

# *From Burwood to bestchance*



**120 Years of Care and Education**

Compiled by  
Kay Edwards and Glenys Grant OAM  
&  
A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond  
Ken Masterton

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## 120 Years of Care and Education

**Burwood to bestchance** is a three part publication- an illustrated Chronology covering the 120 year history from 1895 to 2016; a second edition of the book 'A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond - a history of the Burwood Boys' Home' by Ken Masterton; and an additional chapter, 'Success - and Onwards'.

Members of the **bestchance** Heritage Committee, chaired by Hector Davis OAM JP, feel privileged to have researched and produced this book which celebrates the rich history of this unique and continuously relevant organisation.

### KEN MASTERTON, AUTHOR 'A TEA MERCHANT'S VISION AND BEYOND'

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Ken Masterton served on the Committee of Management of Burwood Boys' Home and Child and Family Care Network for almost 30 years and continued his involvement for some time after.

In 2007 Ken's book, *A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond – A history of the Burwood Boys' Home*, was published. This book begins with the vision of tea merchant Robert Campbell Edwards to help the “waifs of Melbourne” and goes on to give a valuable summary of the organisation's achievements in giving thousands of boys a new chance in life.

Ken's original book is presented unchanged within this three part publication. Sadly Ken died just before this new book went to print.



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Burwood Boys' Home 1900

This publication has been made possible through the generous support of the Campbell Edwards Trust and Old Scotch Collegians' Lodge No 396, and others.

Compiled by Kay Edwards and Glenys Grant OAM

Edited by Hector Davis OAM

Success and Onwards edited by Spiri Tsintziras

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*The material presented has been compiled using available prime source information from Annual Reports, newsletters, photographs, minutes of meetings, oral histories and other available records.*

*Unless otherwise referenced, all quotations are taken from Annual Reports.*

*In the development of this work, the Heritage Committee has endeavoured to be as accurate as practicable using the resources available. In the instances where oral history has been used, this is understood to be personal opinion and is not intended to present the final verified or complete narrative of events.*









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# FOREWORD

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It is an honour to write this Foreword on behalf of the Board, as a token of gratitude to those who have brought to life our rich history.

Much has changed at bestchance since we were founded in 1895. This latest edition brings us up to date with some of those changes over recent years.

It captures the growth and development of both our organisation and our people – while paying tribute to the consistent thread woven into our fabric; which is serving the needs of children and families, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Saul Ryan  
Chairman, **bestchance** Child Family Care Inc.

Glen Waverley  
2016



**ROBERT CAMPBELL EDWARDS**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*The bestchance Heritage Committee is grateful for the generous assistance received and acknowledges the following contributors with thanks:*

The Campbell Edwards Trust which has supported this project and subsequent publication.

'From Burwood to bestchance' tells the story of Burwood Boys Home founder Robert Campbell Edwards, and the evolution of his and the Trust's vision to 'make a real and sustainable difference to people's lives in Australia'. [campbelledwardstrust.org](http://campbelledwardstrust.org)

The Old Scotch Collegians' Lodge No. 396 has provided the extra funding needed to enable this work to be published in a hard cover edition and for its dissemination in National, State, Municipal and other libraries.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Hector Davis, OAM JP, Chairman, **bestchance** Heritage Committee and Past President, Burwood Children's Home- for his inspirational leadership, support, knowledge, editing and financial support.

Ken Masterton [dec.2016], for his book 'A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond' and Ken's niece Norma Hayes for her assistance.

Kay Edwards and Glenys Grant for researching, compiling & writing this publication.

Past President John Thompson OAM, Past President Des Dodds, Past COM/Board Members Gary Edwards and John Moore and former CEO, Lodi Francesconi.

Rev. Dorothy Quantrelle, Ed Snell and Brian Sellars

Saul Ryan, Chairman, **bestchance** Child Family Care Inc, CEO Kevin Feeney and staff members, Vicki James and Diana Khanom

The Cheshire family

Rob Grant and Spiri Tsintziras, contributing writers and editors



**BESTCHANCE HERITAGE COMMITTEE 2016**

Back: Gary Edwards, John Moore, John Thompson OAM, Ed Snell

Front: Key Edwards, Rev Dorothy Quantrelle, Hector Davis OAM JP, Glenys Grant OAM



# THE HERITAGE COMMITTEE

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The Heritage Committee comprises volunteers with a long association with the organisation and includes former residents, past members of the Committee of Management and other supporters. It is committed to preserving the unique history and work commenced by Robert Campbell Edwards in response to his concern for disadvantaged boys in the 1890's.

The ongoing work of the Committee includes collecting, cataloguing and conserving items and photos of historic importance. This work provides background material for the promotion of the organisation, showcasing its 120 years of assisting children and families.

Since 2007, the Heritage Committee has undertaken various work of historical interest including restoration of an original Foundation stone, preparing story boards for display, and preserving important photographs.

The Committee also assisted fellow committee member Ken Masterton in assembling the records needed to write his book 'A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond'. Ken's book recorded the establishment of Burwood Boys' Home, its mission and the developments that had taken place from 1895 to 2000.

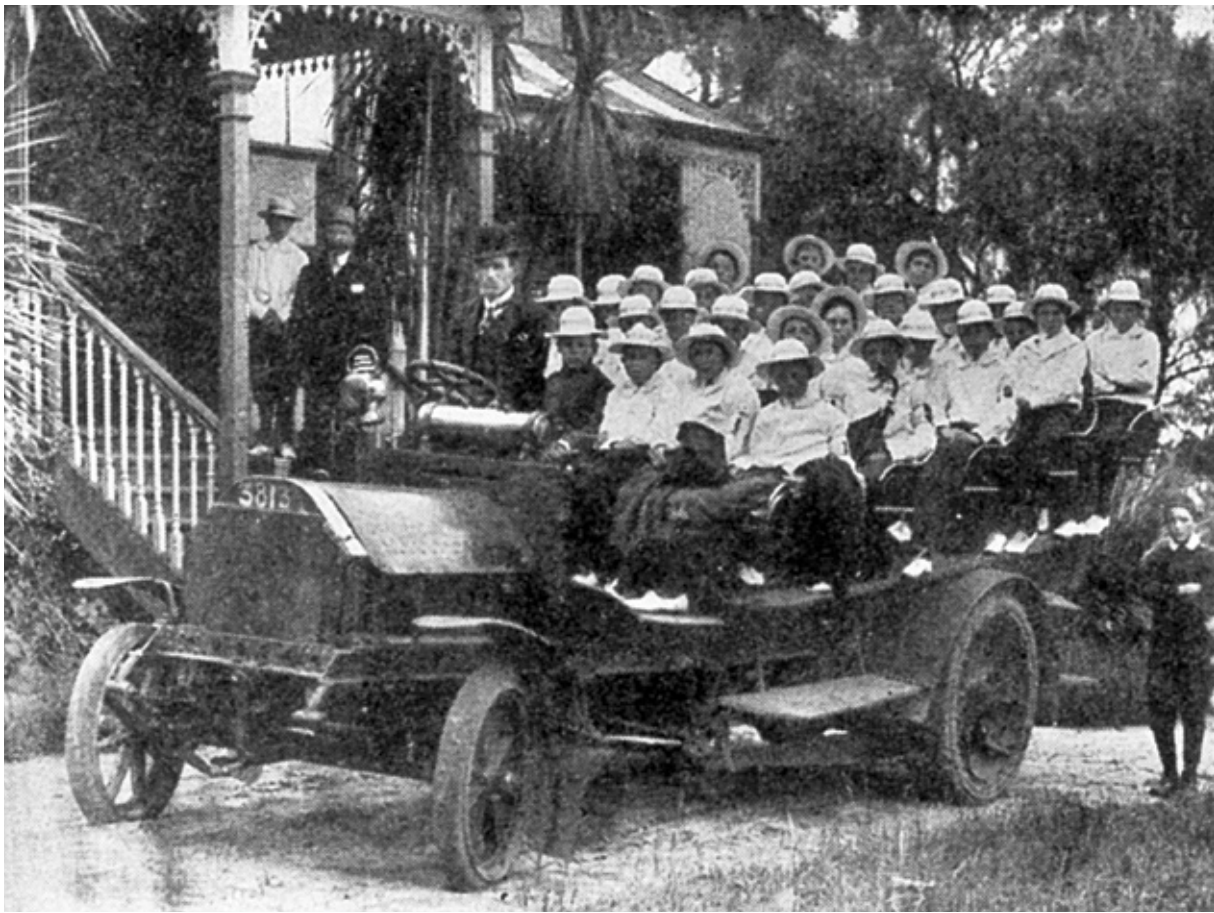
Ken's great contribution to the organisation is recognised in the Forward to his earlier 2007 publication which is reproduced in this volume. Sadly Ken passed away early in 2016.

In 2011, the Heritage Committee was requested to write a new book continuing from where Ken's book finished. This new work incorporates Ken's book, together with a Chronology – a detailed illustrated record of events and an additional chapter covering the period from 2000 to the present. '**From Burwood to Bestchance - 120 Years of Care and Education**' is the result. It has been produced in both e-book and print versions and is held in National and State libraries.

**From Burwood to bestchance** tells the story of how the vision and philosophy of the founder has been continued, interpreted and implemented to meet changing needs since 1895.

The members of the Heritage Committee are grateful to its members, Kay Edwards, Glenys Grant and Gary Edwards for the many voluntary hours they have spent in researching, compiling and recording data and additional material to complete this expanded history, and in particular for the leadership they have given to the project.

**Hector Davis OAM, JP**  
**Chairman, bestchance Heritage Committee**



The first motor picnic

# INTRODUCTION

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## *From Burwood to bestchance*

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### 120 Years of Care and Education

**Burwood to bestchance** is a three part publication- an illustrated Chronology covering the 120 year history from 1895 to 2016; a second edition of the book ‘A Tea Merchant’s Vision and Beyond – a history of the Burwood Boys’ Home’ by Ken Masterton; and an additional chapter, ‘Success - and Onwards’.

#### **CHRONOLOGY 1895 TO 2016**

The Chronology section covers the 120 years of Burwood Boys Home to **bestchance** as it is today. While the Chronology lists significant events, people and programs in a factual style, it also reflects a dynamic and flexible organisation responding to the social needs presented in each era to the present day.

#### **A TEA MERCHANT’S VISION AND BEYOND**

The original book, ‘A Tea Merchant’s Vision and Beyond, a history of the Burwood Boys’ Home’ by Ken Masterton is incorporated unchanged in this publication.

#### **SUCCESS - AND ONWARDS**

This third section covers the period from the year 2000 to today and documents the more recent work of **bestchance** as it reaches its 120th year. ‘Success – and Onwards’ was researched, contributed to and compiled by members of the Heritage Committee and Kevin Feeney, **bestchance** CEO.

This history is provided in both printed form and as an e-book on the **bestchance** website: [bestchance.org.au](http://bestchance.org.au)

We hope that when you read this book you will recognise the core values of care and education initially set by Robert Campbell Edwards, epitomised in every decision made and every program delivered, in over 120 years of service to children and families.

Kay Edwards and Glenys Grant OAM, 2016





Club Swinging, 1905



The Burwood Boys' Rechabite Tent



# Chronology

## Part A

### *Burwood*



Burwood Boys' Home, first boys, 1896

## The Early Years

### 1895 to 1939

*“No truly destitute boy is to be refused admission or turned away”.*

*Robert Campbell Edwards, 1862–1946*



1895

#### Robert Campbell Edwards, Founder of Burwood Boys' Home

- Robert Campbell Edwards was born in Ireland in 1862 and came to Melbourne in 1877 at the age of 17.
- He became a tea merchant at the age of 19, later establishing Edwards Ensign Tea, a wholesale tea and coffee business based in Flinders Street Melbourne.
- Robert Campbell Edwards purchased real estate in the 1880's including extensive farming property in Burwood.
- He died in Australia in 1946.



Robert Campbell Edwards and family

1895

- After discussions with his mother and younger brother, Thomas, Robert envisaged a “Home for Destitute Boys” was needed to care for the many waifs living on the streets of Melbourne at that time.
- The large farming property, adjoining Boundary Road [now Warrigal Road] becomes Burwood Boys Home at a total cost of £500.



## 1895

- The property is to be used as a home for “neglected, orphaned and fatherless boys”, aged 10 to 15 years.
- “No truly destitute boy is to be refused admission or turned away”.
- These homeless boys would be taught to love “their Country and their God”



THE FIRST BOYS AND STAFF OF THE HOME.

## 1896

- Official opening of the Burwood Boys’ Home at Boundary Road, now 155 Warrigal Road, Burwood, by Governor of Victoria, Lord Brassey accompanied by Lady Brassey.
- The property consists of a large weatherboard house, an orchard and a farm.



The Home as it appeared when officially opened on 31st May, 1896, by Lord and Lady Brassey.

## 1897

- A Committee of Management [COM] is appointed, with Robert Campbell Edwards [RCE] as Chairman.
- Although the Home is non-denominational, many COM members are from the Churches of Christ, while others are interested community members.
- The COM is to oversee the wide-ranging activities and to ensure that everything done is within the law.
- Robert Campbell Edwards directs that all boys must learn to read, write and do basic arithmetic.



