

MIFSA Activities	2	MIFSA Fundraising	9
President and CEO Reports	3	MIFSA Volunteers	10-11
MIFSA Programs	4-8	MIFSA Support Groups	12
– Therapeutic Groups & Education	(4)	For your information	13-17
– Peer Work Project	(5)	MIFSA Activity Programs	18-19
– Respite Program	(6)	Membership Renewal Form and	
– Personal Helpers & Mentors Program	(7)	Key Contacts	20
– Well Ways Programs	(8)		

MIFSA website gets a make-over

SHARING THE NEWS OF OUR WEBSITE MAKEOVER WITH MIFSA MEMBERS MARKS THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF OUR NEW SITE. EVERY LINE HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND OFTEN REWRITTEN, EVERY PAGE ASSESSED, THE ENTIRE LOOK OF EACH AND EVERY PAGE HAS BEEN REDESIGNED, IN FACT IT'S A TOTAL RENOVATION!

Check us out at www.mifsa.org

Log on to find information about mental health, keep up with the latest news and events, read our fact sheets, check out our range of programs and discover much more.

Our new look is part of a wider project with our national organisation the Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia (MIFA). Our aim was to develop websites with greater consistency, simpler and clearer navigation, stronger demarcation of topics, increased traffic, greater interactivity, more personality, more content, more updates and greater Google rankings. All of that is behind us now and what really matters is what you think, so log on and let us know!

On-line donations

PEOPLE WANTING TO DONATE TO MIFSA CAN NOW DO SO ONLINE WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A NEW ONLINE DONATIONS FACILITY. THE NEW 24-HOUR-A-DAY, SEVEN-DAY-A-WEEK SERVICE ENSURES THAT PEOPLE CAN DONATE TO MIFSA AT ANY TIME.

MIFSA is collecting the donations through the free online donations service powered by GiveNow. The online donations service is totally secure and ensures that 100 per cent of the donation goes straight to MIFSA. Only credit card fees are deducted from the donation.

continued page 9



Vision & Mission

Our vision is that every person with mental illness is able to make a valued contribution to society, without stigma or discrimination, due to an increased understanding and awareness of mental illness in the community and the availability of appropriate services as required.

Our mission is to provide education, support, rehabilitation and recovery based programs in a safe, quality environment to assist people with mental illness and their natural support network living in South Australia to enjoy the best possible quality of life.



Schizophrenia Awareness Week, 16 – 22 May 2010

EACH YEAR OUR NATIONAL ORGANISATION, THE MENTAL ILLNESS FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIA (MIFA), ORGANISES SCHIZOPHRENIA AWARENESS WEEK TO HIGHLIGHT ISSUES THAT AFFECT PEOPLE LIVING WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS, THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS. MEMBER ORGANISATIONS OF MIFA CELEBRATE THE WEEK WITH A DIVERSE RANGE OF AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES.

Locally we hope you will join us at an education session with our own, ever popular Medical Advisor, Dr Harry Hustig, or maybe we will see you or your work at our Art Exhibition or perhaps an afternoon tea with our international guest speaker.

Art Exhibition

The annual MIFSA Schizophrenia Awareness Week (SAW) Art Exhibition is shaping up for 2010. Please follow the links at www.mifsa.org to find entry details and forms, as well as this year's poster and flyer (shown alongside). Alternatively, please phone MIFSA Wayville Activity Programs staff on 8378 4100 for more information.

The SAW Art Exhibition will be held at 11 Nile Street Port Adelaide from 18 – 22 May, 10am-5pm. The Launch will take place on 18 May, 6pm-9pm.

Entries of artwork from members of the mental health community are welcome and we are looking forward to enjoying some exciting artwork again this year.

Education Forum

Doctor Harry Hustig, respected and International Speaker from Glenside Hospital is the Special Guest Speaker at the Education Forum to be held on 18 May, 2pm, at Goodwood Community Centre, Banquet Hall, 32-34 Rosa Street Goodwood.

This Forum will provide a great opportunity for all people including family and friends to have many of those personal questions answered. The subject of medications and much more will be addressed.

Public Forum

MIFA's guest speaker for Schizophrenia Awareness Week 2010 will be a visiting US expert with more than 40 years' experience in the field of families and mental health: Professor Joanne Nicholson. Prior to Professor Nicholson's presentation there will be a theatrical reading of the play 'Inside Out', written by Mary Rachel Brown. 'A pocket rocket of meaningful, gutsy, important theatre.... inspiring, illuminating, entertaining.' (Stagenoise).

Traditionally, MIFA engages a recognised world expert in a specific issue and engages them in a speaking tour of various states and territories. Past highlights have included Mr Philip Mangano (2008) talking about mental illness and housing, Major Sam Cochran (2006) on police training on mental health issues and Dr Xavier Amador (2004) on what to do when loved ones have no insight into their mental illness.

Professor Nicholson, is Professor of Psychiatry and Associate Director of the Centre for Mental Health Services Research at the University of Massachusetts medical school's department of psychiatry. She will be discussing issues around people with a mental illness and the role that family members play in recovery. Since gaining her PhD in human development and family studies in 1979, Professor Nicholson has spent more than 40 years working with families.

The Public forum will be held at the Adelaide Pavilion Veale Gardens, South Terrace Adelaide, 20 May; 2pm-5pm.

To register your attendance at the Launch, Education and Public Forums, please phone MIFSA Wayville Reception, 8378 4100.



Below: snapshots of the 2009 Art Exhibition





From the President

I've been working with Natasha and Maxie Ashton, who is known to many of you, on a submission to the Federal Government for funds to put on quit smoking courses in several states.

Maxie has been the prime mover in this area for nearly 10 years, and I expect that quite a few of our readers will have been involved with one or other of the programs she and her colleagues have delivered in South Australia.

She was one of the early ones to see that the mental health 'system', was not paying enough attention to the terrible toll that long-term smoking has on peoples' health, We think it is time to take her work to the national level, and prove that a well run course based on the current ones can help people quit. We want to run the same updated model in about five locations across three states, including South Australia, so that the outcomes can be closely evaluated.

I've been corresponding with MIFSA's brother and sister organisations in other states about this, and all agreed strongly that it needs to be a national priority. One senior staff member in another state sent me the following email:

"I smoked for many years and was I dumb. The best, and I repeat, the best thing I ever did was to give those smelly, ugly sticks, the boot. I have only felt better, stronger, sexier and more socially acceptable since that time. Please bring on the policy that supports people give it up."

Now I'm not sure about the 'sexier', but you never know! As someone who gave it up after about twenty years, I certainly agree with



everything else he says. So fingers crossed that we will be successful in getting some funding to spread the great work of Maxie Ashton and her colleagues far and wide.

David Meldrum

From the Chief Executive Officer

In the last edition of MIFSA News I spoke about the pressures we are experiencing in some of our programs. Meeting the needs of participants within available funding and resources can be an ongoing juggling act.

The task is made all the more challenging with growing requirements around program outcomes, ensuring ongoing accreditation against a range of standards, undertaking quality improvements, providing safe and welcoming environments, whilst addressing increasing costs.

Over the past 6 months a review of the Wayville Activity Program has shown that we need to make some changes to opening hours and meal preparation. We are working closely with participants to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible. Our aim is to ensure that we deliver a sustainable as well as quality program. You can read more on page 19.

The first goal from our strategic plan MIFSA 2011 is to reach people we haven't reached before. This goal includes reaching

people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and Indigenous Australians.

You can just imagine the excitement therefore when MIFSA was recently offered additional funding to be used to engage new staff to provide Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) services for humanitarian entrants (refugees) and Indigenous Australians in the western metropolitan area of Adelaide.

The funding will mean we can reach more people needing a quality MIFSA PHaMs service and will also bring some welcome diversity to our staff mix as we hope to employ Indigenous staff and staff from CALD backgrounds. Read more on page 7.

To keep up to date with program news and our latest events why not check us out at our refreshed website at www.mifsa.org

Natasha Miliotis



Key Dates

Schizophrenia Awareness Week

Sunday 16 – Saturday 22 May

- Art Exhibition, 18 – 22 May
- Education Forum, 18 May, 2pm
- Public Forum, 20 May, 2pm

Annual General Meeting

Monday, 18 October, 6pm

Volunteers' Night

Friday, 5 November, 6pm



MIFSA Therapeutic Groups and Education Program

SUPPORTS THE PRINCIPLES OF REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY AND UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS HOPE AFTER DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL ILLNESS.

