwent Hospital (RDH), during its long history. Children in institutions soon become invisible. They are the

voices we never hear, and the suffering we never see. They become invisible victims because the authorities would prefer that nobody knows what happens to unwanted children behind locked doors. The scandals at the Northern Territory's Don Dale Detention Centre and the Australian Government's off-shore detention centres are two recent examples.

A government moratorium on patient files makes it difficult to determine how many children were in the RDH in the fifty years before its closure in 2000, but the numbers were significant.

The mixed adolescent ward (Lachlan House) was built in 1965 to house 38 adolescents aged between 10 and 16. It was always full. M Ward was rebuilt in 1964 and housed the younger children up to 10 years. It too was constantly full. Many of the children had disabilities, as well as mental health issues. There were also the delinquents whom society preferred locked away, while many young girls spent years imprisoned as punishment because they were caught having underage sex.

In 1948 there were 295 children at the Lachlan Park Asylum (RDH). It is not known exactly how many were at the RDH after 1963, because records are unavailable. Also in 1948, there were 20 suicides recorded in Tasmania, of whom 16 were patients at Lachlan Park, but the ages and gender remain unknown. However, anecdotal evidence and eye-witness accounts suggest suicide was an issue within the adolescent population.

The philosopher, George Santayana (1863-1952) once said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." We as a society have so far refused to acknowledge the callous abuses inflicted on the children of the RDH, and as Santayana says, and a recent senate inquiry discovered, history is being repeated.

### **Dannii Lane, Mental Health and Human Rights Advocate**

Images: Bronte House (Willow Court)

## Three Children's Stories From The RDH

### **Karen's Story**

In 1969 Karen left home to join a hippie commune. Unfortunately, she didn't tell her parents. As punishment Karen was sent to the Royal Derwent Hospital; a not uncommon practice where morality (moral mania) was concerned. Karen was not a willing patient and as punishment was forced to have shock therapy without an anaesthetic. Karen found the experience of witnessing suicides frightening. After a few months she was released, but she never forgot the experience. Karen desalt with her trauma by publishing a book of poetry; Postcards From The Asylum.

### Leanne's Story

In the early 1960s, Leanne was forcibly taken to the Lachlan Park Asylum (RDH). She was just 12 years old. Leanne was told to look after the little kids in M Ward. Leanne says she would take them out of their beds each morning and strap them into potty chairs, where they stayed all day until they were put back to bed. They weren't allowed to walk or run around. The kids with encephalitis stayed in their cots without moving, just waiting to die. Leanne tried to escape, but the nurses caught her and locked her in a seclusion cell. Much later, and as a part of the Forgotten Australians senate inquiry, Leanne put her memories into song published as a CD.

### Carla's Story

At age 12, Carla was sent to the Royal Derwent Hospital because of her violent behaviour. Like so many other children, Carla became part of a health system that showed little sympathy for uncooperative and troublesome children. Carla recalls the first time she had shock treatment. "...You just had this thing put between your teeth and they come along and put the things on your head and you're zapped. If you swore at the psychiatrist, you was given a week's shock treatment. That was your punishment." Carla's vulnerability made her a target for sexual abuse, yet she showed resilience, and with the help of a social worker, was finally released. Carla wrote of her experiences and eventually saw her work, *From Darkness into Light*, published.

If any story in this newsletter causes you distress and you want to talk to someone, please contact one of the following: Lifeline: 131114, Beyondblue: 1300 22 4636, SANE Helpline: 180018 7263.



### TasCOSS Conference 23 & 24 November (Final reminder)

The Tasmanian Council of Social Service's biennial conference brings together Tasmania's community services sector to think, learn, challenge and lead on issues that affect our families, communities, workplaces and government. The Conference will be held at the Blundstone Oval Arena Function Centre. To register go to; <https://2016tascossconference.org/tag/tascoss/>

## Workplace Literacy Project

The National Disability Service (NDS) continues to hear from many providers that some of their staff need to strengthen their language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills in order to meet the needs of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The NDS is working with 26TEN to implement the Tasmanian Disability Sector LLN Action Plan 2016 - 2017. If your organisation would like to participate, please contact us to arrange a time to meet and develop a Workplace Literacy Action Plan for your organisation.