Robert Campbell Edwards

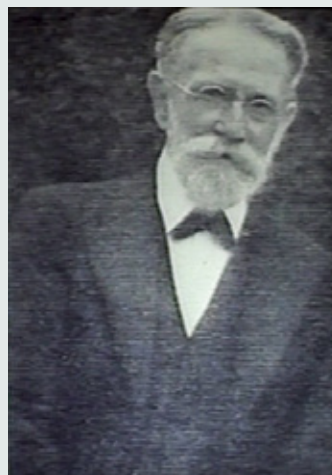
## 1898

- The stated aims of the Home are to provide shelter, warm beds, nourishing meals and an education to provide a future career path.
- Extract from booklet published in 1897 states, “*The Home aims at turning out boys for country life. Burwood boys become gardeners, orchardists, farmers, dairymen and miners*”.



## 1900

- Mr. W Hawkins, an avid horticulturalist, is now Superintendent.
- He strongly advocates farming and gardening as an honourable way of life for the boys.
- He believes that “healthful work among the vegetables and plants has an exceedingly beneficial effect morally and physically, besides creating a love for Nature and things that grow”.



Mr. W Hawkins

## 1902

- All boys spend half their day being taught reading, writing and arithmetic, with the remaining time working on the farm or in the garden.
- The vision is to give the boys an opportunity for a better future.
- Sunday is a day for attending Church, and enjoying quieter activities.
- Christian values of the time strongly underpin the approach in caring for the boys.





## 1906

- 183 boys admitted since opening.
- The stated philosophy is that “we are builders of men, formers of characters, constructors in a nation’s true greatness”.



## 1907

- 208 boys have been admitted since inception: 19 are in work, mainly on farms, 23 are discharged, 15 are returned to their parents and eight are sent out into the world since opening the Home.



Farm at Burwood

## 1908

- Burwood Boys’ Home is incorporated under the Hospital and Charities Act of Victoria.
- An appeal is launched to purchase more property.
- £1,500 is needed and is accordingly raised.



Mowing the Burwood front lawn

## 1910

- The farm consists of an orchard, vegetable gardens and paddocks for farm animals.
- Burwood Boys' Home is predominately self sufficient.
- The COM and Administration is based at 443 Burke Street Melbourne.



## 1912

- Surplus farm produce is sold to supplement the Home's income.
- Robert Campbell Edwards and Hawkins believe that "lads who understand working the land will never be out of employment, and will be of a good physical condition and have a positive attitude to life".



## 1915

- The boys have farming duties to perform, and working with the animals is a favourite pursuit.



## Distinctive Features of the Burwood Boys' Home



A home for boys between 10 and 15 years of age.  
Any really destitute boy admitted without question.  
Boys having relatives must be at least partly supported by them.

Parents who can and should support boys must do so as far as possible.

A boy's doubtful character no bar to his admittance.  
Destitute boys have at all times first consideration.  
Moral improvement is ever kept in view.

Good physical conditions and discipline an aid to right conduct.

Work on the soil a restorer of health and healthy aspirations.

The boy who understands working the land need never be out of employment.

The home aims at turning out boys for country life.  
Burwood boys become gardeners, orchardists, farmers, dairymen, miners.

The home teaches boys to serve their country as well as their God.

Service is the supreme offering which one can give another.

Reprinted from the back page of all Annual Reports from 1905 to the mid 1929

1920

- Churches of Christ and COM members host some children during holiday periods and often take them on outings.
- On site school is registered and known as Boys' Home State School No. 3841.
- The provision of good education remains a key element of the Home, in line with Robert Campbell Edwards' philosophy.



1923

- The farm dam is a popular swimming spot after a day of work and learning.



1925

- 83 boys are currently in care.
- Parents sometimes choose to voluntarily place a son in the Home because of financial or other difficulties.
- Physical exercise is encouraged and some sports demonstrations are provided by professional athletes.





## 1928

- The buildings on the property are expanded and now consist of one large building with several small buildings at the back.
- The larger building houses one dormitory, a kitchen, dining room, hospital ward, large hall, rooms for staff, and a large shared concrete cold water bath shared by a number of boys.
- The smaller buildings house two small dormitories, a lavatory, a hot water bathroom and a wash house.



Warrigal Road entrance

## 1929

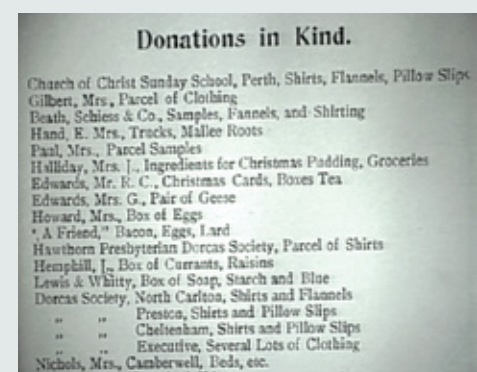
- The Home occupies some 42.75 acres and unanimous approval is granted by the COM to sell a portion of the property for urgently needed funds.
- The COM is pleased to receive news that the first boy admitted to the home when destitute, is now married, has a family, and is “doing well”.



Bedtime prayers

## 1933

- A drop in donations is evident due to the Great Depression [1929–1933].
- Annual Reports cite “*Gifts in kind are always welcome. Consign to Surrey Hills Railway Station*”.
- Burwood Boys’ Home relies on the support of organisations such as Freemasons, Churches, public donations and benevolent trusts, including The Campbell Edwards Trust.



## 1934

- The cost of maintenance requested from parents and guardians for voluntary admissions, is four shillings per capita per week where possible.
- Government funding is still not available.
- Amalgamation between BBH and Minton Boys' Home [Frankston property] is proposed by the Hospitals and Charities Commission for economic reasons.



## 1937

- Minton amalgamation is not carried out due to major fundamental differences between the two organisations.
- BBH is threatened with de-registration by Hospitals and Charities Commission, due to the state of substandard buildings.
- Until the buildings program is completed, the number of boys in care is reduced substantially to 13.



A day's washing. The school is seen in the background.

## 1939

- Due to huge community and benefactor support, the building repairs are carried out.
- A new building is erected with bedrooms instead of dormitories and hot and cold showers instead of the cold water communal bath.
- Numbers of boys in care rises to 31.
- Children are reported to be well nourished and cared for and are educated at the Burwood Boys Home School.



Burwood Boys Home School

## WWII and the Post War Years 1940 to 1959

*Wider community participation encouraged*  
*Secondary education offered*  
*Accommodation and facilities improved*



### 1940–1942

- With able bodied men at war, the Annual Report states that a staff shortage exists.
- Despite renovations, there is still a lack of storage space, poor drainage, and a need for extra tools and a sewing machine.
- A fire has destroyed part of the school building.
- Superintendent Alf Wignell is appointed, in this, “one of the most difficult periods in our history.”



Mr Alf Wignell, back row, centre with staff

### 1943

- A replacement brick school is under construction.
- Burwood Boys' Home administration moves from city to Burwood site.
- The new superintendent is found to be a man of vision. He believes that every endeavour should be made to make the accommodation more homelike.
- Boys from the Gordon Institute for Boys are admitted, together with schoolteacher Mr N. Hazlett, after their premises are requisitioned for war time use.



The Gordon Boys

## 1944

- Superintendent Mr. A J Wignell believes boys who live for long periods in institutions without outside family input are in danger of becoming “distorted in their abilities to cope with life”, and so he encourages and expands holiday hosting.
- Appeal for holiday hosts –overwhelming response.
- Mr G L Murray, [centre top in photo] is the current Committee of Management [COM] President.



Committee of Management [in part]

## 1945

- Women’s Auxiliary is formed.
- Annual Report states that boys are encouraged to help out in the community, as this is “character building”.
- This, and many new ideas, are initiated by Mr Wignell, who is “lifting the spirit”, and is an “outstanding administrator with a great gift of insight into the mind of a boy” as well as having a “wide knowledge of child welfare”.



## 1945

- The Annual Report states that 76 boys are assisted and provided with “a home and home comforts, food, clothing, education, spiritual, moral and physical training, technical and rural training recreation and entertainment”. [AR 1945]



Ready for church



## 1946

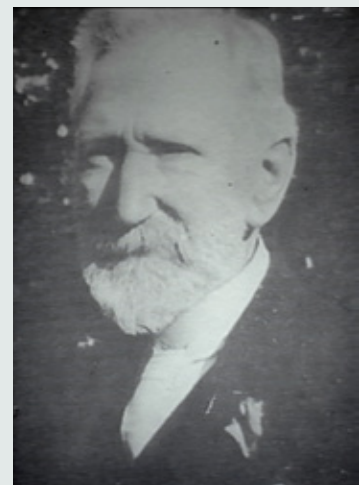
- A number of different technical skills are encouraged.
- After leaving the home at about age 15, suitable positions are found for each boy.
- The BBH Welfare Officer visits and continues supervision until they are 18 years of age.
- It is becoming apparent that some of these boys require additional support to survive independently.



Burwood workshop

## 1946

- Robert Campbell Edwards, founder of the Home, has died. [1862–1946]. A guard of honour of boys and staff line the driveway and road outside the Home to farewell him.
- He tirelessly worked to effect social change, with a focus on helping disadvantaged children.
- His philosophy was help people to help themselves, and in turn, to encourage them to help others.
- It was said he “didn’t require a monument to remind people of him, for his monuments were in the community that he served”.
- His legacy will be carried on through the Campbell Edwards Trust and through the Home.
- Robert Campbell Edwards is buried in Box Hill Cemetery.

Robert Campbell Edwards  
1940

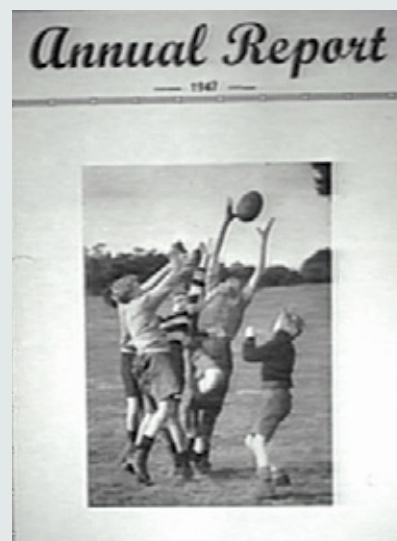
## 1947

- The COM has implemented a unique new program – a hostel for working boys aged 14 to 18.
- The Palms, a Hawthorn residential property, has been purchased and is proving popular.
- This hostel is to provide semi-independence with supervised support from the adults in charge.
- The boys are contributing towards their board and lodging, but the program is subsidised by the Home.
- The State Government has contributed to this purchase.



## 1947

- Boys are now attending a variety of secondary and technical schools for further education.
- Burwood boys play various sports in teams against each other, and against outside teams.
- Team spirit and camaraderie is encouraged.
- Burwood boys are fiercely competitive, often winning games by huge margins.
- Mrs. O. Simons composes the Burwood Boys' Home song.



## 1948

- A new concept, a 'Cottage System', is planned to replace the large dormitory type institutional care premises.
- Authority has been sought and permission granted for a public appeal for funds to build separate cottage accommodation on the Burwood site.
- The Appeal is also for funds to establish additional facilities for sport, trade workshops, gymnasium and a swimming pool.
- An aerial photographic survey view of the site is commissioned.



## 1949

- Building fund reaches £24,000
- Tenders are called for construction of an infants' cottage (Campbell Edwards House).
- Additional land is purchased – £712
- Overall, progress and development is strong.
- Many dedicated volunteers provide exciting sporting opportunities. These include yachting on Albert Park Lake, and tickets to league football matches.



Yachting on Albert Park Lake

## 1950

- Sports and outside activities are actively encouraged.
- Work on a new sports oval area is completed.
- Cricket, football and athletics are important and popular activities.
- Well known sporting identities visit and some provide regular training.
- 12 free tickets are provided each week by the management of the local Cinema.



## 1950

- Mr Alf J Wignell, well respected Superintendent and Secretary, resigns after 10 years.
- He becomes Superintendent of the Lady Northcote Homes at Bacchus Marsh, where he influences young resident Colin Tutchell, who after a successful career in the police force, later becomes Superintendent of Burwood Boys Home.
- Gordon boys depart to their new premises in Hihett in December (after eight years at BBH).
- A new milking shed is under construction.



Milking shed

## 1951

- A cub pack is formed.
- Old Boys Association is formed.
- Construction of Campbell Edwards House, for 3 to 7 year olds, is held up awaiting bricks (post war short supply).
- Post Year 8 Secondary and Technical Education continues to be offered, and in 1951, four boys have progressed to this.



Cub pack

## 1952

- BBH School, adjoining the property on a separate block, originally taught only BBH boys.
- The State Education Department has acquired the land from BBH and has erected extra classrooms.
- BBH school has become Wattle Park State School No. 3841, accommodating 250 pupils, both boys and girls and with a staff of eight.
- Report from the Head Teacher states, “The Home boys have now merged into the normal school life”.



Burwood Boys Home School

## 1952

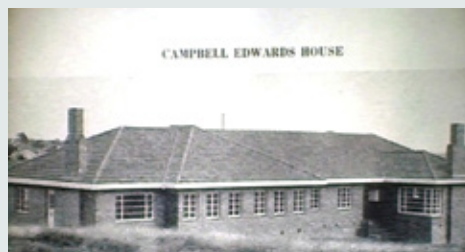
- A new library and study area is opened.
- Freemasons are raising money to help fund the construction of a gym and recreation hall.
- Mums and Dads Association give weekly pocket money, a birthday present to each child and ensures that each child receives a birthday card by post.



Library and study area

## 1953

- Campbell Edwards House [CEH] completed.
- CEH is designed for younger children under eight years of age.