The groups focus on building strengths and achieving the best possible quality of life. Sharing ideas and methods for managing well-being in a group with others who have similar experiences can be particularly helpful.

MIFSA Therapeutic Groups are small groups exploring pathways to wellbeing. Topics throughout the year will include:

- Alleviating Anxiety
- Dealing with Depression
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Managing Mania
- Recovery from Psychosis

Groups are time limited and goal focused, and support the principles of rehabilitation and recovery, which state that there is hope after a diagnosis of mental illness, that many people live meaningful lives, with some remaining symptom free, whilst others manage recurring symptoms.

The groups focus on developing and/or maintaining a key role in managing one's own recovery.

See page 12 for the Rewire Recovery Group Program.

If you are interested in any of these programs or for more information please contact Anna or Ben, phone 8378 4100 or by email: annab@mifsa.org or ben@mifsa.org

Monthly Forum – 24 March 2010 'Turning Dreams into Reality'

Facilitated by Ian Hoffmann

Many of us have set goals for ourselves in the past and sometimes we have achieved our goals, sometimes not.

- What are the factors that determine whether we will be successful or not?
- How can we keep focussed and on track?
- How can we deal with barriers and setbacks?
- How can we create a personal tool to turn our dreams into reality?

Come along and find out!

Forums are open to the public – everyone welcome.

Fourth Wednesday of each month, 1pm-2:30pm, at MIFSA Conference Room, 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville.

For further information contact Anna Byas, 8378 4100 or annab@mifsa.org

Dealing with Depression

Tuesdays, 4 May – 8 June 2pm-4pm	Level 1, Education Centre Modbury Hospital, Modbury
Wednesdays, 6 May – 10 June 10am-12noon	Clarence Park Community Centre Black Forest
Fridays, 10am-12noon	Community Campus, Gunther St, Elizabeth Grove

We will work together to:

- Better understand depression
- Share ideas with others who have similar experiences
- Explore the mechanisms of excessive worry and how to tackle it
- Understand the ups and downs of self esteem
- Explore how our thinking can affect our moods
- Get in touch with what really matters to you in life

Emotional Wellbeing

Fridays, 3 May – 11 June 10am-12noon	Family Connections, 72 Collins Parade, Hackham
---	---

We will work together to:

- Share experiences and increase knowledge and awareness of how our emotions, thoughts and actions impact on our sense of wellbeing
- Understand the ups and downs of self esteem
- Learn strategies and techniques to reduce the impact of stress and anxiety
- Explore how our thinking affects our moods and practice ways to deal with unhelpful thinking
- Learn helpful ways to deal with unpleasant or uncomfortable emotions
- Explore ways to communicate more positively and effectively
- Get in touch with what really matters in life

These groups will run for 2 hours, including a break for refreshments, over six weeks

For more information or to register please phone Anna or Ben on 8378 4100, or email annab@mifsa.org

Cost: a gold coin donation would be appreciated

*The focus is about thriving,
not just surviving*

MIFSA Peer Work Project

THE PEER WORK PROJECT HAS BEEN BLESSED TO HAVE HAD SO MANY AMAZING, COMPASSIONATE AND REMARKABLE PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM SINCE ITS START FIVE YEARS AGO. THIS IS ONE OF THEIR STORIES:

What a surprise to find out that I was nominated for the MIFSA Consumer Choice Sunflower Award for 2009, but to actually win it? Wow, a reward for doing something I love, something I am so passionate about, could it get any better? I'm Vanessa, Peer Support Worker for the Gawler/Barossa Health Team based at Gawler Health Service. As a Peer Support Worker, I am able to share my lived experience in a way that empowers and inspires others towards recovery and wellness.

I have lived with Mental Illness since my late teens, and have experienced first-hand how daunting it can feel. Due to stigma from friends and family, I was always too afraid to seek help, and when I did, the intimidation I felt from professionals made me feel all the more misunderstood. I guess it wasn't until I reached rock-bottom that I was able to get the help I needed. With medication and support, I was able to start my recovery journey, made possible by a wonderful and caring team. Although I never really felt truly understood, my first liaison with a Family Support Worker changed my life forever. I guess speaking to someone who understood the hardships I faced really made the difference. I was able to be truthful about my illness, and therefore receive the appropriate medication and help. I also understood that recovery had no end-point, it was a continuing journey. Living well is certainly a lot harder than succumbing to my symptoms; it takes a lot of strength and hard work. Acceptance was also vital. Accepting that medication and therapy is only a part of recovery, not the cure, and that mental illness may very well be part of me forever. The effort to stay well is rewarding, it has made me a better person, a better friend and mother, but most importantly, it has given me a life worth living.

It wasn't long before I learnt that with knowledge, comes power. I wanted to learn all I could about my illness so that I could lead the best possible life. I enrolled in a Diploma of Mental Health at TAFE. I became passionate about wanting to help people as others had helped me. I enrolled in the Peer Support Programme offered by MIFSA and Baptist Care. It enabled me to use my life experiences in a more appropriate and professional manner. The experience also gave me the opportunity to hear of other member's hardships and journeys. It is a wonderful thing to know you are not alone. Although working in Mental Health, and living with it, sometimes becomes difficult, working as a Peer Support worker has to be the most rewarding and empowering experience of my life. If I can help one person avoid the years of torment and hardship I endured, then it has been worth it. I find that when I am able to share my experiences with a client, I'm able to build trust and rapport more easily. The more open and honest the client is with their symptoms, the more appropriate their medication and treatment can become.



Vanessa with her 2009 Sunflower Award

I'm now completing a Bachelor Degree in Social Work, so to combine a clinical position with a lived experience will enable me to reach a wider population, and well, the sky's the limit!

After having met Vanessa during the introduction to peer work training in 2008, at various mental health events following graduation and then again when I was given the opportunity to present the Sunflower award to her at her staff meeting, it is easy to see why she is a deserving recipient of not only the award but the respect and recognition of all.

Thank you to Vanessa and all of the other graduates and Peer Workers who are putting themselves out there, in spite of the stigma and discrimination around mental health, to share their experiences and make the lives of others just that little bit (sometimes a lot) easier.

If you would like to share your story of peer work or of employing a peer worker please feel free to contact me to arrange.

Dei Griffith
dgriffith@mifsa.org

Contact details:
 MIFSA: Dei or Liza – 8378 4100
 Baptist Care (SA): Carmen or Sheryl – 8338 6799

MIFSA Respite Program

WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO ONE OF OUR RESPITE WORKERS: GABRIELLE.

Gabrielle has been providing Respite to Carers while offering Care Recipients her support in their recovery journey. This is Gabrielle's experience of working in the program:

My experience as a MIFSA Respite Worker:

My name is Gabrielle and I have supported people for 12 months now and overall I love the work I do.

I have found each individual participant to be vastly different. Individual goals and needs have rarely been the same. However most participants would like to interact more with others and limit social isolation. The diversity from each participant is challenging at times and as a rule I don't pretend to know it all.

Sometimes participants may appear excited about new prospects or services that I have researched with them. We might even make plans the best way to going about achieving this. However in between my visits the participant's enthusiasm can disappear as quickly as it rose. The challenge for me is to then help the person to understand the cause of their diminished interest and support them to find acceptable ways to continue moving forward as part of the recovery process.

I try to make each session an enjoyable experience even when plans are changed. On any particular session a participant may be happy to just have a chat while sitting in the garden. These sessions are still valuable and informal chatting can sometimes bring things to light I had never thought to ask. Many situations force me to think hard and come up with new ways or ideas to move through the situation alongside the participant.

I have not always been involved in the health service area but began heading toward this direction in 2001. I worked as a Tenancy Officer at a housing organization prior to my role as a MIFSA Respite Worker. I am now at Flinders University, studying for a Bachelor of Disability and Rehabilitation as a Developmental Educator that specializes in all disabilities and facilitates rehabilitation into the wider community. It is part of the Health Sciences at the Sturt Campus and the only one of its kind in Australia. As I don't have "lived experience", I sometimes need to seek a "cuppa" with a colleague to get clarity of an issue. On reflection I am always seeking to learn more because things are always changing.