Further information contact; Meagan Newton, Adult Literacy Skills Officer

Email: [meagan.newton@nds.org.au](mailto:meagan.newton@nds.org.au)

Phone: 03 6212 7302

## Fifth National Mental Health Plan Consultation

The draft plan for the 5th National Mental Health Plan was recently released by the Federal Minister for Health, Susan Fey, for public consultation. The Plan sets out the national priorities for collaboration across states and territories, between the Australian Government, the community sector and consumers on mental health for the next five years. In particular it has seven priorities:

Integrated regional planning and service delivery;

Coordinated treatment and support for people with severe and complex mental illness;

Suicide prevention;

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and suicide prevention;

Physical health of people living with mental health issues;

Stigma and discrimination reduction; and

Safety and quality in mental health care

The Priorities and corresponding actions are consistent with Tasmania's Rethink Mental Health Plan and the rollout of national mental health reform initiatives through Primary Health Tasmania.

If you would like to provide feedback, the following options are available:

1. The Commonwealth will be undertaking national consultation activities from November to early December 2016. More information is available at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
2. Tasmania, through the Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate, will be consulting with key stakeholders about the Plan. Feedback can be provided directly to [narelle.butt@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:narelle.butt@dhhs.tas.gov.au) or by calling Narelle Butt on 61660770
3. There will also be an opportunity to submit general feedback via the Commonwealth webpage. More information will be available at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) in the coming weeks

## Magnesium And Mental Health

There is a fine line between mental health and mental illness, but what actually triggers an episode and how should it be approached, diagnosed, and treated? Well, I don't really know, but what I can offer is that pharmaceuticals are not the way to go. A lot of pharmaceuticals, including synthetic drugs, are actually responsible for causing problems. If we look at our bodies and realise how complex we actually are, we perhaps may better understand the importance of being balanced, fit and healthy. To stay healthy is these days expensive, but not out of everyone's reach. I think a mental health episode is partially caused by an imbalance in the body. This imbalance may be caused by many factors. Being a protein synthesis research scientist, I think a lot of people overlook certain mineral factors in their daily routines. One of the most important is magnesium, which is required for hundreds of reactions in your body every day. It is essential for protein synthesis, which keeps you alive and breathing. I wonder if the psychiatrists are aware of this, or are they just happy with dispensing those little white pills!

**Henry Mackin, Research Scientist**

## Magnesium: What You May Not Know

Magnesium is an abundant mineral in the human body and is naturally present in many foods, plus it is added to food products. It is also available as a dietary supplement, and present in some medicines (such as antacids and laxatives). Magnesium is widely distributed in plant and animal foods, and in certain beverages. Green leafy vegetables such as spinach, legumes, nuts, seeds, and whole grains, are all good sources of magnesium. In general, foods containing dietary fibre provide magnesium. Magnesium is also added to some breakfast cereals and other fortified foods.

Source: <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Magnesium-HealthProfessional/>

## Flourish AGM And State-Wide RAG Meeting ~ DATE & VENUE CHANGE



The date and venue for the 2016 Flourish AGM and State-wide Regional Advisory Group meeting has been changed. The new date is Thursday 17 November. The venue is The Stables, located behind the Ross Village Bakery, Ross. The time remains the same, i.e., 10:30 am – 3:00 pm. Please advise Flourish of transport or dietary needs.



## Healing Voices: A Tasmanian Film Premiere (Final reminder)

The venue will be The Old Woolstore, Macquarie St, Hobart on Friday 18 November between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. Lunch is provided. Between 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm there will be a Q&A panel discussion. To register, go to:

[http://www.eventbrite.com/e/healing-voices-a-tasmanian-film-premier-tickets-](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/healing-voices-a-tasmanian-film-premier-tickets-28128341627?aff=utm_source%3Demail%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_campaign%3Dnew_event_email&utm_term=eventurl_text)

[28128341627?aff=utm\\_source%3Demail%26utm\\_medium%3Demail%26utm\\_campaign%3Dnew\\_event\\_email&utm\\_term=eventurl\\_text](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/healing-voices-a-tasmanian-film-premier-tickets-28128341627?aff=utm_source%3Demail%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_campaign%3Dnew_event_email&utm_term=eventurl_text)

## Stop Male Suicide Workshop 7 December (Final Reminder)

On 7 December 2016 there will be a Male Suicide Prevention seminar in Hobart. The aim is to bring together some of the key people concerned with, and committed to, taking action to Stop Male Suicide. The seminars will cover four key areas: Facts, theories and first person accounts; Sharing best practice in male suicide prevention; Reflecting of different ways to respond to men's high male suicide rate; and exploring new solutions, commitments and actions to Stop Male Suicide in Australia. Please email to reserve your place: [StopMaleSuicide@gmail.com](mailto:StopMaleSuicide@gmail.com).