## 1954

- CEH now has seven boys in residence – three years of age and upwards.
- Construction work on the new gymnasium commenced.
- Concrete paving is completed around buildings.
- Tennis courts are provided, and add extra amenity to that provided by the swimming pool.



Campbell Edwards House boys

## 1955

- An inter-house telephone system is installed, linking all buildings.
- New Box Hill High Schools zoning policy – boys now attend Jordanville Technical School and Burwood and Box Hill High.
- Palms Hostel in Hawthorn is at capacity with 19 boys in residence.



Homework

## 1955

- There is now a great demand for residential care of boys aged three to eight years.
- This demand leads to 16 boys in residence in Campbell Edwards House.
- Younger boys now attend a local kindergarten at Orana.



## 1956

- Diamond Jubilee Year celebrations are held.
- Gymnasium is officially opened.
- Volunteers provide expert physical education and gymnastics instruction in the new gymnasium.
- A.E.Bottomley donates a 21 inch TV for viewing the Olympic Games.
- 70 boys are now in residence at Burwood.
- A further 20 boys are in The Palms Hostel in Hawthorn



The new gymnasium

## 1957

- Team spirit and cooperation are encouraged through organized activities.
- The Burwood Boys' Home football team has become quite successful and respected by other teams.
- Property enhancement program leads to 150 trees and shrubs being planted.
- Roads, paths and driveways are established and sealed.
- A number of staff members have enthusiastically undertaken the newly offered part time Social Service training course.



Burwood Boys Home football team

## 1958

- Honorary Officers are appointed each year.
- These include medical advisors, dentists, chiropodists, solicitors, auditors, teachers, sport instructors and a hairdresser.
- All give their time voluntarily.
- All Committee of Management members are also voluntary.



Dental room

## 1959

- The new Selwyn Harris Pool is officially opened.
- Melbourne Junior Chamber of Commerce [Jaycees] have financed, designed and built the pool as a voluntary project.
- This and the Gym are favourite activities.
- The Palms Hostel for working BBH boys aged 14 to 18, is closed, due to being economically unviable.
- Children's Welfare Department were to take over this venture, but has failed to do so.
- COM has found suitable lodgings for the Palms boys and continues to support them.



Selwyn Harris Pool

## Developing the Cottage System 1960 to 1972

*Separate cottage accommodation introduced*  
*Secondary education established and supported*  
*Emphasis on total care and wellbeing*



### 1960

- John Moore starts a tennis clinic on site. This is officially opened by Tennis icon Harry Hopman.
- Building alterations are in progress due to a fire affecting carpentry, engineering, laundry and library blocks.
- Funds are being sought to expand accommodation and pay for building repairs.
- Great emphasis is placed on building up a child's 'character'.



Burwood Boys Home tennis courts

### 1961

- Hector Davis, previous resident, joins Committee of Management.
- Laundry is modernised with electric dryer and hot water service, following the fire.
- 24 boys are at secondary school – either Jordanville Technical School or Burwood High School.
- Younger boys are at Wattle Park State School and Orana Kindergarten.
- While Burwood Boys' Home [BBH] remains independent and non-denominational, the spiritual approach to care continues, with various churches involved.



BBH secondary school students



## 1962

- The Adventure Club is formed. This provides opportunities for outdoor education and camping experiences.
- More land adjacent to Wattle Park State School is sold to the Education Department, raising funds for a new house.
- Efforts to support families to “rehabilitate themselves so that boys can be returned home”, have some success.



Adventure Club

## 1962

- Holiday hosting in the homes of ‘Uncles and Aunts’ is popular, giving young boys a taste of family living.
- The scheme is introduced because boys living in a highly structured communal institutional environment are having difficulty adjusting as young adults in the wider world.
- To find hosts, notices are placed in newsletters and sent to appropriate organisations asking families to receive boys into their homes over holiday periods.
- Occasionally this is expanded to weekends and other special occasions.



A taste of family living

## 1963

- Approximately 40 boys are housed in the two wings of the main building, Kiel and Craigie.
- Campbell Edwards House [CEH], has approximately 18 boys aged from 3 to 7 years. This cottage is already proving a success as it more closely reflects typical family life.
- Each accommodation unit has a set of cottage parents living in and extra daily helpers.



Boys from Kiel and Craigie

## 1963–1964

- Following the success of Campbell Edwards House, which is modelled on a 'family type' configuration, it is planned to build extra and separate cottages accommodating smaller numbers of children.
- This is to give the boys a more realistic understanding of home and family life.
- The staffing for the new system will remain similar to previous arrangements.
- Numbers are at capacity for the current buildings. More cottages are required and a building fund is established.



Campbell Edwards House boys

## 1964–1965

- The first ever Government grant is sought for the construction of a new house to alleviate the present overcrowding, as each residence houses at least 18 boys.
- The aim is to have no more than 12 boys in each of the three facilities.
- Each cottage will have cottage parents living in, with the wife being called Senior Cottage Mother. An extra female helper will assist each day.



No more large dormitories

## 1964–1965

- Weekly cost of maintaining a child in care is now £8.
- BBH is reimbursed for each State Ward at £4 per week, and with no other government grants, donated funds are keeping over 60 boys in care.
- John Moore joins Committee of Management, following years of volunteering as a tennis coach at BBH.
- Holiday hosting is well established and occasionally, where circumstances permit, boys are accepted permanently into these families.



Holiday hosting is popular

## 1965

- Margaret McAlister dies.
- Margaret had served on the COM for 33 years, and taught Religious Education to the boys.
- She had a special, caring relationship with each boy, gave gifts at birthdays and Christmas and kept in contact with them into their adulthood.
- Following her death a newly built cottage for 12 boys is to be named Margaret McAlister House.



Margaret McAlister House

## 1965

- Many boys are arriving with minimal education and social skills, creating a desperate need for remedial teaching.
- Two part-time teachers are employed to help boys with homework and basic academic skills. Study areas are provided on site.
- In the gymnasium Roman rings, horizontal bars and climbing ropes are installed.
- Many building improvements are taking place, but there are still no maintenance grants from the Government.



BBH Gymnasium

## 1965–1966

- Jock Roper joins COM following many years service as a volunteer.
- Kiel and Craigie are substantially renovated and sitting rooms added, following donations from the community.
- BBH provides remedial teaching for some BBH students who are at Wattle Park State School.
- Many children are admitted with bad teeth and are attended by the two honorary dentists.
- Five honorary doctors provide medical care.



New sitting room



## 1966

- BBH's innovative system of separate cottages is now recognised by the Government as the "New Look in Childcare".
- Frank Cheshire House is built and opened.
- The three cottages on the hill, Campbell Edwards House, Margaret McAlister House and Frank Cheshire House are now part of the newly formed Cottage system of family units.
- At this stage administration and funding is still centrally based. This includes all household purchases and clothing.



3 cottages, left to right Cheshire. Margaret McAlister and Campbell Edwards

## 1966–1967

- Glen Quantrelle, son-in-law of Vice President Dr W.A. Kemp, joins COM.
- A secondary school teacher supports senior students on a voluntary basis two evenings a week.
- A group of Monash University students attend regularly to help boys with homework.
- Boys enjoy participating with ground maintenance and general home duties.



## 1967–1968

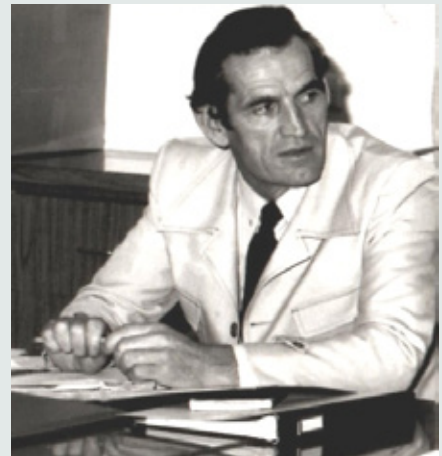
- The Home's well loved Kombi van is used for outings.
- The first BBH combined Auxiliary is established.
- Of the 58 boys in residence 43 are Wards of the State, 12 are fee paying private placements and for three boys, no payments are received.
- The Government pays only half of the actual cost for Wards of the State at BBH.
- A part-time Education Officer is appointed to support BBH boys in local schools and to manage the homework program.





## 1968–1969

- Colin George Tutchell is appointed as Superintendent and Secretary. He has a background in policing and child care.
- Frank Cheshire resigns as President of Burwood Boys' Home and Alan Searle becomes President.
- The State Government is moving towards formal training of child care staff.
- A government grant of \$40,000 is received to upgrade accommodation and contribute towards a new building.
- Oil heating units are installed in Campbell Edwards House and Kiel and Craigie wings and bedrooms are upgraded.



Colin Tutchell

## 1969–1970

- Betty Skidmore is appointed Matron, after 5 years on staff. Her dedication, expertise and generosity of spirit is respected by all.
- She is affectionately called “Aunty Betty” by the boys.
- Mr Greg McCloskey is appointed BBH Honorary Orthopaedic Surgeon.
- The remainder of the 1968 \$40,000 government grant will be used towards building a hostel on site to house older boys who are in advanced stages of education or are working.



Betty Skidmore

## 1970

- Remedial and modified programs at local schools support BBH boys who are academically ‘at risk’.
- In schools, psychologists from the Education Department are supporting BBH students who have emotional issues.
- Greater emphasis is now on ‘comprehensive care’, embracing the child’s physical, emotional and spiritual needs.



Learning support

## 1970

- Government Ministry of Social Welfare is formed.
- Fred Veitch becomes President after Alan Searle dies during his tenure as President of BBH.
- Hector Davis is appointed Vice President, COM.
- Superintendent Colin Tutchell instigates training and collegiate support for cottage mothers who now live, rent free, in the cottages.



Colin Tutchell and staff

## 1971

- Cottage parents are established in each cottage or house.
- Cottage mothers and female assistants are paid employees of BBH while husbands of cottage mothers are unpaid and expected to have outside employment.
- 12 children are cared for in each house.
- The cottage system aims to replicate a steady, predictable, 'home-like' environment.
- Spiritual welfare is now widened, with six local Christian churches involved.



A cottage 'family'

## 1972

- 30 new admittances have strained resources, with many of these children having experienced traumatic family events.
- The Annual Report states "*This requires complete analysis and understanding of each case history, followed by a pre-determined treatment program*".
- A psychologist is appointed for this task and will assist staff in managing any challenging behaviours.
- The COM recognises that along with this new expertise, the devoted and efficient care provided by the staff remains paramount.



Caring for individual needs

## 1972

- COM is expanded to 18 members. New appointments are:
  - Ken Masterton, a long term BBH volunteer, primary school and religious education teacher.
  - Mr. Greg McCloskey, orthopaedic surgeon, who has cared for BBH boys in an honorary capacity for many years.
- The sub-committee structure is now widened to include Welfare and Forward Planning as well as Finance and House [Property] sub-committees.



Ken Masterton

## 1972

- The senior boys have always had suitable accommodation within the community sourced for them by the Home. However this has only been partly successful.
- Kemp Lodge, a new strategy, is built on-site as a transitional house for boys who are en-route from children's cottage accommodation to independence.
- Kemp Lodge has eight senior boys in residence.



Kemp Lodge for senior boys

## 1972

- The Annual Report states, "*Kemp Lodge aims to stimulate personal growth, and restore each youth to full independent living and community participation, prior to them successfully entering the wider community*".
- The period of residency varies, according to length of time needed for adjustment.
- The Kemp Lodge Project is the first of its type permitted by the State Youth Welfare Division.
- It is a ground-breaking initiative.
- The government encourages other youth organisations to consider this model in their residential planning.



Kemp Lodge – a ground breaking initiative



## The Changing Years 1973 to 1986

*Girls admitted*

*Renamed 'Burwood Children's Home'*

*Tertiary education encouraged*

*On-site remedial education centre established*

*Homelike environment in cottages*

*Regional service hub commenced*



### 1972–1973

#### The First Girls

- On November 1, 1972, the first small group of girls are admitted into Burwood Boys' Home to be cared for with their brothers, as a 12 month pilot scheme.
- The siblings are housed in one cottage as a family group.
- The Welfare sub-committee is trialling this in an attempt to keep siblings together.
- This is considered a momentous forward step.



### 1973

- Number of children in cottages is reduced from 12 to 10.
- Cottages are staffed by live-in married couples and full time female assistants, including some extra domestic help.
- Kiel and Craigie Cottages are provided with separate kitchen facilities, resulting in the end of congregate style accommodation.



Everyone lends a hand



## 1973

Major change in education policy:

- The emphasis is now on the young person continuing their education to tertiary level, instead of starting work at age 14.
- An off-site flat is established for senior students and a private house is leased for three working boys.
- Staff and committee visit to advise them, but they are semi-independent and self catering.



Senior students

## 1973–1974

- Family Group Policy of admitting siblings of both sexes is confirmed, as the pilot program has proved successful.
- For the present the name 'Burwood Boys' Home' [BBH] is retained.
- More involvement with children's families and relatives is also underway.
- Children attend 6 local churches, where their spiritual and social needs are supported.



Brother and sister

## 1974

- 62 youngsters from 46 families are in care.
- No private placements – all are Wards of the State.
- Accommodation is in eight separate facilities:
  - five cottages for children, two of these housing brothers and sisters,
  - one flat for senior students,
  - one youth hostel
  - one suburban house for young men who are heading towards total independence.