The Respite Program delivers flexible recovery based Respite Services to people experiencing mental illness across metropolitan Adelaide. If you are interested in joining our innovative and dynamic team of sessional Respite Workers please visit our website at www.mifsa.org or contact Naomi Minett on 8378 4100 for further details.

Naomi Minett
Respite Team Leader
naomi@mifsa.org

The MIFSA Respite Program is funded by the Australian Government under the Mental Health Respite Program.

MIFSA Respite Program Recruitment

We are continuing to seek applications for Respite Workers through our open recruitment campaign to increase our pool of casual Respite Workers.

We are looking for people who are available to deliver 1 to 1 Respite services, working with Participants individually in the community across the whole metropolitan area. We anticipate increased opportunities for Respite Workers to support Participants with Retreats, Short Breaks and Residential Respite services in 2010 and 2011.

If you are interested in working in the Respite Program, several positions remain available. Please visit the MIFSA website and follow the link for 'Jobs', which outlines the Job and Person Description and application requirements.

Tai Chi at Diamond House

Mondays and Fridays, 9:30am to 10:30am. Cost: FREE

Clubhouse members, carers, friends, support workers are all WELCOME!
Flat soled shoes are a must!

Further information, contact Diamond Clubhouse, 8244 5525, or comunit@clubhouse.org.au



Diamond Poets

Attention all poets! You're welcome to join Diamond Poets, a weekly poetry recital group held each Wednesday in the 'yellow room' at Diamond House.

All welcome; bring along your poetry, or that of your favourite poets, and share some precious words.

Contact Theo and Cate at Diamond House, 8244 5525 or comunit@clubhouse.org.au

BUILDING BRIDGES

A FREE seminar for anyone responding to a young person (12-25) experiencing mental health concerns.

Topics Include:

- How can family and friends assist – responding to a crisis, treatment and recovery
- Tools for the journey – self care, communication and problem solving

To be held 15 April 2010, 6-8pm at the Cheltenham Community Centre, 2 Stroud St North, Cheltenham. Light Supper Provided.

To register or for further information, please FREE CALL Centacare on 1800 809 304

Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) Program

REACHING PEOPLE WE HAVEN'T REACHED BEFORE

The Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) recently announced their plans for the Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) Program Round 4 funding. FaHCSIA have agreed to establish new sites and provide additional funding to a limited number of existing PHaMs service providers. This additional funding will enable specific PHaMs Programs to support a greater number of individuals in the community whose lives are severely affected by mental illness.

It is with great delight to announce our existing PHaMs West Program has been successful in receiving funding to continue offering PHaMs services until June 2012. In addition we have been given extra funding to increase our capacity to work with humanitarian entrants and Indigenous Australians in the region.



*'Untitled Panels 1, 2, 3, 4,' by Nunkuwarrin Yunti
Women's Healing Group*

Artwork exhibited at the 2009 Schizophrenia Awareness Week Art Exhibition converted from colour to duotone to conform to the printing restrictions on this page.

HUMANITARIAN ENTRANTS

PHaMs will address the 2 components of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's Humanitarian Program:

1. The onshore (asylum or protection) component offers protection to people in Australia who meet the refugee definition in the United Nations Refugees Convention.
2. The offshore (resettlement) component offers resettlement for people outside Australia who are in need of humanitarian assistance.

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

FaHCSIA states that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders receive proportionately less specialised care for mental health disorders. It has been found that mental illness is likely to progress to more severe or chronic levels, with people more likely to seek care only at times of crisis or in acute states. Rural and remote Indigenous communities may have little or no assistance to address factors that contribute to mental illness, such as family breakdowns, violence, suicide, homelessness and substance misuse. With this information the PHaMs Program has an understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is be considered holistically to embrace mental, physical, cultural and spiritual health as a part of support.

MIFSA is aware that many individuals located within both of these cultural groups may find it difficult to access support or services due to language and cultural barriers, shame and stigma, prior negative experiences, lack of support or social networks or knowledge of their entitlements.

PHaMs West team members will utilise this additional funding and time to support and assist participants with their recovery journey at their own pace and to tailor services to meet the needs of all participants.

For more information, please contact us:

MIFSA Personal Helpers and Mentors Program – West region
phams-west@mifsa.org
 Telephone 8378 4100

Official press release: [www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/
internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/mental_heath_services_
refugees_03mar2010.htm](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/mental_heath_services_refugees_03mar2010.htm)

The Personal Helpers and Mentors Program
is an Australian Government initiative.

MIFSA Well Ways Programs

WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY FOR FAMILIES

Well Ways Programs have been consistently presented at MIFSA since late 2005. Initially one type of program was offered. Now two different programs are available in the metropolitan area to suit the needs of all carers (paid or unpaid), plus other family and friends of people with the lived experience of mental illness, from depressive and anxiety disorders to psychotic disorders like bipolar or schizophrenia etc.

Well Ways Building a Future (the first program delivered) and **Well Ways DUO** (for families with the support role for people with substance use and mental illness), are regularly advertised and you may have seen the brochures in GP surgeries, Community Centres and/or mental health Centres etc, or you may have seen our advertisements in the Messenger Press. The support from services, professionals and the community at large is tremendous. There will be 14-16 Well Ways programs conducted this calendar year. Four are currently running with bookings taken for upcoming venues.

The follow-up sessions are always well attended, over a light buffet dinner, prior to further education to assist participants in their caring and support roles. For further details please phone Carol or Maureen at MIFSA Wayville, 8378 4100.

The new **Well Ways Snapshot** program for country families is ready for the Eyre Peninsula region, with plans for other areas of the state as funding for training of rural facilitators and program roll out is secured.



Schizophrenia Awareness Week – Education Forum, Tuesday 18 May, 2pm

Doctor Harry Hustig, respected and International Speaker from Glenside Hospital is the Special Guest Speaker at the Education Forum to be held at Goodwood Community Centre, Banquet Hall, 32-34 Rosa Street, Goodwood.

This Forum will provide a great opportunity for all people including family and friends to have many of those personal questions answered. The subject of medications and much more will be addressed.

Please contact me for further details on the Forum or about the upcoming Well Ways programs.

Bookings are important. Best wishes.

Maureen Lewis
Well Ways Coordinator
mlewis@mifsa.org

Coming Well Ways Programs sessions

Well Ways Building a Future Program (for family & friends)

Conducted over 8 consecutive weeks on Wednesdays, 7 April – 26 May; 9:30am-12:30pm	MIFSA Wayville 5 Cooke Terrace Wayville
Conducted over 8 consecutive weeks on Thursdays, 22 April – 10 June; 6pm-9pm	Grenville Community Connections Hub Playford Blvd, Elizabeth
Conducted over 8 consecutive weeks on Mondays, 21 June – 9 August; 6 pm-9pm	Reedbeds Community Centre, Fitch Road, Fulham

Well Ways DUO (for family & friends)

Conducted over 6 consecutive weeks on Wednesdays, 12 May – 30 June 6pm-9pm	MIFSA Panangga 64 Elgin Avenue Christies Beach
--	--



Bread tags fundraiser

FOR SEVERAL YEARS MIFSA HAS RECEIVED DONATIONS OF BREAD TAGS FROM SOURCES FAR AND WIDE; AND IS HUGEY GRATEFUL FOR THIS PUBLIC SUPPORT.

Through this amazing community response, from businesses both government and private, schools, community groups and individuals, MIFSA now has accumulated a considerable stock of bread tags and now must ask all our faithful supporters to put collections on hold for the time being.

To those currently holding collections of tags please deliver them to MIFSA through the usual method. Collectors will be advised through future editions of *MIFSA News* that stocks have reduced enough for donations to be required once again.

Again, our sincere thanks for all tags collected so far.

Thank you all for a fantastic effort!