## Office Desks For Sale



Three (3) large office desks (2.4 m x 1.8 m) \$150 each ono

In good condition, dismantled, as is where is.

One (1) computer/office desk (130cm L x 80cm W)

In good condition \$50 ono

Can be viewed at Flourish Office, 33 Melville St, Hobart

10:00 am – 3:00 pm Monday to Friday by appointment

Phone: 0448 185 629 BH

Email: [admin@flourishtas.org.au](mailto:admin@flourishtas.org.au)

## Comments And Submissions

Feedback can be done via SharePoint, e-mail, phone, or mail. Newsletter content does not necessarily reflect the views of the Flourish Board or staff. Flourish is not responsible for, and refutes all liability for, damages of any kind arising out of use, reference to, or reliance on any information contained within the newsletter. There is no guarantee the information provided in the newsletter is correct, complete, or up-to-date. Flourish is not responsible for the accuracy or content of information contained in listed web sites.

**The next edition of Voices is due out 2 December. Deadline for articles is 28 November**

## Newsletter Guidelines

Submissions should be a maximum of 500 words. More than one article per person is welcome, but at the editor's discretion. The editor reserves the right to edit articles as required. Articles will not be otherwise altered without the authors permission. Contributors may be anonymous, use only their first name, or use their full name. If reporting on committee involvements, it is the responsibility of the author to ensure that confidentiality is not breached.

## Flourish Membership

Membership of Flourish is free and open to all Tasmanian's who have a lived experience of mental illness and/or have experience in and an understanding of mental health issues. Being a member of Flourish can provide you with information about mental health through our newsletter, website, and forums where people with an interest in mental health can meet and share their experiences and ideas. Flourish has four Regional Advisory Groups in the North West, the West Coast, the North, and the South, which provide a forum for consumers to have input into the way mental health services are delivered. To apply for membership, complete the attached form, and agree to the Flourish Code of Conduct. If you would like to discuss Flourish membership in more detail, please phone our office on 03 6223 1952 or email [admin@flourishtas.org.au](mailto:admin@flourishtas.org.au)

## Flourish Code of Conduct

The Code Of Conduct guides Flourish members. The term 'member' refers to employees, Board members, volunteers, Regional Advisory Group members, and work-experience students of Flourish. Flourish seeks best practice in management and governance. Flourish expects a high standard of behaviour from members and there is an expectation that members will conduct themselves in a professional manner. This code underpins other policies, e.g., Anti-Discrimination Act. The following principles form the Code of Conduct:

- Members work in a professional manner, adhering to relevant professional and organization codes' of ethics and working with respect, fairness and integrity at all times.
- Workplace Health and Safety and the Anti- Discrimination Act are adhered to.
- Flourish policy and procedures are adhered to, such as Anti-Discrimination and Harassment, Complaints, Privacy and Confidentiality.
- Members are respectful of colleagues and work to resolve conflict in an appropriate manner.
- Members conduct themselves professionally at all times and do not act in a manner that might jeopardise the safety of others or themselves or bring the name of Flourish into disrepute.
- Members show due care when using all assets and property belonging to Flourish.
- Members are aware of diversity in the workplace and are respectful of others.
- Members are aware of harassment and bullying issues, discrimination and sexual harassment.
- The Code of Conduct mandates the need for appropriate working relationships and the resolution of conflict in a safe and respectful manner. Where conflict is not resolvable members should refer to the Grievance Policy or the Bullying and Harassment policy.

I understand and agree to abide by the Flourish Code of Conduct.

Member's name:

Signature:

Date:

## **Flourish Membership Application Form**

**First Name:**

**Last Name:**

**Gender (circle): Male / Female / Other**

**Age (circle): 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, 66+**

**Address:**

**Phone:**

**Mobile:**

**Email:**

**Preferred method of contact:**

**Do you have any special needs, e.g. mobility?**

**I agree to Flourish disclosing my contact details to other members for the purposes of contacting me about relevant matters. YES / NO**

**By signing this application for membership you have read and agree to abide by the Flourish Code of Conduct**

**Signature of applicant:**

### **OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Application processed (date)**

**Information on register (date)**

**Letter sent to applicant (date)**