Superintendent Colin Tutchell [centre] visits a newly established family cottage

## 1974

- Emotional stress experienced by children in care is increasingly recognised.
- This is identified as higher when a child is first admitted.
- Carer training and other strategies are explored.
- Committee of Management's House sub-committee regularly visits cottages. This has resulted in greatly improved housing standards and décor to create a more home-like environment.



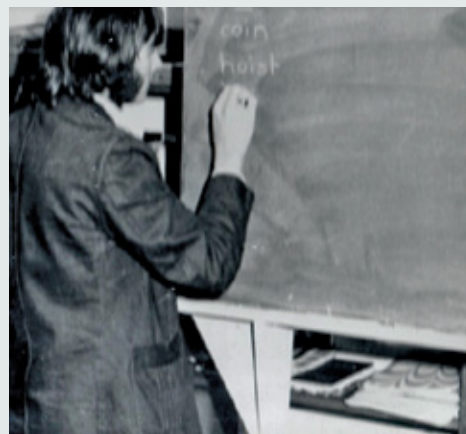
## 1975

- Discussions with Social Welfare Department initiated.
- This has led to:
  - a closer working relationship with Government
  - recognition and support of BBH plans to provide best practice standard of care, and
  - strategies for special remedial education.
- The cost of caring: Government allowance per capita to maintain a child in care is \$36.00 per week – BBH cost exceeds \$61.00, and will reach \$83.96 by 1976.



## 1975

- A small 'remedial education' school is established in the Superintendent's former residence.
- Garry Green is appointed as Education Officer.
- His role will be running remedial programs, liaison with schools and integration programs.
- As a result, a number of children in joint home/school remedial programs are assisted in making a smooth transition into the mainstream school environment.



Garry Green

## 1975

- Adventure playground built by Balwyn Apex Club.
- Many organisations continue their support – Rotary, Lions, Apex, Freemasons and local churches of various denominations.
- All supporters are generous with time and funds.
- There are two new buildings: an Administrative Centre and a Superintendent's residence.
- Frank Cheshire House (FCH) is now fenced. This further replicates a private home-like environment.



Adventure playground

## 1975–1976

- Due to regionalisation of Social Welfare Department, BBH is now in the Eastern Region.
- Some financial support and advice is being received from the Social Welfare Department.
- Continued support is received from Campbell Edwards Trust, and includes family members from time to time holding positions on the Committee of Management.
- There are now 19 voluntary Committee of Management [COM] members.



IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM  
 (From left to right: Minute Secretary K. G. Masterton, Superintendent C. G. Tutchell, Vice-President H. Davis, Hon. Treasurer A. N. Alley.)

## 1976

- A decentralized, autonomous management pilot program commences in one cottage.
- In this program, cottage parents will assume much greater responsibility for the children in their care, and manage the household with much greater independence and autonomy.
- Cottage parents are addressed by the children as 'Aunty and Uncle'.
- Holiday hosting program is found to be beneficial and may be extended.



Cottage meal time



## 1976

- The on-site remedial school known as the Education Centre now has two full time staff, a part time psychologist and 10 pupils.
- Education Centre staff to children ratio is 1–4.
- Each child, on admission to the Home, is educationally assessed. Following assessment, appropriate school placement and programming is planned.
- The Education Centre is registered as Primary School Number 1743.



Hands on education

## 1976–1977

**Major change of name:**

- With the inclusion of girls, Burwood Boys' Home is now renamed Burwood Children's Home incorporating Burwood Boys' Home [BCH].
- With inclusion of siblings, applications for admission have now increased well beyond capacity.
- There is greater involvement and significant funding from the Social Welfare Department.



## 1977

**Major change in care:**

- Decentralization of cottage life is introduced after the successful 1976 pilot scheme.
- The new policy is that each cottage is now to be a 'stand alone' unit, where the cottage parents independently manage the household food, children's clothing, recreational and social activities eg sporting teams, cubs etc.
- This is in contrast to the previous system where all supplies and decisions were made centrally.
- Individual needs of each child are now a focus.

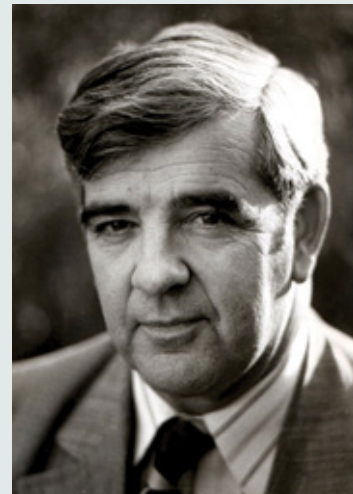


Focus on individual needs



## 1977

- Hector Davis is appointed President of Burwood Children's Home.
- Glenys Grant [nee van den Brenk] is appointed to the Committee of Management.
- Glenys, active in holiday hosting and children's welfare, is closely involved in planning the new 'independent cottage' strategy and is to steer its implementation.
- Holiday Host program is found to be beneficial and contributes to the children's development
- With some hosts, this is now expanded to each weekend as well as vacations.



Hector Davis

## 1978

- Mums and Dads Association continues to provide gifts for Christmas and birthdays, which are all celebrated.
- Six new Life Governors are appointed, bringing the total to 182.
- Life Governors are appointed as recognition of their dedicated and significant voluntary service over a number of years.



Cottage style Christmas

## 1978–1979

- Now operating with increasing independence, each cottage mother is allocated funds to work within the household budget of their cottage.
- Children are encouraged to learn 'family responsibilities and sharing' as this involvement replicates a more normal family environment.
- All food is now purchased by cottage mothers. Individual dietary needs and tastes are more easily managed.



Everyone helps with chores

## 1978–1979

- Central clothing store is closed.
- Children can now participate in choosing their own clothes, and be involved in shopping for independent styles, fashion and quality.
- Increased involvement of children in appropriate forms of wider community life, activity and experience is encouraged.



BCH cricket team

## 1978–1979

- Government policy now moves towards children requiring residential care remaining within the region in which their family resides.
- Statistics demonstrate less need for residential care in the Inner East, which will impact on BCH programs and numbers of children admitted.
- BCH is therefore exploring new avenues of service.



Cottages become more homelike

## 1978–1979

- Many BCH children are presenting with learning and social difficulties.
- Committee of Management and staff identify a need for an increased focus on specific education.
- COM Education sub-committee is formed.
- This is chaired by COM member, Frank Cheshire, who is also a well respected publisher of education resources and high quality children's books.



## 1978–1979

- Jim Billings is appointed Education Officer. He is recognized as a leader in remedial education.
- He initiates a program of continual assessment and adjustment of each child's education needs.
- Three full time staff are employed at the BCH School, with a part time educational psychologist.
- At BCH School, emphasis is placed on successfully returning children to mainstream schools.



Jim Billings

## 1978–1979

- Ten children attend BCH School.
- This year, five children from the school have been reintegrated into mainstream schooling.
- Other students are supported by BCH education staff in 11 local schools.
- Assistance is given with homework by Special Education student teachers.
- Some youth are now undertaking tertiary level education.



Homework assistance

## 1979–1980

- A new Government policy directs that children in care be returned home to 'increase family unity' where practicable. BCH is involved in active discussions regarding this approach.
- The policy results in less residential care being required and many residential institutions are now closing.
- COM publicly expresses concern regarding the implications of the new policy given the quality and type of care needed, and the community resources required to meet children's specific needs.





## 1979–1980

- New children being admitted to BCH are presenting with greater complexities of needs.
- This is placing increased demand on BCH resources.
- Children with less complex needs are being considered for foster placement or are returned to their families.
- Of the 67 children in care in BCH, 20 are returned to their own families, and 3 are transferred to other agencies.



## 1979–1980

- Craigie House is set up as an Early Adolescent Unit for 12 to 15 year old children after a review has found early adolescents will benefit from care specifically geared to their level of maturity.
- Greater dependence is placed on the Home's professional consultants, benefactors, philanthropic trusts, the State Department of Community Welfare Services and on service, sporting and social clubs.



Craigie House

## 1980

- Due to increasingly complex needs presented by the children in care, more professional personnel are employed including a part time social worker.
- These professionals will:
  - provide extra counselling for children
  - expand the remedial education program
  - provide counselling for staff – a leading edge initiative
- Because of the new government policy of returning children to their families where practicable, these professionals will also assist in the preparation needed to ready these children and support their families.



Remedial education





## 1981

- Goulburn Valley Family Care is established after Burwood Children's Home proposes a 'network' relationship, with representatives of each organisation on both Committees of Management.
- Campbell Edwards Trust once again gives financial support.
- A property in Shepparton is purchased to house early adolescents, as well as a family group home in Mooroopna.



Campbell Edwards Family

## 1981

- Mums and Dads Association ceases to function but members continue to provide gifts for birthdays and Christmas.
- Many service and sporting organisations, churches and social groups continue to provide help in 'cash and kind'.
- Mr Campbell Edwards has died. He was the son of the Founder, Chairman of Campbell Edwards Trust and a loyal, enthusiastic supporter of BCH.
- Weekend and holiday hosting program is thriving.
- A substantial Library Grant is received from Government.



COM member Jock Roper as Santa

## 1981-1982

- This year Santa (Jock Roper) arrived on a mini tractor laden with gifts.
- Christmas celebrations are always eagerly anticipated, with Santa arriving each year in ever more creative ways.
- Much planning takes place, ensuring each child receives personalised gifts.
- Essential Services [police, fire brigade etc] enthusiastically participate in the day with special activities.



## 1981–1982

- This year, a total of 68 youths and children [including three voluntary placements] have been cared for, with a daily average of 50.
- COM states that BCH's unique type of care is still needed.
- With consistent schooling and support, some older youths are now undertaking tertiary level education.
- Greater emphasis is to be placed on children returning to local schools from BCH School.



A cottage 'family'

## 1983

- BCH Primary School registration is changed to 'Special School'.
- 18 Remedial Education post-graduate student teachers are working 1:1 with children who are unable to cope emotionally and academically in mainstream schools.
- Of 38 children who have attended the school, 29 have now been successfully re-introduced to the mainstream school system due to this early intervention.



## 1983

- Government policy, now firmly established, is for suitable children to be fostered or where appropriate returned to their own families.
- BCH is to now receive children with severe emotional and educational challenges.
- Consequently, supporting children's social and emotional development is considered vital.
- COM is exploring possible strategies to help families remain intact.





## 1983

- Goulburn Valley family group homes are established for Goulburn Valley Family Care [GVFC] and are functioning successfully, including children in residence at Mooropna.
- BCH is no longer a single campus model as the regional responsibilities develop.
- BCH has changed its traditional role since inception in 1895 towards a regional network of family care services.
- First computer is purchased for Education Program.



Goulburn Valley Family Care office

## 1983–1984

- Frank Cheshire retires from the COM, after 39 years on the COM with 14 as President.
- Fundraising office set up so that BCH can gain some independence from Government funding. The initial donor base has 150 members.
- COM changes: Fred Veitch and Don Little retire after each having served approximately 35 years. Margaret Edwards [Campbell Edwards family] resigns.
- John Moore resigns from COM, to later become BCH Finance Director.



John Moore

## 1984

- 27 May, 1984 Goulburn Valley Family Care (GVFC) is officially opened by Mr Peter Ross Edwards MLA.
- The Charter is presented to BCH President Hector Davis in the presence of Dr R.K.Edwards and other members of the Campbell Edwards family.
- Two residential care houses are opened in the Goulburn Valley Region.



Signing and presentation of Charter



## 1984

- A Youth Development Program was commenced in 1983 in conjunction with Orana Peace Memorial Homes for Children and St John's Homes for Children.
- This program provides work experience activities for youth who are unable to cope at school and who do not possess employable skills.
- This program has now successfully placed 60 youths in employment.
- An independent University team's evaluation of the program gives high praise for its methods and success.



Youth Development Program

## 1985

- Gary Edwards joins COM in Feb 1985, having provided honorary advice to the Property Committee for some time.
- Hector Davis – COM 1961–85; Chair (1977 – 85), resigns, but continues to support the organization.
- Glen Quantrelle is elected President, Glenys Grant and Ken Masterton are Vice Presidents.
- John Moore is appointed Finance Director after 12 years as Treasurer, and 24 years on the COM. He then develops a wide based funding program.



Glen Quantrelle

## 1985

- Inaugural meeting of Goulburn Valley Family Care [GVFC] Committee. Interim Chairman is Roger Furphy (Mayor of Shepparton)
- Colin Emonson is appointed CEO.
- Ken Masterton is BCH representative on GVFC Committee of Management and Albert Kellock is GVFC representative on Burwood's COM.



Colin Emonson

## 1985

- Government funding for children in residential care now stops, necessitating other care options for BCH children.
- Children are found other placements such as adoption, foster care, boarding out, family group homes or independent living arrangements for older youths.
- Now in new roles, Director, Colin Tutchell, and Welfare/Education Coordinator Mrs Betty Skidmore sensitively manage this process, resulting in successful placements for the more than 50 remaining children.



## 1985–1986

- Hartwell based Inner East Foster Care [IEFC] becomes a BCH network linked program on the same model as GVFC i.e. retaining its own management committee.
- This provides a suitable placement option for BCH children who are unable to return to their own families.
- Avis Medding from IEFC becomes IEFC representative on BCH COM.
- Gary Edwards is BCH representative on the IEFC committee.



Avis Meddings

## 1985–1986

**Caring for the 'Whole Family Unit'**

- A total review of the organization has been conducted by Ms Brenda Fitzpatrick, and a 'Forward Planning Report' has been produced, re-directing the focus of caring to include the whole family.
- The plan is to develop broad based community welfare programs, as well as specialised family orientated support programs. Preparations for this are underway.
- BCH will work with all members of vulnerable family units and provide an overall network of services.