Our thanks also are extended to our volunteers from James Nash House for their assistance in weighing and bagging the bread tags. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Since the last *MIFSA News*, bread tags collections large and small, from near and far, have been received from:

Jackie Coatsworth	TAFESA Pt Augusta Campus
Tuila Wells	Morgan Lutheran Ladies Guild
Joy Parker and friends, Warragul Vic	District Council of Kimba
Bev Cook, Nandaly, Vic	Christina Bell
Kay Williams	J Bayless
Rainbow Girls	Audrey Fuhrer
Sunny South, Chapter OES	Lodge Concordia
St Paul's Lutheran Church, McLaren Vale	
Crystal Brook Girl Guides	

Thank you all, and the many anonymous donors who leave bread tags at our Sunflower Shops, the Collection Bins, Panangga Activity Centre and the Royal Adelaide Hospital Kiosk. Your support is appreciated.

Delivery Points for Bread Tags

Sunflower Shops at Christie Downs, Goodwood or Seacombe Gardens – see addresses below.

Sunflower Shops Collection Bins located at:

- Sixth Ave Shopping Ctr, Cnr Sixth Ave & Stephens Tce, St Peters
- Woolworth's Plus, 272 Shepherds Hill Rd, Eden Hills

MIFSA Wayville: 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville 5034

MIFSA Panangga: 64 Elgin Avenue, Christies Beach 5165

MIFSA Mount Gambier: 12 Crouch Street South, Mt Gambier 5290

On-line donations

continued from front page

MIFSA is a charitable, not for profit organisation providing services for and with people with mental illness. With donations and fundraising we are able to extend our Activity Programs, Community Education, Carer programs, Training, Counselling, Support groups, one-to-one Support and Respite services to reach more people living with mental illness as well as their carers, families and friends.

We hope the new donations service will attract new supporters to our service and provide an option for current supporters to give immediate financial support.

So, how will the funds be used? Each year donations assist MIFSA to reach hundreds of people we haven't reached before. Through your generous donation we are able extend our services and programs to support people to manage their mental health, to find better ways of caring and to improve understanding and awareness about mental health in our communities. Every dollar is precious, you can make a difference no matter the size of your gift.

People wanting to donate to MIFSA can either visit our website at www.mifsa.org and click 'Support Us' and donate, or go straight to the special online donations page at www.mifa.org.au/donate-0 and follow the prompts.

MIFSA Sunflower Shops are located at:

CHRISTIES DOWNS Shop 4, Flaxmill Shopping Centre, 303 Flaxmill Road; phone 8236 2456

GOODWOOD 145 Goodwood Road (south of the Capri Theatre); phone 8272 7162

SEACOMBE GARDENS 577 Morphett Road; phone 8298 3051

SHOPS COORDINATOR Elsha, 0409 697 432



In Memoriam

Thank you to those who have supported MIFSA in this way with donations in lieu of flowers. It is through your generosity and financial support we can continue to support both people with mental illness and their carers. MIFSA gratefully accepts memorial gifts to help its work. Donations are promptly acknowledged to the bereaved and the donor.



Vale Clem Dunning

VALUED MIFSA VOLUNTEER

MIFSA received the sad news that Clem Dunning passed away on January 27, aged 85 years.

Clem spent over 15 years at the Schizophrenia Fellowship of SA as one of our most reliable and dedicated volunteers. Clem's many tasks included folding newsletters, photocopying leaflets and brochures, compiling introductory kits for carers and students, ongoing housekeeping duties, and of course, being available to talk about "life" with participants attending the Kent Town and Keswick Activity Centres.

Clem had clearly-defined values, and believed strongly in the durability of the human spirit. He would often recount stories from his life that would be relevant to the lives of our younger participants, and offer a simple message of hope just by being himself. His self-styled street wisdom was appreciated by so many.

Clem lived as a single man, but always maintained strong links with his many nieces and nephews, and their children. He was a source of enormous support when family issues arose; his gentleness, understanding and compassion came to the fore in such times.



Clem Dunning

So we say "Farewell, Good Man", thank you for your guidance, modelling and example.

Michael Becker

Thinking of Volunteering?

'THINKING OF VOLUNTEERING' WAS MIFSA'S WEDNESDAY FORUM TOPIC FOR FEBRUARY 2010 AND PARTICIPANTS THOROUGHLY ENJOYED AN INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION AND WORKSHOP FROM KAYE MAHOMET AND ANNA WILLIAMSON FROM VOLUNTEERING SA&NT.

Kaye is the Manager of Sector Support and Development as well as Manager of the Alice Springs and Darwin offices. Anna manages the Volunteer Inclusion Project which assists with placing volunteers from diverse backgrounds and people living with disability or mental illness into positions.

Forum participants were given an overview of the organisation's services followed by an examination of the benefits of volunteering which include developing networks and friends whilst learning new skills and refining old ones. Volunteering can also open doors to education and be a pathway to employment or a source of recreation. It can increase self esteem, personal satisfaction and self-awareness. In fact, volunteering can provide a smorgasbord of experiences and opportunities; it can change your life journey!

The Forum continued with a lively debate around disclosure of mental health issues in the workplace; some sharing of personal volunteering experiences and we discussed a checklist of things to consider before accepting a volunteer position. We also learned about the many and varied volunteering opportunities that exist and the importance of finding a volunteer position that matches your skills and interests.

We extend a very warm thank you to Kaye and Anna for their thought provoking and extremely useful presentation!

Volunteering SA&NT is the peak body representing the interests of volunteers and the volunteering sector in South Australia and the Northern Territory. Key services provided include: Recruitment; Volunteer Vacancy Listing Service; Volunteer Referral Service; Training; Volunteer Management Professional Development; Consultancy; Research; Working with Targeted Populations; Guest Speakers; Free Resource Library and Merchandising.

If you would like more information or guidance around becoming a volunteer contact Anna at Volunteering SA&NT at 08 8221 7177 (Country Callers: 1300 135 545) or visit www.volunteering.sa.org.au

Go to page 16 for a 'Volunteers Check list', provided to assist you as you consider Volunteer options.

Volunteer work at MIFSA

Looking for voluntary work? Enjoy meeting people? Committed to supporting MIFSA? MIFSA provides its range of services through the generous and enthusiastic support of volunteers.

Volunteers needed for SAW Art Exhibition

2010 Schizophrenia Awareness Week – May 16 – 22

An opportunity exists for Special Project Volunteers to assist with the MIFSA Schizophrenia Awareness Week Art Exhibition 2010.

For more information or to express your interest, please contact Simone Phippen or Susan Wilkes on 8378 4100



Why Volunteer?

“Helping others and giving back to the community is something that has really helped me in my own recovery journey,” says Lynton Brown: husband; father; grandfather; consumer and carer; hard worker; generous and resourceful volunteer.

For many years Lynton has given his time, skills and experience to many formal and informal volunteering roles within the community. For 16 years Lynton has been involved with MIFSA variously as a participant, member, volunteer and currently one of our stalwart Sunflower Shops Van Drivers.

Having attended the recent Wednesday Forum about volunteering, I thought Lynton would be an ideal person to have a chat with to get his perspective on “why volunteer” and to learn what he considers the benefits to be.

Lynton’s first involvement with MIFSA was on a very casual basis back in the mid 90s Kent Town days when he was introduced by members of a social group from Grow.

At this particular time, Lynton was having difficulty finding work so began volunteering in order to “re-train myself” and to “keep busy”. For three years part-time Lynton was driving Fred’s Van (now part of St Vincent De Paul) and assisting people who were living on the street with food and supplies. It came to pass that excess food was, by arrangement, delivered to MIFSA, then situated at the Keswick premises. Lynton laughed when he recalled how ‘I used to hide the food out the back as I couldn’t get there during office hours. I would divide up the delivery and let Fred’s Van people know that I had hidden the food in two lots – food for MIFSA and food for the ‘boarders’ in the shed!’ When he finished his work with Fred’s Van, Lynton continued to come to Keswick.

As a MIFSA participant, Lynton completed Peer Work training and attended the Therapeutic Groups program. He also greatly enjoyed fishing, music and many other activities. He often played the piano and even performed at some of the past Christmas Functions (“last Christmas was the best one ever by the way, I really enjoyed it!”) and with his ever present sense of humour, “even dressed up on a Melbourne Cup Day!” As a MIFSA Volunteer, Lynton has been involved with many projects including quality control sorting of bread tags, ‘shed’ sorting and as a Parking Attendant during Show Week at our new premises at Wayville.