## 1985–1986

- The stated aim of the Forward Planning Report is to “*reduce family dysfunction and develop new and flexible programs, strategies and skills to meet the ever changing family needs*”. The AGM votes to adopt all recommendations.
- This will involve:
  - total agency rationalisation and program restructure
  - further development of some existing programs.
  - initiating programs in response to identified needs
  - staff re-structure and training
  - sale of current Burwood property
  - relocation to a property more suited to the new network of services.



Director Colin Tutchell plans for change

## 1985–1986

- Historic resolution by the Committee of Management on July 27 1985, to sell Burwood property and relocate all services.
- Gary Edwards of the Property Committee has researched suitable properties and recommends purchase of former Melbourne Orphanage site at 583 Ferntree Gully Road, Glen Waverley.
- John Moore, Finance Director, undertakes negotiations for purchase of the Glen Waverley site, and sale of the Burwood site.



The Burwood site to be sold

## 1986

- A ‘Back-to-Burwood’ Day is held on November 9, 1986
- Past and present friends and family are reunited to celebrate the past and welcome the future.
- Items of interest include an historical display, open cottages, and a shuttle bus service to the new site.
- Hundreds attend to enjoy the celebrations, while honouring the past.



Commemorative Medal

1986

- On March 18 the last child in residential care is placed appropriately and the last residential childcare worker leaves.
- Admission of children to residential care organisations has been phased out. 'De-institutionalisation' has occurred.
- BCH initiates a variety of innovative programs to meet the new challenges.
- CFCN will now support the 'whole family unit' and a new name is to be adopted by the organisation.



Residential care ends



# Chronology

## Part B

### *Glen Waverley*



## A New Beginning

### 1986 to 1996

*Child and Family Care Network – linked services*  
*Holistic family programs*  
*Education/Training and Welfare Programs focus*  
*Increased volunteer support*



### 1986

- Sale of Children's Home property in Burwood and purchase of the new operational headquarters at 583 Ferntree Gully Road, Glen Waverley. This is overseen by Committee of Management [COM].
- The Glen Waverley property was purchased from Melbourne Family Care, [once Melbourne Orphanage], itself having undergone a similar history due to government changes regarding residential care.
- Colin Tutchell, formally Superintendant, is now Executive Director. Colin and staff manage the successful transfer of the organisation without interruption to any programs.
- Harry Garrett, COM and Property Subcommittee member from 1951 to 1986, resigns.



New site, new programs

### 1986

- A new type of non-residential childcare service is established under the name 'Child and Family Care Network [CFCN], incorporating Burwood Children's Home'.
- A restructure of the whole agency and a staff development program is commenced.
- The newly established Network will provide interconnected programs to support the whole family, both on-site and in the wider Victorian community.



Child and Family Care Network Inc. – 1986 logo

## 1986

- Goulburn Valley Family Care Interim Committee with Chairman Roger Furphy and Director Colin Emonson are setting up locally based administration in Shepparton.
- The five member committee with the community are developing plans towards autonomy and to meet local welfare needs.
- Two family group homes and a home for early adolescents have been set up.



Group Home for family of six

## 1986–1987

- Palya Youth Development program is established. Palya is a local aboriginal word for 'I'm OK'.
- This program is assisting unemployed or disengaged youth aged 15 to 20. It aims to guide their future direction, and provide opportunities for success.
- Services include personal and career counselling, specialised trades training on-site and in industrial workshops, with work experience placements.
- Palya Canteen Hospitality Pre-employment Program begins its work with long term unemployed youth.



Palya

## 1986–1987

- Welfare Education Services will now work with the whole family unit.
- Key staff members are Mrs Betty Skidmore, Welfare Education Co-ordinator and Mr Jim Billings, Welfare Education Director.
- Finance Director John Moore increases the donor base from 3000 to 9300 donors in 12 months, netting additional income of \$238,000.
- This increased funding supports many new programs.



Jim Billings and Betty Skidmore



## 1986–1987

- Hector Davis is vested with the Order of Australia [OAM] in 1987 for his contribution to Government and Community Affairs.
- Hector served as a member of the COM for 24 years, including 10 as President.
- From 1934 to 1939 he was a resident of the Home and has continued, throughout his successful career, to render great service to the organisation.
- He has a unique place in the history of the organisation.



Hector Davis OAM

## 1987

- Inaugural AGM of Goulburn Valley Family Care [GVFC] with election of all committee members. A formal Working Agreement between CFCN and GVFC is signed.
- CFCN delegates responsibility for day to day management to GVFC Committee.
- Their future programs will focus on family support including foster care, child and adolescent care and developmental child services.
- Administration has moved premises to a larger, more central location in Shepparton.



Formal Working Agreement between GVFC and CFCN

## 1987–1988

- CFCN Special School at the Glen Waverley site, now known as Frank W Cheshire Education Centre, is opened by Frank Cheshire on 26th March 1987.
- The Centre assists primary school aged children who have social and academic difficulties.
- The goal is to reintegrate students to regular school after a period of up to 20 months at Cheshire
- Victorian Education Department Guidance Officers refer students to and from Cheshire and monitor progress.



Glen Quantrelle, Jean and Frank Cheshire



## 1987–1988

- Frank Cheshire, COM for 35 years and President for 14 of those years, dies in November 1987.
- Frank was a generous contributor to the organisation. His vision inspired many new initiatives and programs.
- Both Cheshire Cottage and The Frank Cheshire Education Centre were named in his honour as recognition of his constant support and financial contributions.



Frank Cheshire

## 1987–1988

- Frank's wife, Jean Cheshire, also a strong advocate for family welfare, remains an active supporter of CFCN in all aspects.
- Jean continues as a much loved regular visitor to Cheshire School, volunteering and reading stories to the children.
- Jock Roper OAM resigns from the COM and as Property Committee Chairman after many years valuable service, including his role as a much beloved Santa at the children's Christmas parties.



Hector, Jean and staff member Raymond

## 1987–1988

- Over the years the members of the Committee of Management have all served in an honorary capacity.
- As Ken Masterton recorded in his original history, 'A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond', many service groups and clubs have supported the organisation financially and as volunteers.
- Many members of the COM and other committees have been Freemasons. Some of these have included Allan Searle, Frank Cheshire, Hector Davis, Les Searle, Jock Roper, Ken Masterton, Ed Snell and Gary Edwards.



Ed, Hector and Gary, still involved many years on

## 1987–1988

- To establish CFCN's new service approach, links are made with many similar agencies and community based support groups through Waverley City Council.
- CFCN commences a Family Crisis Accommodation pilot scheme. Betty Skidmore has formed strong links with Waverley City Council to further this program.
- Mr Greg McCloskey, Honorary Orthopaedic Surgeon and COM member, 1970–87 resigns.
- Gary Edwards is appointed Chairman of Property Committee.



Interim CFCN Logo

## 1988

- Berengarra School is now on site at CFCN Glen Waverley.
- The school aims to provide 'another chance' for adolescents who are unsuited to the mainstream education system.
- It caters for secondary school aged students who are experiencing social and academic difficulties.
- Berengarra has 14 staff and 60 students.



Berengarra students

## 1988

**Official Opening of CFCN at Glen Waverley**

- On November 20th 1988, The Hon John Cain, Premier of Victoria officially opens Child and Family Care Network [CFCN] Glen Waverley campus.
- This completes the transition of the organization from residential care of children to a network of community based care services for children and families.



The Hon John Cain, Premire of Victoria

## 1988

- Hundreds of guests, including Committee of Management members, staff, former residents and clients, attend the Open Day and launch.
- Executive Director, Colin Tutchell thanks the many community supporters who remain a major source of financial support.



Opening celebrations

## 1988–1989

- CFCN continues to follow the planning guide as set out in the 1985 Brenda Fitzpatrick Report.
- Current programs are successful.
  - **Palya**, and Canteen Hospitality Pre-employment.
  - **Youth Training**, for job seekers 18years+ demonstrates substantial employment outcomes
  - **Welfare support** services, help 150 families
  - **Family Counselling** services are well established
  - **Crisis Accommodation** Program is now managing two houses in the Waverley area
  - **Cheshire** school is assisting 20 children



Hospitality Pre-employment

## 1988–1989

- Goulburn Valley Family Care [GVFC] highlights:
  - Three new group homes and Campbell Edwards Adolescent Lodge established.
  - An early intervention program of family therapy for troubled and at risk families is introduced.
- CFCN gives a grant to GVFC to fund new initiatives.
- Campbell Edwards Trust also provides a financial Grant for client accommodation.



GVFC – New bikes



## 1988–1989

- Highly regarded Executive Director Colin Tutchell retires after 21 years with the organisation.
- Colin has overseen many progressive changes and innovations including programs such as Cheshire School and Goulburn Valley Family Care.
- He has greatly enhanced the organisation by instigating a wide range of quality and more accessible client services.
- Widely respected in his field, the State Government often sought Colin's expertise, utilising his skills in planning improvements in Child Care throughout Victoria.



Colin Tutchell and President Glen Quantrelle

## 1989–1990

- The COM and staff deeply appreciate Colin's dedication and his commitment to improve the lives of the many young people in his care.
- During his leadership years he has been ably supported by his wife Freda and family.



Colin, wife Freda and family

## 1990

- Wesley Central Mission consultants work with the COM on forward planning initiatives.
- Ken Masterton acts as interim voluntary Public Officer until a new CEO is appointed, and Glen Quantrelle becomes honorary CEO while continuing as President.
- Government subsidy is cut, due to the Recession.
- More reliance is being placed on voluntary workers and independent funding.
- Huge demand on crisis accommodation and funds.



Ken and Glen at work



## 1990

- CFCN's shop 'Wanda Round' in Wanda Street, Mulgrave is opened by Mayor of Waverley, Cr. Barbara Thompson.
- This gives experience and training in retail and management to participants in the Palya Youth Development Program and provides an outlet for the goods they produce.
- Coordinator Betty Skidmore thanks the consistently generous Fowles Purdy Auction Group for providing funds, shop fittings and practical help for this venture.



Coordinator Betty Skidmore [r] and volunteer at 'Wanda Round'

## 1990–1991

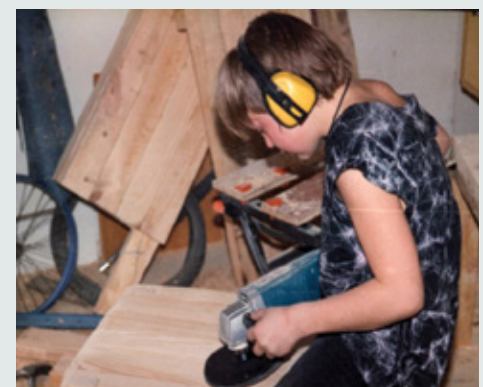
- John Thompson joins COM after considerable voluntary experience in child and adolescent welfare organisations.
- A Family Services Team is established to work with families across all programs.
- They develop strategies to support families in the current difficult economic climate.
- This team is part of the new approach to create a network of integrated and complimentary programs for working with children and families at risk.



John Thompson

## 1991

- CFCN is now an 'umbrella' organisation with both linked and in-house programs.
- The independent, but linked, programs are:
  - **Berengarra School** for adolescents not coping either academically or emotionally in mainstream schools
  - **Waverley Emergency Adolescent Care [WEAC]** provides community housing for adolescents at risk.
  - **Goulburn Valley Family Care (GVFC)** based in Shepparton
  - **Inner East Foster Care [IEFC]**
- Some operate off site and are given funding support. All have reciprocal representation on the CFCN COM.



## 1991

- The in-house programs [integrated with the linked programs listed above], are:
  - **Family Support** – counselling, therapy, parenting support, Family Services Team
  - **Income Support** – counselling, crisis funding
  - **Accommodation** – crisis housing for families
  - **Education** – Cheshire Education Centre
  - **Employment Training** – Palya Youth Programs, Canteen Pre-employment, Youth Training
  - **Community Outreach** – advice, advocacy, supporting, receiving and giving



Family services team

## 1991–1992

- CFCN transfers to the ‘Associations Incorporation Act 1981’ on the 25th July 1991 to become CFCN Inc.
- John Moore, Finance Director, retires after 24 years. He has served on COM from 1965–82, was Treasurer for 12 years, Vice President for eight years, and later as paid Finance Director for seven years.
- John coached tennis at BCH, instigated a fund raising office, telemarketing, newsletters, and built up a huge network of donors.
- Nicholas Woodlock is appointed Executive Director.



Nicholas Woodlock, Glen and Ken

## 1991–1992

- Albert Kellock, as Chair of Goulburn Valley Family Care Committee, reports that the major locally based fundraising initiatives are:
  - Proceeds from the sale of an AV Jennings home on land donated by developers with fittings and services donated by local trades people.
  - Uniting Church – \$7500 to Family Therapy Program.
  - Grant from Felton Bequest Committee for a van for outings for young people and their cottage parents.
- Adolescent Unit – a new approach results in shorter stays, with most families reunited within 6 months.



GVFC Committee

## 1992

- Executive Committee is Glen Quantrelle, President, and Vice Presidents Glenys Grant and Ken Masterton.
- Deficit of \$44,600 for the year.
- COM member Rodney Little retires after 12 years.
- Don Little, Rod's father and former Committee of Management member, dies. He served on the COM for 38 years.
- The Little family's contribution of over 50 years voluntary service to the organisation is greatly appreciated.