Volunteer positions held by Lynton include three years at the Glenside Hospital Gymnasium and the Glenside Library and two years with the Unique Club (part of Southern Mental Health for the Aged at the Repatriation Hospital). He has also volunteered at Carrick Hill, with the Electoral Office and for many years at his

Church. Roles have included driving, gardening, cleaning, playing the piano, visiting people and generally doing whatever needs to be done. Informally, Lynton has always been available to lend a neighbourly hand.

Lynton says that one of the benefits he has continued to enjoy throughout his volunteering roles is the connections he has made. He readily draws on his own recovery experiences to assist people and says he cross-promotes MIFSA and other services through his natural networks in the mental health sector.

Lynton describes himself as a family man and he and his wife Joan are the proud parents of three children and have 4 grandchildren. With the onset of mental health issues in late teenage years, they have supported one another and notwithstanding Lynton’s long employment history, say that volunteering has always been integral to their lifestyle.

Why volunteer? For Lynton it means continuing to meet new friends and acquaintances and to broaden his experience

and skills in life. He values being able to make a contribution and by volunteering he feels as that he is giving something back to the community that supports him. “It replaces the workforce and has great social benefit”. He regularly experiences a sense of achievement and personal satisfaction and very much enjoys being busy (although he is currently trying to be less busy!) Lynton is quick to point out the myriad benefits to wellbeing that volunteering has provided him.

Why volunteer at MIFSA? In Lynton’s words, “being acknowledged is very important and being treated with proper courtesy and feeling as though you are a part of a team is very important. At MIFSA respect is multilayered throughout and there is loyalty and the culture is progressive. The mental health area can be very complex and at MIFSA

there is effective management and good processes for volunteer support. MIFSA is very flexible and you feel heard as a volunteer”.

One of Lynton’s current goals is to be “less garrulous”. “Mr Garrulous” is a nickname Lynton says he earned in Form 2 and which seems, he says, to have stuck. Having said that he has two final things to add:

He would like to take this opportunity “to mention and commend Elisha Stolk, Sunflower Shops Coordinator and all the Shops Volunteers... in all my years of volunteer experience I have never worked with such a committed team who provide such great support to one another”; and “I believe that there is no single situation in life that you can’t find a positive!”

Susan Wilkes
susanw@mifsa.org



Lynton Brown



Marion Support Group

MEETINGS ARE HELD BIMONTHLY (FEBRUARY, APRIL, JUNE, AUGUST, OCTOBER, DECEMBER) ON THE SECOND MONDAY (EXCLUDING PUBLIC HOLIDAYS) AS SOCIAL GET-TOGETHERS OVER A MEAL AT THE WARRADALE HOTEL, 234 DIAGONAL ROAD; 6:15PM.

The next gathering will be held on Monday 12 April at 6pm, a week later than usual due to Easter. Hope to see you all there.

The following meeting will be held on 10 May.

The Marion Support Group has a new Convenor

I would like to thank Narelle who began this group 17 years ago. She has supported me over the years with a phone call or card when things were not going well and I know many others who can relate to this. Her tireless efforts in supporting carers and her positive attitude will always be remembered. Also thank you to Ken who was always there as a good backup and a great sense of humour. Thank you both and enjoy your long awaited retirement to Port Arlington.

I feel very humble stepping into her shoes in a minor way to keep our bimonthly social get-togethers going at the Warradale Hotel.

Please ring Jeannette on 8297 6974 or 8554 2467 by Friday 9 April to confirm bookings.

Everyone welcome,
Jeannette Walsh

Mood Disorders Carers Group

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FOURTH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH, AT MARJORIE BLACK HOUSE, 47 KING WILLIAM ROAD, UNLEY; 7:30PM.

Offering help and support to those in the role of caring for people with bipolar affective disorder and depression.

Coming meetings: Tuesdays 27 April and 25 May 2010.

Newcomers welcome; to join this group or more information please phone MIFSA Reception, 8378 4100.

Marcia Johnson Timm, Convenor

Rewire Recovery Group

A GROUP FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND/OR MANIA. GROUPS HELD ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH, 1PM-2:30PM.

MIFSA Rewire Recovery Group follows the rehabilitation and recovery model, which focuses on supporting people experiencing depression, anxiety and/or mania, to develop and maintain a key role in managing their own recovery.

No referral required. Newcomers welcome, carers or support workers may also attend. Please direct all enquiries to Anna Byas, Group Coordinator/Facilitator: annab@mifsa.org or 8378 4100.

Coming sessions:

April 14: Accepting Emotions

Do you battle to get rid of unpleasant or uncomfortable emotions? Feel anxious about being anxious, guilty about being depressed etc?
Learn ways to let go of the struggle.

May 12: Thinking about thinking

Do you: Catastrophise? Filter out the good things? Blame yourself for everything that goes wrong?
Learn how to challenge unhelpful thinking.

All sessions held in MIFSA's Conference Room
5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville (carpark under building or street parking available – observe time restrictions).

Voice Hearers' Group

MEETS WEEKLY ON THURSDAYS, 1:30PM – 3PM AT THE MIFSA CONFERENCE ROOM, 5 COOKE TERRACE, WAYVILLE.

The group works together to:

- Develop effective life management skills as well as voice management skills
- Identify stressful situations and helpful coping strategies
- Increase self-awareness about patterns of voices and how they relate to life events, thoughts and emotions
- Explore personal values and identity related to and apart from voice hearing
- Acknowledge and feel good about strengths and achievements
- Develop goals towards improving health and well-being.

No referral required. Enquiries to Anna Byas, Group Coordinator/Facilitator: annab@mifsa.org or 8378 4100.



No Pain, No Gain

REHABILITATION FROM A CRIMINAL PAST IS ANYTHING BUT EASY...

Despite their notoriety and the 'tough guy' persona they often present, prisoners are a uniquely-vulnerable group of people – especially when first released back into the community. When they hit the streets – often after years in punitive, soul-sapping surrounds – ex-prisoners face what can only be described as a daunting set of challenges. Often-as-not, life skills are few, 'issues' are plenty, discrimination is rife and pockets are empty – hardly an optimal combination when one of the few aptitudes you've shown thus far in life is for anti-social behaviour. Little wonder, then, that the recidivism rate among Australian offenders within two years of release is a staggering 38.2 per cent*.

Having been released from custody just last year, I'm well-placed to report on the difficulties ex-prisoners face. My own personal struggles weren't a mirror image of the generic challenges outlined above, but life was certainly a battle. For one thing, I had no friends or relatives in SA, the state where I was incarcerated.

This was a significant problem since I was required to stay here as a condition of my release. Support, therefore, was at a minimum in the critical first days and weeks after release, when many ex-prisoners make the fateful choice of 'going straight' or returning to old ways (luckily I'd already made that choice before my release, and I've stuck with it over 12 offence-free months). Accommodation wasn't a problem thanks to one non-government organisation (NGO) but dealing with the psychological issues driving my anti-social behaviour seemed beyond this NGO's resources. This is disturbing, given that psychological issues are "between three and five times higher"*** among offenders than in the general community, and that there's an established causal relationship between such issues and crime. The cost to the community of ignoring such problems is far greater than the cure. As the Americans say: "go figure".

Amid the frustrations encountered during my first few weeks of freedom came one piece of sound advice. "Go and see MIFSA", I was told. So I did. When I first arrived at MIFSA, the place was in a state of flux. A move from its Keswick headquarters to nearby Wayville was afoot, the Induction Officer I first saw was moving on and funding for the mentoring of people from my suburb wasn't yet available. These factors – all of them file-able under the heading 'crap happens' – could have seen me fall through the cracks. Not to worry: one memorable temper tantrum later and no-one was ever going to forget me again!

In the months since, progress on issues which threatened to permanently derail my life has been slow but steady, thanks in great part to pro-active input from the Personal Helpers and Mentors program (PHaMs) and tolerance from MIFSA's Activities and Reception staff in the face of my occasional eruptions.