Don Little

## 1992

- Respected Welfare/Education Director James [Jim] Billings resigns after 14 years.
- His visionary initiatives have progressed CFCN's welfare education programs, which are now recognised widely as best practice.



Jim Billings

## 1992

- CFCN is now a Government funded, Accredited Training Provider, and is recognised nationally.
- Programs include Hospitality and Retail Training.
- Close to 100 students, mostly long term unemployed, participate in these courses.
- Many local businesses and large companies provide industry based training and experience.
- Outcomes of work placement from these programs are exceptionally positive.



Training Program



## 1992–1993

- The Family Services Team currently consists of psychologists, family therapists, educational counsellors and welfare officers.
- This reflects the new multi-disciplinary focus of CFCN, the aim of which is to strengthen and support the family unit to avoid breakdown.
- Individual counselling and consulting services are also provided. These services have provided counselling to 183 clients this year, mostly referred from current programs.



Counselling Services

## 1992–1993

- Wanda Round, CFCN's second shop, is opened by Mr Ross Smith MLA. Profits from the two Wanda Round shops will supplement Palya program expenses.
- Increased dependence is being placed on volunteers to support programs. There are now 34 volunteers.
- John Thompson is appointed COM Treasurer.



The second Wanda Round shop

## 1992–1993

- Fundraising office raises \$314, 841 for programs and services.
- Betty Skidmore is now Community Services Officer.
- Mrs Avis Medding of Inner East Foster Care [IEFC] formally joins the COM and Gary Edwards joins IEFC committee.
- Berengarra School & CFCN Working Agreement ends and operations are now formally separated, but the school is still on site and continues in a supportive independent working relationship with CFCN.



TV personality, Denise Drysdale presents fundraising proceeds to President Glen Quantrelle



## 1993

- Cheshire school staff hours are reduced by 20 % and experienced volunteers are helping out.
- A part time psychologist is appointed for the school's children and families.
- To balance the deficit in these difficult financial times most programs have staff and budget cuts.
- CFCN now has three family emergency houses to provide crisis accommodation for up to four months.



Cheshire students

## 1993–1994

- Palya Youth Development program has assisted 40 'at risk' youths with a new intensive manual skills program progressing to TAFE courses or employment.
- Pre-vocational courses of 10–20 weeks are introduced for disadvantaged long term unemployed youth.
- Commonwealth Employment Services and Youth Access are referring their case managed clients to CFCN because of consistently positive results.



Youth Employment Program

## 1993–1994

- Executive Director, Nicholas Woodlock resigns and no replacement is appointed at this stage.
- Ken Masterton is now Public Officer and Honorary Secretary, with Glen Quantrelle as President and acting honorary CEO, with Glenys Grant and Gary Edwards as Vice Presidents.
- To assist COM administer the Network, a Corporate Management Team has been formed.
- It is chaired by Hector Davis OAM.JP



Committee of Management

## 1994

- Due to regional service rationalisation, Inner East Foster Care [IEFC] combines its activities with St John's Homes, under the name of Care-Force Eastern Foster Care.
- This service and CFCN maintain a supportive relationship.
- CFCN Psychology Services include: Counselling for 41 families and 75 individuals
- Youth Program personal skills and wellbeing training is provided for 84 participants in groups of 12.
- Twenty hours of training is provided for each group.



Personal skills and wellbeing training

## 1994–1995

- Palya services and equipment is upgraded by donations from industry, organisations and private individuals ensuring the program is maintained.
- Palya Program is now recognized by both State and Federal Governments.
- A Grant of \$16,000 towards salaries is received from the Government [Adult Community and Further Education]



Hospitality Training

## 1994–1995

- 200 disadvantaged young people have been assisted this year with 66% of participants obtaining immediate employment.
- Added to Hospitality and Retail Training are:
  - Information Technology
  - Social and Community Services
  - Home and Community Care
  - Employment Access
- Courses are now fully Accredited.
- Funding is provided by Government Departments [DEET Youth Bureau and Office of Youth Affairs]



Accredited Courses

1995

**Centenary 1895–1995**

- In July 1895 Burwood Boys Home was established at Boundary Road, now Warrigal Rd, Burwood.
- On 18th November 1995, 100 years later, the Centenary Celebrations are opened by The Hon Richard McGarvie, Governor of Victoria, who unveils a commemorative plaque at the Glen Waverley site.



The Hon Richard McGarvie, Governor of Victoria

1995

**Centenary Celebrations**

- Many former residents, families and staff attend.
- Mr Hector Davis OAM, JP is MC.
- The highly regarded Victorian Police band perform.
- Many stalls and activities add to the festive atmosphere.
- Norm Gibbs, COM member and long time supporter of the organisation, provides entertainment as Zodo the Clown, joining other local entertainers.



Zodo [Norm Gibbs] entertains

1995–1996

- A building extension to Cheshire school provides space for specialised family counselling, an individual play area and a meeting and activities room.
- A Government grant provides 50% of the cost.
- A 'Friends of the Network' campaign has commenced where donors are invited to various functions to maintain communication and involvement.
- After a recruiting drive, volunteers now outnumber the staff by 3 to 1.



Cheshire – new facilities

## 1996

- Lodi Francesconi is appointed CEO. He comes with a background in education and local government management, and strategic planning.
- The Foundation for Homeless Youth [FHY] is adopted as a CFCN program.
- FHY provides accommodation and support for homeless youth who are prepared to continue full time education.



Lodi Francesconi

## 1996

- Community Services Manager Betty Skidmore retires.
- She and husband George joined the staff of Burwood Boys Home in 1965.
- Mrs Skidmore was appointed Matron in 1969.
- She was highly respected by all who knew her.
- ‘Aunty Betty’ was loved by past residents of BCH. She maintained contact with former residents over many years.



Betty Skidmore

## 1996

- Goulburn Valley Family Care is now fully autonomous from July 1st, 1996, but still retains a close relationship with CFCN, with each having representation on the other's COM.
- To maintain a link, Albert Kellock, of GVFC and Ken Masterton of CFCN each serve on the other organisation's COM.
- Each of these COM members regularly travels between Glen Waverley and Shepparton, to fulfil their roles.
- Roger Furphy becomes President of GVFC.
- *Note: In 2006, the organisation adopted the working name of FamilyCare, offering support services to people with disabilities, families and the aged. Its legal name remains Goulburn Valley FamilyCare Inc.*

GOULBURN VALLEY FAMILY CARE  
SERVICE AREA



## An Era of Expansion 1997 to 2006

*More networking, partnerships and linked services*

*The 'Voice of the Child' is heard*

*Focus on early intervention, education and training*

*Volunteers trained and assist in all services*

*Integrated services support the family unit*

*CFCN renamed 'bestchance, Child Family Care inc.'*



Cheshire students

### 1996–1997

- The Hon Alistair Nicholson AO, RFD, QC, Chief Justice Family Court of Australia, is appointed as the first Patron of CFCN Inc.
- He actively promotes the rights of the child both through his work in Family Law, and in the wider community.
- He is the first of three patrons to be appointed.



The Hon Alistair Nicholson AO,  
RFD, QC

### 1997

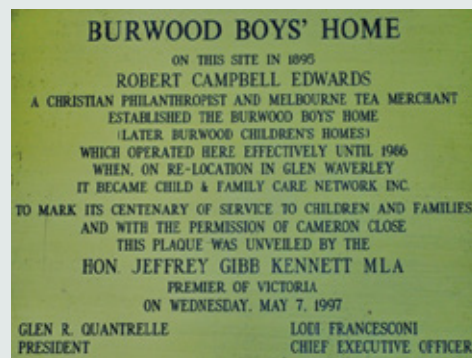
- A positive working relationship with Holmesglen TAFE has resulted in Palya participants gaining entry to TAFE courses for the first time.
- Counselling services expand to 253 clients.
- There are continued high employment outcomes in the Training Programs. [80%]
- 'Parents Apart, Children Together' [P.A.C.T.] is formed to help children cope with family separation. CFCN and the City of Monash collaborate with this program.



Palya

## 1997

- 7th May 1997: The Hon Jeff Kennett, Premier of Victoria, unveils a Campbell Edwards memorial plaque at the original site in Burwood, now known as Cameron Close Retirement Village.
- The Helping Hand program is formed. This is an early intervention initiative providing friendly visits and support by trained volunteers for struggling families with children under five.
- Volunteer numbers have doubled in three years, and a part time Volunteer Coordinator is appointed.



Memorial plaque unveiled at Burwood Boys Home original site

## 1997–1998

- Pauline Ogden commences as Deputy CEO, Manager – Client Services. She has considerable background in child care and kindergarten administration.
- Partnerships are formed with commercial, Government and local agencies such as the City of Monash.
- Relationship is formed with Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc for clients to more efficiently receive emergency aid.



Pauline Ogden

## 1998

- Youth support programs are expanded.
- 169 participants access pre-employment training.
- CFCN is now administering 10 houses for the Foundation for Homeless Youth. [FHY]
- Crisis support in financial, housing and welfare has also expanded.
- Occasional Child Care is trialled with assistance from Helping Hand volunteers.



Hospitality training

## 1998

- Nancy Chambers dies.
- Nancy joined the COM in 1968, and was a COM member for almost 30 years.
- The Chambers/Searle family commitment to Burwood Boys Home began in 1938, through Nancy's father Les Searle and her uncle Alan Searle.
- Nancy made a valuable contribution to the organisation, particularly in ensuring conditions in the children's cottages at both at Goulburn Valley and Burwood, were as home-like as possible.



Nancy Chambers

## 1998

- On the 13th March 1998 a new initiative, 'Who's Minding the Children?' Taskforce is launched through CFCN.
- The Taskforce, chaired by Patron of CFCN Chief Justice Alistair Nicholson, brings CFCN together with members of Government, business and community sectors and other family support agencies.
- The aim is to raise community awareness of the needs of children and to influence community and government decisions, advocating as 'the voice of the child'.



SOME MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE (from left to right)  
 MR LINDSAY FOX, THE HON JUSTICE SALLY BROWN, CHIEF JUSTICE  
 NICHOLSON, RT. REV. BISHOP MICHAEL CHALLENGE, MS MARY  
 DELAHUNTY, MR JOHN LEATHERLAND AND MR. GRAEME WISE.

## 1998–1999

- Frank W Cheshire Education Centre is redeveloped – doubling its size, assisted by funds of \$96,250 from the Henry Brough Smith Charitable Trust.
- It is now purpose built for extra students and services, including interview, teaching and counselling rooms. This allows for innovative techniques to assist children, aged 5 to 12 years, with social-emotional difficulties.
- The upgraded Cheshire Centre is officially opened in August 1999, and was attended by Jean Cheshire.



Hands on learning at Cheshire



1999

**Current programs include:**

- Emergency relief, crisis intervention and support, Helping Hand, occasional care, counselling, youth support, including coordination of Foundation for Homeless Youth, emergency housing, vocational training and pre-employment skills, P.A.C.T., the Frank W Cheshire Education Centre and the children's Taskforce.

**CFCN Future Planning:**

- Evidence based research indicates that early intervention provides better outcomes, and is more financially viable.
- Program emphasis will now be directed towards early intervention.



Youth Support

1999

Three new ground breaking early intervention programs are added:

- About Face – a school support program for 14–16 year old young people at risk of early withdrawal from school.
- An expanded Helping Hand program increases support of young families under stress, particularly single parent families and parents with multiple births.
- Warooga – an off-site, early intervention program for children aged 0–5 years with developmental disabilities.



About Face Program

1999–2000

- Warooga provides specialised educational, speech and OT therapy and other support programs, not just for the child, but for the whole family unit.
- 100 families have participated in the combined Warooga CFCN programs and have received counselling and support.
- Early Intervention programs such as Warooga are recognised as critically important in making a difference for developmentally delayed children.



Early Intervention



## 2000

- Dame Beryl Beaufrepaire OBE, DBE, AC and Centenary Medallist, joins CFCN as a Patron.
- Dame Beryl is known as a community activist who works diligently to initiate and support programs for women and children of diverse backgrounds.
- Through her political and charity interests she advocates for their rights.



Dame Beryl Beaufrepaire OBE,  
DBE, AC

## 2000–2001

- Long serving President of CFCN Glen Quantrelle OAM dies in May 2001 during his term of office. Glen spent 35 years as a member of the COM, with 17 years as President.
- Under his leadership Burwood Children's Home, previously a residential care facility, has evolved to become a total integrated care provider for all members of the family unit.
- Glen's core philosophy was captured in his often heard words, "It is for the children".
- His wife Dorothy continues her active participation.



Glen Quantrelle OAM

## 2001

- Glenys Grant is now Acting President, and continues to manage the strategic change program, and gather statistics to use in future planning and site and service development.
- CFCN current statistics:
  - 50 housed through Foundation for Homeless Youth
  - assisting 67 families through crisis
  - 3,615 people are given family support
  - 30 Helping Hand volunteers assist 135 children.
  - 25 students at Cheshire School, 5 are fee supported
  - 11 Accredited courses with 170 participants
  - 264 participants in basic life skill training
  - 80 volunteers across all programs
  - 109 children access Warooga
  - 300 Community education participants



Community education for ages 18 to 80 years

## 2001–2002

- Kevin Bartlett AM, well known sporting, fundraising and media personality, joins CFCN as a Patron.
- Helping Hand and Warooga early childhood intervention programs are now on CFCN Campus.
- The wider range of CFCN services is now available for Warooga families facilitated through program leader Geraldine Ryan. Geraldine's work across both family support and early intervention underpins the integration of services.



Kevin Bartlett AM

## 2001–2002

- John Thompson is appointed President of CFCN. With COM and Executive Staff he actively plans for a unique, comprehensive and integrated children's resource centre.
- He leads the Children's Centre project and The Royal Children's Hospital Centre for Community Child Health is commissioned to conduct a study into CFCN services and to assist in the planning.
- The new Centre will provide childcare for 0–5 year olds, early intervention, education and family support.
- Papers on CFCN's innovative, whole of family early intervention strategies are presented at both National and International Conferences.



John Thompson

## 2002–2003

- Following expansion of the training facility in 2001 there has been a 70% growth in the number of trainees.
- Now 51 Training courses with 615 participants.
- Cafe Quantrelle, the on-site hospitality training cafe, named after former President Glen Quantrelle, is officially opened.
- It offers students the chance to gain practical experience while catering for the public and CFCN client and staff functions.



## 2003–2004

- Volunteers play a significant role in the day to day operations, contributing almost 10,000 hours annually.
- Vicki Teese is appointed Volunteer Coordinator.
- She instigates matching program needs with the specific skills and expertise of each volunteer and organises training where necessary. A team approach is encouraged.
- The importance of volunteer contributions is officially recognised and celebrated.



Vicki Teese

## 2003–2004

- Rusden Childcare and Kindergarten moves to CFCN campus. This marks the beginning of Kindergarten Cluster Management.
- CFCN, in partnership with State Government, becomes a Kindergarten Cluster Manager, taking over the staffing, financial management, administration and professional development of seven local kindergartens.
- CFCN now manages Fleet Street Occasional Care.



Kindergarten and Childcare

## 2003–2004

- Foundation for Homeless Youth constructs 3 new homes [12 properties in total].
- Government policy now officially recognises the importance of early intervention in the wellbeing of children and families.
- Preliminary infrastructure work commences on the Children's Centre.
- To assist in planning two CFCN staff members travel overseas investigating best practice early intervention initiatives and concepts to be incorporated within the new Centre's operation and design.



Housing for homeless youth



## 2003–2004

- Mr Albert Kellock, Goulburn Valley Family Care, retires from CFCN COM after 14 years.
- He continues actively on the Goulburn Valley Family Care COM as Treasurer.
- GVFC, having been founded by CFCN, and after 14 years of mentoring and close association with CFCN, is now a completely separate entity, and provides a wide range of family support services.
- It is to be known as ‘FamilyCare’ while its legal name is Goulburn Valley FamilyCare Inc.



Albert Kellock

## 2004

- Stage 1 building of the unique Children’s Centre begins after tireless fundraising efforts produce support and donated materials from many generous businesses and individuals.
- Government financial support for Stage 1 was not granted due to the early intervention concept being ‘outside current guidelines’.
- Holmesglen TAFE Construction students, supervised by their teachers, build Stage 1 of the Centre and an additional classroom for Cheshire School.
- John Thompson voluntarily closely coordinates the Children’s Centre project, including the various trade ‘packages’ and financial and building aspects.



Holmesglen Construction students  
Children’s Centre construction  
– Stage 1

## 2004–2005

- John Thompson, CFCN President, is awarded the City of Monash, Sir John Monash Award for Community Leadership.
- \$500,000 funding has been received from the Victorian Department of Human Services towards the construction of Stages 2 and 3 of the Children’s Centre.
- When completed, the Centre will provide effective integrated service delivery for children and families and facilitate localised research and education for child care professionals.





2005

- CFCN is awarded Finalist – *Victorian Training Provider of the Year – Small*. For the second consecutive year CFCN has been recognised as one of Victoria’s top three training providers.
- The Christmas ‘Wishing Tree’ has packed over 200 hampers and distributed 600 toys to families in need. Hampers include staple and festive foods and a gift that parents can give to their children.
- Cheshire School opens 3rd Classroom.



2005–2006

- Vice President Glenys Grant is awarded an Order of Australia [OAM] for her 40 year commitment to community service and also for services in her professional diagnostic field.
- Child and Family Care Network Inc. [CFCN] adopts the working name of Bestchance, Child Family Care, and uses the working title of ‘bestchance’ in order to increase recognition of the new brand in the community.
- The new name **bestchance** more accurately reflects the organisation’s mission to deliver the best chance possible for children and families.



Glenys Grant OAM

### Programs & Services

<p><b>Warooga Early Intervention Centre</b> An early childhood intervention program for children aged 0-6 years who have developmental delays.</p> <p><b>Foundation for Homeless Youth</b> A cooperative program between community, Government, TAFE and service providers to establish managed home environments for homeless young people who are continuing their education.</p> <p><b>Cheshire School</b> An intervention program for children aged 5-12 years with social/emotional and/or learning difficulties. Cheshire combines standard curriculum with the development of individual strategies and techniques to facilitate a successful return to mainstream schooling.</p> <p><b>Helping Hand</b> Volunteers supporting families caring for babies and pre-school children, in the home and at playgroup, enabling families to interact and develop support networks in their local community.</p>	<p><b>Vocational Training</b> Delivering nationally accredited courses, using flexible and innovative approaches to meet individual needs.</p> <p><b>Community Education</b> Introduction to computers, Internet, First Aid and other specialised life skills and interest courses for the community.</p> <p><b>Kindergarten Cluster</b> CFCN manages and supports staff and program delivery for a group of community preschools, working with parent committees to provide professional development and access to specialist resources.</p> <p><b>Child Care Services</b> Offering full day care, occasional care, respite care and pre-school programs to families with children aged 0-5 years.</p> <p><b>Community Support</b> Emergency relief and crisis accommodation, provision of information, referral, advocacy and material aid.</p>
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## bestchance – Education and Care 2006 to 2016

*A Decade of:  
Awards and accolades  
Evaluation and quality outcomes  
Strategies for integrated family services  
Diversity and community involvement  
Emphasising core values*

### 2006

- The **bestchance** Children’s Centre for children and families is opened by the Hon. Steve Bracks, Premier of Victoria, in October 2006.
- This multimillion dollar centre is unique in that it offers a best practice, fully integrated range of early childhood family support services as well as special needs services.
- John Thompson and the COM worked closely with CEO Lodi Francesconi, Deputy CEO Pauline Ogden, and staff to bring the Children’s Centre to fruition.
- John Thompson particularly acknowledges the support of The Hon. Maxine Morand, Member for Mount Waverley.

### 2006–2007

- John Thompson acknowledges that although **bestchance** is an independent organisation, it primarily relies on the generosity of others to fulfil its mission.
- Funding sources include:
  - various levels of government fund 42%
  - Trusts and Foundations, corporate and business sector, service clubs and many individuals whose contributions keep programs viable.
  - A number of events and fundraising activities which supplement CFCN income.
  - donations of material and skills by organisations such as Holmesglen TAFE.
  - ‘User pays’ fees



l-r The Hon Maxine Morand, MP, John Thompson, President, The Hon. Steve Bracks, Premier of Victoria, Pauline Ogden and CEO Lodi Francesconi



Children's Centre

## 2006–2007

- Valued COM members, President John Thompson and Treasurer Mike Kelly, both retire after 15 years.
- Significant developments during these years included:
  - a major shift in investment strategy
  - a review of all programs, with some restructuring
  - Cheshire School re-organisation.
  - a homeless youth housing program
  - a focus on children’s early years development
  - new early intervention programs including childcare and kindergarten services.
  - the construction of the Children’s Centre, a unique concept of holistic early intervention care for the young
  - focus on staff professional development and wellbeing.



In the Children’s Centre

## 2007

- John Thompson in his role as President of the COM, became the link between all parties involved in the Children’s Centre Project.
- He tirelessly oversaw and managed the daily financial and building aspects of the project.
- In 2007, John Thompson is awarded an OAM for 50 years of significant contribution to the community.

John Thompson OAM  
COM President 2001–2006

## 2006–2007

- The Children’s Centre development is awarded a City of Monash 2006 Sustainable New Building Award.
- Des Dodds is appointed President of **bestchance**, Child Family Care Inc, after having served six years on the COM.
- Increasing emphasis on raising the quality of services, evaluation of financial viability of activities and the need to improve the efficiency of processes and systems to ensure **bestchance** remains a practice leader in the field.

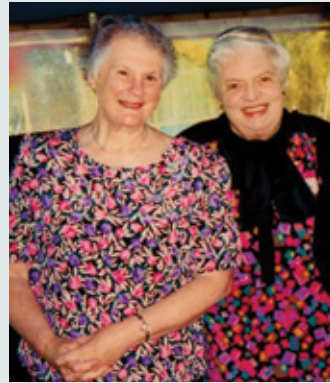


Children’s Centre



## 2007

- Life Governorships are awarded to Mrs Jean Cheshire and Mrs Dorothy Quantrelle, acknowledging their dedication to the organisation in assisting children and families over many years.



Dorothy Quantrelle and  
Jean Cheshire

## 2007–2008

- The Children’s Centre brings the vision of integrated service to reality. Now on-site and integrated with existing programs are:
  - Long Day Care
  - Sessional Child Care
  - Kindergarten
  - Early Childhood Intervention
  - In-home Volunteer Support
  - Supported playgroups,
  - Kindergarten Cluster Management [for 11 kindergartens]
- Volunteers continue to be integral to **bestchance** programs and long serving **bestchance** volunteer, Anne Soulsby is presented with the Sir John Monash Volunteer of the Year Award.



Anne Soulsby with other volunteers

## 2007–2008

- **bestchance** Training Programs now include:
  - Integration Aide Certificates II and III
  - Diploma of Children’s Services
  - Level II Office Skills
  - Level II Digital Technology
  - Aged Care Certificates
- City of Dandenong applies to **bestchance** to be included in the ‘Monash Kindergarten Collaborative Model’ for management support.
- **bestchance** is awarded the Monash Business Centre Award for Innovation.

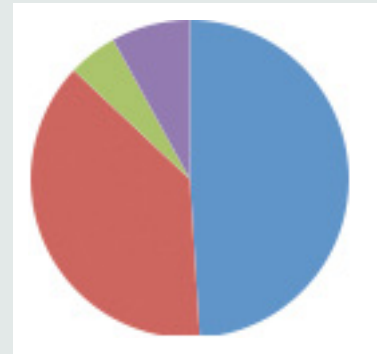


Training Centre

## 2008

- The Global Financial Crisis puts increased pressure on **bestchance**. Income from investments declines, to 5% of total income, while operational costs escalate.
- Foundation for Homeless Youth [FHY] is transferred from **bestchance** to St Vincent de Paul Society. This is an appropriate move, as **bestchance's** focus is now on early intervention.
- During its association with CFCN/**bestchance**, FHY built 20 homes. These housed 388 young people, most of whom completed advanced education.

2008–2009 Funding Sources



Govt. Grants 49%  
 Client Fees and Charges 38%  
 Income from Investments 5%  
 Other 8%

## 2008–2009

- Launch of Ken Masterton's book *A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond*, a history of the Burwood Boys' Home.
- "It's not the honour you take with you, but the heritage you leave behind". The values on which Robert Campbell Edwards based his life's work continue today.
- The Heritage Group is established with these aims:
  - to preserve more than 110 years of history
  - to develop an accurate and detailed record of events, so that the vision and past achievements may be used to build a strong base for future development.
- Chaired by Hector Davis, OAM, JP, the committee includes past and current members of the organisation.



Heritage Group 2008

## 2009

- State and Federal Early Childhood Sector undergoes a major reform process requiring more professional development for staff and an increased focus on measuring outcomes for Government Accreditation.
- Emphasis on early identification of children with developmental delays and efficient referral to specialised services.
- A high proportion of families are accessing more than one **bestchance** service through the integrated service model.



## 2009–2010

- Two projects are supported by Federal Government Grants totalling \$1.5 million. These are the refurbishment of Cheshire School and the completion of a new Training Centre
- 30 organisations attend a celebratory church service to recognise those people dedicated to the service of children.
- An Open Day is attended by **bestchance** families, volunteers, staff and friends.



Cheshire students

## 2010

- The Heritage Group receives a State Government Local History Grant.
- Grant money is used to restore and re-site a foundation stone laid by the founder of Burwood Boys Home, Robert Campbell Edwards in 1937.
- A series of mounted story boards highlighting key points in the organisation's history were produced.
- Additional work covered by the Grant included
  - Some photo and video conversion to DVD
  - Shelving and storage
  - Restoration and preservation of some historical photos and material



COM President Des Dodds with Campbell Edwards' great granddaughter and Trust Member, Eliza Bellmaine unveiling the restored foundation stone

## 2010

- Pauline Ogden retires as Deputy CEO, after 13 years with the organisation. She has been pivotal in the development of the **bestchance** integrated service model, focusing on better outcomes for children and families.
- Pauline is awarded the 2010 Eastern Region's International Women's Day Award for her contribution to children and families.
- Chris Thompson is appointed Deputy CEO and General Manager – Programs. Chris has a background in management of specialist child and family services.



Afternoon tea in the Children's Centre – a volunteer at work



## 2011

- CEO Lodi Francesconi retires after 15 years.
- Lodi was appointed in 1996. His management, organizational and entrepreneurial skills helped to increase the stability of the agency and develop a blue-print for the future which involved significant building and fundraising.
- Lodi was an innovative fundraiser, securing significant donations from private, corporate and government sources, financially strengthening the organisation.