Tangible progress over this time includes:

- re-engaging with people (at MIFSA and elsewhere) after years of relative isolation;
- returning to study in – of all things – social work, first as a correspondence student and then, significantly, as an on-campus student;
- managing my day-to-day issues through Dialectic Behavioural Therapy (DBT) at Port Adelaide Mental Health;
- further development of life skills and coping strategies through one-to-one counseling;
- obtaining 'Category 1' (priority) status with the local Housing Department as I seek permanent accommodation in that state (one can't overstate the peace-of-mind such progress brings, not to mention the prospect of stability), and finally;
- beginning some modest voluntary work with efforts such as the Foodbank SA program.

To the uninitiated, this progress might seem modest, even mediocre, but given where I was, trust me: it's massive. Most importantly, the path I'm on has given me hope that I can make a contribution to society again after years seeing myself as irretrievably broken. The Social Work study I've embarked upon

isn't coincidental, by the way. Once you've seen the contributions made by MIFSA and other staff – some of them with histories every bit as dysfunctional as mine – you can't help but see the vocational possibilities.

About now you might be thinking this article is little more than a PR press release for MIFSA; it's not. Like all institutions, big and small, MIFSA has its drawbacks, and I've been frustrated in my attempts to expand my role around the place. Don't get me wrong: it's appropriate for decision-makers to factor in whatever concerns they have about me, but for each positive, forward step I take towards rehabilitation, a reciprocal step towards me would be welcome.

Validating someone's efforts is a motivator par excellence. I'm sure I read that somewhere...

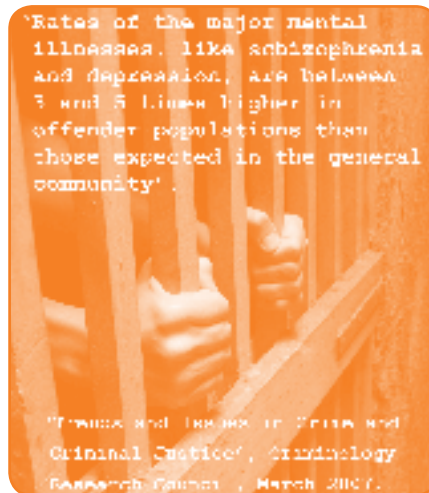
Such issues notwithstanding, I have a lot in my favour as I sort out my life. Not only have I made a decision to embark on that journey, but I'm smart and resourceful enough to overcome most if not all of the obstacles (some of them self-made) which I face. Pity those who lack the faculty and/or the savvy to get there on their own. It is they who are most at risk of slipping through those proverbial cracks. To staff at MIFSA and elsewhere I implore you: when it comes to seemingly-lost causes – the 'chronic' cases, the quiet ones and, yes, the occasionally hot-tempered clients – err on the side of generosity; go the extra yard.

It'll pay off. Trust me.

By Malcolm Little

*Source: Sentencing Advisory Council (Vic);

**Source: Criminology Research Council (ACT).



The Forgotten Children

A MAJOR EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN OF PARENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.

Delegates examined the daily problems faced by children whose parents have a mental illness, and subsequently prepared the following Declaration that states:

- Children of parents with mental illness bear serious burdens which they cannot be expected to carry on their own.
- Good-quality parenting by people with mental illness is fully possible if the right support is given on a continuing basis.
- Support needs to start early, with the aims of helping parents develop their parenting abilities despite their mental illness, to keep families together, and so prevent the need to take children away from their natural home.

'The Forgotten Children' Conference, which took place late last year at the EUFAMI Conference held in Vilnius Lithuania, was sponsored by the World Health Organisation (WHO) with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the European Commission acting as three collaborating partners. The conference was run jointly by the Leuven, Belgium-based European federation of associations of families of people with mental illness (eufami) and the Vilnius-based Lietuvos sutrikusios psichikos Žmonių globos bendrija (IspŽgb) [Lithuanian People's Mental Health Trusteeship Community].

Conference Declaration

Delegates from 25 countries across Europe confirm their support for this Declaration following their participation at the EUFAMI Conference held in Vilnius, Lithuania on 26-27 November 2009.

Children of parents with mental illness bear serious burdens which they cannot be expected to carry on their own. They are vulnerable to long term emotional and behavioural problems and do not normally have a say in how they are treated. They and their families therefore need regular support from health, social and school staff professionals as well as an understanding of their situation within their local communities.

- Services provided should focus on the whole family including not only parents and children but others such as grandparents who may assume a parenting role.
- Support needs to start early, from the prenatal stage and especially targeting the first year after birth, and leading into adolescence. The aims must be to help parents develop their parenting abilities despite their mental illness, to keep families together and so prevent the need to take children away from their natural home.
- Good quality parenting by people with mental illness is fully possible if the right support is given on a continuing basis. This may include specialist day care or home help with domestic matters.



- Parents with mental illness are themselves entitled to all the normal rights of citizenship that are generally taken for granted. In particular they should not allow themselves to be stigmatised by others and made to feel guilty as parents. This should form part of public policy to raise awareness and understanding of the problems of mental illness and increase sensitivity towards those who are affected.

This broader approach involves cooperation by a range of people and agencies – schools, childcare services, family organisations and health providers – to give the children of parents with mental illness the support and help they need to flourish as children and go on to develop their full potential as individuals. It should therefore be led and championed nationally by governments and locally by the civic authorities.

Let us all commit ourselves to tackling the problems faced by these forgotten children in our own localities.

For more about the Conference, its organisers and Declaration, go to: www.eufami.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=51&Itemid=75

Financial Counselling Services at MIFSA, Wayville

Tuesdays, 11am-1pm

Gain control over your finances

Make an appointment with a qualified financial counsellor from UnitingCare Wesley Bowden for assistance in managing a wide range of financial problems: from budgeting to debt problems, legal action and bankruptcy, and advice on concessions available for people to access.

To make an appointment with the Financial Counsellor please phone MIFSA Wayville Reception on 8378 4100.





Book Review

Inspired Recovery BY SONYA MELBOURNE

Is a message of hope for those who suffer from mental illness and all those who care about them.

In short, *Inspired Recovery* is about the triumph of the human spirit. It is intended to be a powerful source of inspiration and a genuine message of hope to sufferers the world over, that wellness and recovery are possible.

Inspired Recovery is a compilation of true stories of those diagnosed with mental illness who have overcome the odds and achieved happiness and success in their lives.

"Each chapter provides a glimpse into a remarkable and courageous journey. It is a great privilege to read these narratives – sincere and full of wisdom. They describe how people cope in the face of psychological stress and serious mental illness. Alas, they also bring into sharp relief how much more work needs to be done in order to help people stay on their individual pathway to recovery."

Historians tell us that the compassion and strength of a society can be judged on how that society treats their minority groups. The true stories told in this book suggest that our society still has a long way to go in helping people recover from mental illness.

The book also provides template for those struggling to cope with mental illness – here are tried and true suggestions, based on the 'lived experience'. Not all of these suggestions will work for all individuals – we need much more research into the causes and optimal treatments for mental illness – but this book is 'tonic' for the spirit and will inspire many more along the road to recovery."

Professor John McGrath, MD, PhD, FRANZCP. Prof. McGrath is a Director, Epidemiology and Developmental Neurobiology at the Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research, University of Queensland.

To order your copy of *Inspired Recovery* go to:
www.inspiredrecovery.com



Shine

FOUNDATION SHINE
INCORPORATED

WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO AN AFTERNOON OF Fabulous Food, Flowers and Fun!

Bring your mum, your friends to our Mother's Day High Tea at Lenzerheide Restaurant, 146 Belair Road Hawthorn.

Tuesday, 4 May 2010, 12noon to 3pm

Special Guest MC, Eve Goodings will comper the afternoon, whilst Foundation Shine Co-Founder, Robyn May, will share some of her ideas with a flower arranging demonstration.

An Exhibition by Emma Kate Codrington, 'Chrysalis – Unravelling Anorexia' will be on display.

Cost: \$50 per person (includes GST) Proceeds from this event will be shared by MIFSA and ACEDA.

To order tickets or enquiries, please contact Sharon Middleton, 0418 826 272 or Robyn May 0418 848 319 or email: info@foundationshine.org.au

www.foundationshine.org.au

The Americanisation of Mental Illness

Watters, Ethan (2010), "Crazy Like Us: The Globalization of the American Psyche", US, Free Press.

Watters expounds on how the West has spread modern knowledge of mental illness around the world to reveal the biological basis of psychic suffering and dispel myths and stigma. "There is now good evidence to suggest that in the process of teaching the rest of the world to think like us, we've been... changing not only the treatments but also the expression of mental illness in other cultures".

A thought-provoking essay adapted from Watters' book was published in the New York Times and is available at www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10psyche-t.html

Taken from Multicultural Mental Health Australia e-news, February 2010 edition, www.mmha.org.au



Volunteers Check list

IF YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING WITH AN ORGANISATION THERE ARE SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER.

If you decide that your interests and skills match a particular not-for-profit organisation and you apply for a volunteer position with them, below is a helpful check list of questions you may like to ask before accepting a Volunteer role.

NATIONAL POLICE CLEARANCE AND PERSONAL REFERENCES:

- Will I be required to provide a Police Check (National Police Clearance) and if so what is the process and will I have to pay for it?
- Do I need to provide any Personal Referees?

INSURANCE:

- Does the organisation have Personal Accident Insurance cover and Public Liability Insurance Cover?
- If I am required to drive my own vehicle as part of any volunteer role, what sort of insurance do I need?

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT AND OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES:

- What Policy does the Organisation have in relation to travel expenses? Am I able to claim public transport costs or mileage in relation to travel to and from my volunteer position?
- If I use my phone or incur any out-of-pocket expenses as a result of my volunteering position, are these expenses able to be reimbursed?

VOLUNTEER POSITION:

- Will I have a defined volunteer role with a clear role description?
- What information do you need from me and will it be kept confidential?
- Is there an introductory or probationary period?
- Will I be part of a team or working on my own?
- Will I be trained and supported in my role?
- What happens if I am uncomfortable or have concerns about aspects of my role?
- Is there any opportunity for professional development?
- Is there a dress code?
- Will I need a uniform or any special equipment requirements and who provides these?
- For how many hours will I be required?
- How much flexibility will I have if I am unable to make it to my job for any reason?
- Will the organisation certify my volunteering hours should Centrelink require this?
- Will the organisation be happy to provide me with an employment reference?
- Does the organisation provide any volunteer recognition?

Checklist prepared by Susan Wilkes in collaboration with Volunteering SA&NT; to find out more about Volunteer SA&NT go to www.volunteeringsa.org.au

Have Your Say

ARE YOU A CARER OR PROVIDING SERVICES TO CARERS: (the Riverland, CALD communities, Lower South East)

Come along and Have Your Say about unmet needs and service gaps for Carers, particularly if you are a Carer for or providing services to Carers of frail older people or Carers of young people with a disability; or thinking about doing so.

The views collected will be included in a Carers SA independent report to Home and Community Care to help improve local service for Carers.

Riverland

Venue: Berri Resort Hotel, Riverview Drive, Berri

Date: 7 April 2010

Carers: 10am-12:30pm:

Service Providers: 2pm-4:30pm

RSVP: 31 March – call 1800 815 549

CALD (NB: service providers only)

Venue: Carers SA State Office, 58 King William Road, Goodwood

Date: 8 April 2010

Service providers: 2:00pm-4:30pm

RSVP: 31 March – call 1800 815 549

Lower South East

Venue: Mount Gambier International

Jubilee Highway West, Mt Gambier

Date: 6 May 2010

Carers: 10am-12:30pm

Service Providers: 2pm-4:30pm

RSVP: 3 May – call 1800 815 549

Can't attend? Call Phil Saunders on 1800 815 549 to make a comment or complete postal feedback.

Have Your Say Forums are part of a larger series of consultations being held across South Australia to look at practical solutions to overcome service gaps for family Carers. Two forums are being held in each location, one for Carers and one for service providers. The views collected will be included in an independent report to the Home and Community Care program (HACC) to help improve local services for Carers. Information from the forums will also be provided to attendees and the regional Carer support organisation.

The project, funded by HACC, is being undertaken by Carers SA in association with local Carer support groups: this CALD forum is being undertaken in conjunction with Multicultural Aged Care.

Carers SA is a state wide body representing the interests of family Carers across South Australia. Carers SA plays a key role in leading change and empowering family Carers to participate in a partnership with government and non government service providers. Together we seek better services; to improve the conditions under which family Carers work and to increase the recognition of the contribution of family Carers to the South Australian community.





Pathways to Recovery Project Healthy Living Group Workshops

A CONSUMER DEVELOPED INITIATIVE (CDI)

In recent times much has been written about the benefits of healthy living in order to assist recovery and promote better mental health. Research clearly indicates links between good mental health, physical health and general wellbeing, yet there is a distinct lack of education in this area and the mortality rate of people affected by mental disorders continues to rise.

Recovery often occurs more effectively with a merge of medical and psychosocial interventions with a strong holistic focus, which places the consumer in the drivers seat to take personal responsibility for self management; however, a strong and dedicated education program with outcomes is very necessary to support the consumer journey to wellness.

Much has been written about the recovery concept and its controversial definitions. Recovery is an individual process in which the consumer pursues wellness. Various pathways can be created; however, the consumer must walk the pathways and overcome obstacles and barriers with the help of education and often with peer support.

The Healthy Living Group Workshops, which are an interactive participatory self help styled group provide motivation and support for those in pursuit of wellness. The group meets monthly at the Mental Illness Fellowship of South Australia (MIFSA) and is facilitated by a Consumer Consultant/Peer Worker.

A multifaceted approach is used. Monthly topics range from: diet and nutrition; physical activity; stress management; seasonal affective disorder; sleep hygiene; coping with heat waves and Christmas stress; wellness and recovery plans. Consumers are encouraged to join other groups within the community such as walking, yoga, social, hobby, cooking, coffee, music groups, Day to Day Living programs; all of which promote consumers to have an active sense of self, discover meaning and purpose, and to have social connections.

A T100 self report outcome measure tool was developed in 2008 which gave an overall outcome score of 72.5% for the group participants. The results indicated that the majority were more able to effectively deal with daily problems, self manage and look forward to better health.

As a result of interest from Country SA and interstate about the Healthy Living Group (as convened at MIFSA) Microsoft PowerPoint facilitator versions are being designed and with standardised handouts and evaluations for participants based upon Consumer Participatory Action Research (CPAR)

It is anticipated the new national version will be launched at TheMHS conference in Adelaide 2011, following field trials at various locations and when much needed sponsorship support becomes available.

Dave Tapley
Consumer Consultant, Peer Group Convenor

Be Smoke Free!

A supportive program for tobacco smokers with mental illness

Would you like to quit or cut back tobacco?

Join the *Be Smoke Free!* Support Program
being conducted at MIFSA during 2010.

The 2010 Program is being held at MIFSA Wayville on Thursdays from 10am-12noon.

The group provides a positive and supportive place to work on smoking and is for people who are:

- Just thinking about quitting
- Wanting to cut back
- Really keen to stop smoking.



For more information or to register interest please phone the Tobacco and Mental Illness Project on 8200 2009 or talk to Simone Phippen in the MIFSA Wayville Activity Program on 8378 4100.

Helping people with mental illness to Be Tobacco Smoke Free!

Training for all those who work with people with mental illness and want to support them to quit or reduce tobacco.

One Day Workshops, 9:15am-5pm (no cost):

Friday, 14 May: Glenside Learning Centre, Fullarton

Thursday, 17 June: Red Cross, 229 Marion Road, Marleston

Learning objectives include:

- Have an understanding of the importance of addressing tobacco with people with mental illness
- Understand the role of the health professional in assisting people with mental illness to address tobacco.
- Understand the Stages of Change Model and how to apply it within a clinical setting, in particular in relation to nicotine addiction
- Have an understanding of the special issues that arise for people with mental illness when addressing tobacco and how to effectively assist them.
- Be aware of effective pharmacology for helping people deal with nicotine withdrawal and its application with people with mental illness.

Registration: www.health.sa.gov.au/mentalhealth

For more information contact Maxie Ashton:
maxie.ashton@health.sa.gov.au or phone 8200 2006

MIFSA and SAPOL Working Together

MIFSA Activity Programs at Wayville recently had the pleasure of hosting eight South Australian police cadets on our "Out There" adventure program which runs in partnership with Panangga and Glenside hospital.

The exercise formed part of the cadets' course work relating to mental health. This was a successful initiative in community education which was valuable for all involved. The cadets, as well as participants and staff, found the experience rewarding.

The first group of four cadets was lucky enough to accompany us to Greenhills Adventure Park. Police cadets were paired up with participants and had fun on the water slides, mini golf and archery. One cadet said "Working closely and forming a small friendship with the guys/girls on the day was rewarding".

The second group of four headed down to Sellicks Beach where they joined in beach cricket, a walk and wading in the water with participants. One cadet stated, "Overall I found the whole day fun and informative. I really have a better understanding of how people are helped by services like MIFSA".

The cadets gained valuable hands on experience via the interactions with participants, which gave them a better insight into people living with a mental illness, as well as an understanding of the potential for people living with the impact of mental illness to lead fulfilling and productive lives. They were able to complement the 'hands on' experience with a de-briefing session at the end of the day which answered any specific questions they had.

MIFSA Activity Programs at Wayville look forward to hosting more cadets in the future and strengthening our partnership with SAPOL. We are confident this will ensure better understanding of people living with a mental illness amongst our up and coming police force.

Helen Huffa and Simone Phippen

Housing SA Accommodation Advice

Fortnightly at MIFSA Wayville on Thursdays, 1pm-4pm

Housing SA provides an Outreach Service for people with mental illness. To make an appointment with the Outreach Service Officer, phone MIFSA Reception on 8378 4100.

Wayville Activity Program Art Group Project Time Table

Held every Tuesday, 12:30pm

at Wayville Activity Centre, 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville

January	Mosaic Mural	Come in to see the finished product, see photos below
February	Mosaic Mural	
March	Glass Painting	
April	Glass Painting	
May	Fimo Jewellery making	
June	Botanic Landscape sketching or painting	
July	Visit various galleries in Adelaide	
August	Painting Sunflower Shop bins	
September	Live model sketching (non nude)	
October	Landscape sketching or painting	
November	End-of-year-wrap-up – 1	
December	End-of-year-wrap-up – 2	

Art Group tutor, Danielle Kriegler

Enquires to Simone Phippen, 8378 4100 or by email: simone@mifsa.org



Left: art group members, Lyndell and Yolanda, and below, with Art Tutor, Dani Kriegler, Chloe and Yolanda.





Wayville Activity Programs

As a result of some detailed and careful work in recent months, some difficult decisions have been made to ensure the long term future of Wayville Activity Programs.

From Easter 2010 (starting Tuesday 6th April) the Wayville Activity Programs will operate during the following hours:

Monday	10am to 4pm	MAPs and Orientations by appointment (closed for group programs)
Tuesday	10am to 4pm	Activity Centre and Programs
Wednesday	10am to 4pm	Activity Centre and Programs
Thursday	10am to 4pm	Activity Centre and Programs
Friday	10am to 4pm	Activity Centre and Programs

MEALS

Preparing and sharing meals will continue to be an important part of the program. Added to this, a new cooking program will help people to plan, shop and prepare simple and healthy meals at low cost. More details about this will follow soon.

At the moment the meals are running at a considerable loss. From Easter onwards, participants will be required to pay for all meals on a daily basis, which means no more meal credits. Lunches will remain at a reasonable price of \$1.50 for sandwiches. Occasionally participants and staff plan together for special meals, and this can continue. Please bring your ideas to Participants' Meetings. MIFSA Activity Staff will be available to help participants plan for the challenges these changes may bring, which may include finding other services which provide meals.

KEEPING UP TO DATE AS WE ADJUST

We highly value Activity Programs as one of the important services we offer at MIFSA. In fact, it is because of our determination to keep the Wayville Activity Programs running that MIFSA is making these adjustments. Without the changes the program is at risk. Information Updates, a Question and Answer sheet and meetings have occurred over the past 6 months with a meeting mid March attended by participants and staff to discuss the restructure and how we can work together for a healthy and vibrant Activity Program at Wayville.

If you need further information or support please call Wayville Activity Program staff on 8378 4100.

A New face at MIFSA Eyre

As mentioned in the MIFSA News Dec/Jan edition there has been a change in leadership of the MIFSA Eyre Activity Programs and MIFSA welcomes Peg McCann to the role of Team Leader.

Peg began work in the first week in January after a gradual handover late in 2009, and has spent her first weeks orientating herself with the current program and team, and has begun planning for 2010.

Building on the strong foundation established during its first two years, the Eyre team is exploring ways to grow and diversify the program. We look forward to more news from across the gulf in future editions of MIFSA News!

Mattea Malcolm, Programs Manager

Activity programs incorporate Support for Day to Day Living in the Community – a structured Activity Program and are funded from various sources including HACC, SA Department of Health and Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.



MEMBERSHIP FORM/ CHANGE OF ADDRESS



Mail to : PO Box 310 Marleston 5033

- Membership Renewal
- New Membership
- Change of Address

Membership Categories

- Single \$20
- Pensioner/Student \$10
- Organisation \$45
- Family \$30
- Pensioner Family \$18
- Donation

We keep membership cost low.

Why not make a tax deductible donation and support MIFSA.

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Email Address _____

Contact Telephone _____

Old Address (if applicable) _____

Membership payment by Cheque Money Order Cash Credit card

Visa Mastercard

Credit card number Expiry date /

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

KEY CONTACTS

Chief Executive Officer

Natasha Miliotis
natasha@mifsa.org

Operations Manager

Monique van der Neut
monique@mifsa.org

Programs Managers

Amanda Porter
amanda@mifsa.org

Ben Heyward
bheyward@mifsa.org

Mattea Malcolm
mmalcolm@mifsa.org

Finance Manager

Michael Becker
mbecker@mifsa.org

Communications Officer

Susan Wilkes
susanw@mifsa.org

PROGRAMS

Activity Programs

Mattea Malcolm
mmalcolm@mifsa.org

Education & Therapeutic Groups

Program Team Leader

Ben Swift
ben@mifsa.org

Peer Worker Project Coordinator

Dei Griffith
dgriffith@mifsa.org

Respite Program Team Leader

Naomi Minett
naomi@mifsa.org

Well Ways Programs Coordinator

Maureen Lewis
mlewis@mifsa.org

MIFSA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

President

David Meldrum

Vice President

Marion Croser

Treasurer

Neville Rice

Members

Marion Angel
Eddy Lynch
Pat McLeod
Victoria Morton
Dr Eli Rafalowicz
Susan Wilkes

Minute Secretary

Brigid Downing

Ex Officio

Natasha Miliotis

PROGRAMS CONTINUED

Personal Helpers and Mentors Program

Team Leaders

Mount Gambier

Ingrid Coombe
ingrid@mifsa.org

Outer Southern

Elisabeth Fagan-Schmidt
elisabeth@mifsa.org
Emilie Gagnon-Milot
emilie@mifsa.org

Unley-Mitcham

Amanda Carter
amandac@mifsa.org

Western

Fiona Johnson
fiona@mifsa.org

PATRONS

Dean Brown
Jane Doyle

Correspondence and articles for inclusion in MIFSA News to:

The Editor
MIFSA News
Mental Illness Fellowship SA
PO Box 310
MARLESTON SA 5033

Tel: (08) 8378 4100
Fax: (08) 8378 4199
email: mifsa@mifsa.org

DEADLINE for articles, letters,
reports for the June / July 2010
issue of MIFSA News:

Monday, 3 May 2010

SUNFLOWER SHOPS

Coordinator

Elsha Stolk
0409 697 432

MIFSA LOCATIONS

MIFSA Wayville: 5 Cooke Terrace, Wayville 5034

MIFSA Panangga: 64 Elgin Ave, Christies Beach 5165

MIFSA Reynella: PO Box 255, Morphet Vale 5162

MIFSA Eyre: PO Box 2292, Port Lincoln 5606

MIFSA Mount Gambier: PO Box 1146, Mt Gambier 5290