Lodi Francesconi

## 2011

- Mindful of the organisations' past history, Lodi supported homeless youth through building and managing FHY homes and providing counseling and educational support.
- He facilitated the development and construction of the state of the art Children's Centre, a new Training Centre and Cheshire School's renovation and extension.
- Lodi embraced the Victorian State Government's 'Kindergarten Cluster Management' model to compliment **bestchance's** other early intervention services. This has remained a cornerstone program.



## 2011–2012

- **bestchance** embraces multicultural focus by promoting cultural awareness amongst clients and staff.
- 49% of those accessing childcare services are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse [CALD] and a Multicultural Festival is held in March
- Staff and volunteers receive training specific to CALD needs.
- 21 Kindergartens are now in the **bestchance** Cluster Management program.



Multicultural Festival performers

## 2011–2012

- Kevin Feeney is appointed CEO.
- Kevin has expertise in finance and social housing in the not-for-profit area.
- He oversees the implementation of the National Quality Framework Standards to ensure services meet diverse and community needs into the future.
- **bestchance** Committee structure is reviewed and the Committee of Management is now known as the Board of Governance.



Kevin Feeney

## 2012–2013

- Kindergarten Cluster now covers six local Government areas, providing 42 kindergartens with management services.
- Major review of **bestchance** Training services undertaken.
- Arden Joseph retires after 17 years on the Board. Arden's wide industry knowledge has been highly valued.
- A major review of Board structure and an update of the charter changes its governance focus from 'operational support' to 'oversight and strategic planning'.



## 2012–2013

- The Paddy O'Donoghue Centre, (three community childcare facilities based in Noble Park) joins **bestchance**.
- 96 % of families assisted by The Paddy O'Donoghue Centre are Culturally or Linguistically Diverse (CALD).
- Discussions are held with Federal Minister of Education and Training, The Hon Peter Garret MP and The Hon Peter Hall MP State Minister of Education, to discuss concerns related to providing quality training to diverse communities.
- Free interpreter service provided for children where needed.



Multicultural celebrations

## 2012–2013

- Parent and Community Support Program re-commences emergency relief, due to increased need.
- 6,590 volunteer hours are contributed to **bestchance** programs in 2012–2013.
- The well established Wishing Tree Program ensures children from needy families receive gifts at Christmas.
- A volunteer survey indicated that 95% rated their volunteer experience at the highest level of satisfaction.



Emergency Relief Program

## 2013–2014

- Strategic Plan sets the course for the next 3 years.
- Five main focus areas are: ‘Access to Quality Services, Excellence and Innovation, Partnerships, Organisational Capacity and Service Expression.’
- **bestchance** now provides management services for Booroondara Family Day Care Program, officially opening it as a **bestchance** Family Day Care Program.
- Family Day Care is a unique form of education and care offered in the provider’s [educator’s] home. The program has 422 children with 52 educators.



Family Day Care

## 2013–2014

- **bestchance** Training Centre is in full operation with a diverse range of education programs, from short one day courses to diploma level qualifications.
- Board Member Gary Edwards, retires after more than 35 years. He was Vice President for sixteen years, a member of the Finance Subcommittee and chaired the Property Subcommittee.
- As Chair of the Property Committee, Gary investigated the suitability of site options for the relocation from Burwood, recommending the Glen Waverley site, which was accepted by the COM subject to successful negotiations being undertaken by John Moore.



Training Centre



## 2014

- Des Dodds retires after 14 years with **bestchance** and eight years as Chairman of the Board.
- He has directed many strategic developments including changes in management, program structure and integrated service delivery.



Des Dodds

## 2014

- As Chairman, Des oversaw:
  - commencement of long day services in Glen Waverley and Noble Park
  - establishment of integrated, best practice programs and family support services in the Children's Centre
  - the Kindergarten Cluster Management program becoming a major service
  - development of the Board's strategy to look beyond the immediate geographical area for future services.
  - the construction, opening and establishment of the new Training Centre.



## 2014–2015

- Saul Ryan is appointed Chairman of the **bestchance** Board.
- He has a strong commitment to the **bestchance** philosophy that 'no child is turned away' and advocates for high quality integrated and affordable services for families.
- He looks forward to guiding the organization in maintaining and extending its position as a highly respected leader in care and education.



Saul Ryan

## 2014–2015

- CEO Kevin Feeney undertakes a study tour to major research centres and visits leading practitioners in early years education and specialised primary schools in USA. Findings from this study will be used in future planning of an integrated service model.
- Current improvements include:
  - systems and infrastructure update
  - comprehensive human resources information system for over 500 employees
  - quality and risk management strategies



## 2014–2015

- Staff Member, David Greenwood is appointed General Manager Education and Training. David's background is in management and training.
- Achievements in Training include:
  - 727 enrolments
  - 347 trainees in nationally accredited courses
  - 56% of trainees are from CALD backgrounds
  - 31 accredited courses commenced this year
  - high employment outcomes
- 100% of Cheshire students transitioned back into mainstream schools after completion of the 12 to 20 month intervention program.



Training Program Graduates

## 2015

- Jean Cheshire OAM, Life Governor and supporter dies.
- Jean was the widow of Frank Cheshire. The Cheshire family have generously supported the organisation for over 60 years, including with the establishment of schools at both on the Burwood campus and at Glen Waverley.
- Jean and Frank's visits to Burwood Children's Home were eagerly looked forward to by the children.
- Jean continued to be actively involved at **bestchance**, especially with the children of Cheshire School.



Jean Cheshire with Cheshire students

## 2015

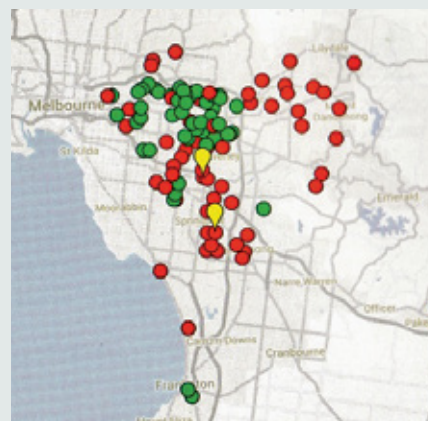
- Chris Thomson, General Manager Early Years, resigns. During Chris's leadership, Early Years programs were expanded.
- Early Years programs include:
  - long day care
  - occasional care
  - family day care
  - early childhood intervention
  - kindergarten cluster
  - parent and community support
- Achievements this year include:
  - a growth from 75 families to 325 using family day care
  - Glen Waverley and Noble Park child care centres achieve 'Exceeding National Quality Standards'



Chris Thompson

## 2015

- 19 new kindergartens join the **bestchance** kindergarten cluster, bringing the total to 61 with 372 educators.
- **bestchance** has formed 10 local government partnerships through the cluster program.
- **bestchance** supports kindergartens to provide programs aligned to the needs of their local community.
- The program strengthens and grows relationships with academic and other organisational partners.



Kindergartens Cluster members  
 Family Day Care Educators  
 Bestchance Centres

## 2015–2016

- 466 children now access Long Day Care at a **bestchance** centre.
- 6% had additional needs and 88% are from non English speaking backgrounds (CALD).
- 13% of families using **bestchance** childcare access other **bestchance** services.
- **bestchance** childcare and kindergarten programs achieve 'exceeding' under the National Quality Framework Accreditation System.





## 2015–2016

- 158 children and their families access Early Childhood Intervention services, 45% have CALD backgrounds. 13% benefit from other bestchance services.
- Monash University Psychology Masters program students collaborate with the Early Years Program at bestchance.
- Integrated Services model is further refined and developed and fits well with early intervention for more positive outcomes.



## 2015–2016

- 105 people now access the parent and community support program, including emergency relief, food vouchers, in-home volunteer support and supported playgroup.
- 25% were asylum seekers and 25% were from Culturally or Linguistically Diverse, [CALD] backgrounds.
- 25 families received in-home parenting support.



## 2015–2016

- 107 active volunteers, 52% of whom are CALD, provide 13,035 volunteer hours.
- Training and professional development is provided for volunteers. This is a way of interrelating opportunities gained through volunteering, compared with the earlier approach of purely donating time to those in need.
- 331 people enquired about volunteering for bestchance and 142 [43%] of those were placed in a position.
- 40% of exiting volunteers now use their work experience to gain employment or take up related study.



Volunteers turn their hands to many tasks

## 2015–2016

- 671 student enrolments in the Training Program. 207 fully accredited courses.
- 46% of students accessing training are CALD
- The Training Program demonstrates a commitment to high quality education with pathways into sustainable employment that meet the requirements of industry.



## 2015–2016

- 23 students are at Cheshire School during 2015–16.
- Major refurbishment of Cheshire School is undertaken by employees of two large firms, Lendlease and Harvey Norman. Donations of paint and whitegoods are included.



Cheshire students work together

## 2015–2016

- A consultancy service is offered to schools, parents and kindergartens who request help with students requiring intensive behavioural support.
- Relationship with Monash University Psychology Department expands and research is a key priority.
- **bestchance** presents, ‘The Voice of the Child’ Forum. Keynote speaker is Ms Megan Mitchell, National Children’s Commissioner. Bestchance presents community forums each year.

### Voice of the Child



Keynote speaker, Ms Megan Mitchell, National Children’s Commissioner presents at this Bestchance Forum

*Bestchance works holistically with both the child and their family, effectively responding to families from different cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds.*

*Having completed 120 years of care and education, bestchance continues to work for the best outcomes for children and families now and into the future.*



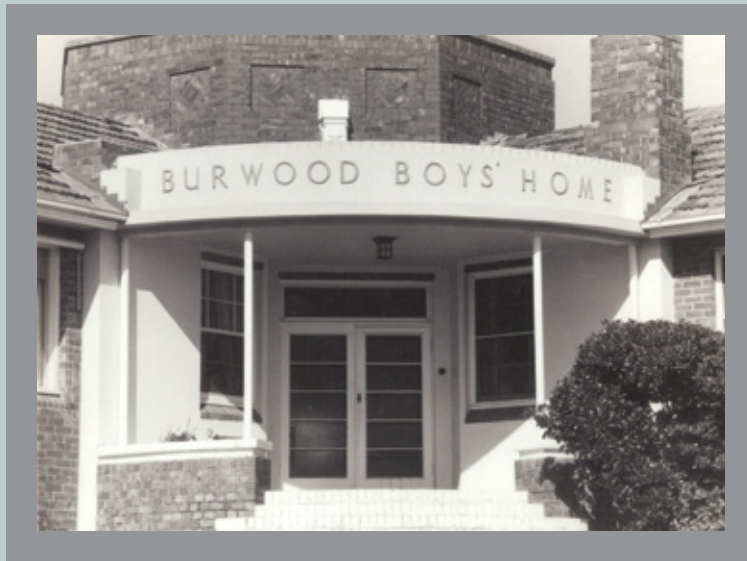




Ken Masterton's book was originally published in 2007 and has been a valuable resource for this new work **From Burwood to bestchance**.

Ken's original book is presented unchanged within this three part publication.

# *A Tea Merchant's Vision and Beyond*



**A history of the Burwood Boys' Home**

**Ken Masterton**

Ken Masterton is a retired primary school teacher who served on the Committee of Management of Burwood Boys' Home and Child and Family Care Network for almost thirty years.

He is an elder of Oakleigh Church of Christ and served on the Executive Committee of the World Convention of Churches of Christ (including a term as a Vice-President of that body).

He has been active in freemasonry for over fifty years and been rewarded with the rank of Past Junior Grand Warden.

Although a bachelor, and with no children of his own, he used to say that his family changed each year with every new group of students.

With this book completed, he has now set himself the task of producing a booklet of 'one-liners' or similar items that he has used in forty years of church and lodge newsletters – but only if he doesn't suffer too great a frustration due to Parkinsons Disease.

### **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this book to the memory of three friends:

- Glen Quantrelle, OAM (many rich and long hours together at Child and Family Care Network)
- J.J.F. (Jock) Roper, OAM (through kindred interests – Church, Lodge and Homes)
- Lodi Francesconi, CEO **bestchance** (generous and caring heart)

and to all who, by their association over the years, have helped to support and make our work better known.

I would be remiss if I did not express my deep appreciation of those who translated my hieroglyphics into a form that we can all understand – Shannon Gilmore, Ann McIntyre and Aimee Jellett.





*A Tea Merchant's  
Vision and Beyond*

A history of the Burwood Boys' Home

Ken Masterton

Edited by Michelle Jellett

Publication sponsored by the Campbell Edwards Trust

First published 2007

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# FOREWORD

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Robert Campbell Edwards would be proud to know that his vision a hundred years ago would be the means of giving thousands of boys a new chance in life. Ken Masterton in his writing has presented a detailed account of the achievement of the Burwood Boys' Home, which had its beginning through that vision.

Names, dates and places are important in recounting the long history of the Home, but the story is best told in the story of changed lives and the dedication of those who followed the example of the 'founder of the feast' and helped to bring those changes about.

The author has had a long history of service to the Home and has been part of the changing scene over much of the hundred years. He was a member of the Board for many years and has seen much of the passing parade of children, staff and Board members.

He has seen and been part of the changes that have taken place and has played a major role in the decision-making that has led to most of those changes. He is one of the few remaining members of the Burwood Boys' Home structure and his knowledge and research are a valuable contribution to the historical record of Robert Campbell Edwards' vision and what it has meant in the lives of former residents and families.

Modern day critics may be quick to pass judgement on what the Home was seeking to do in days long since passed, but there are those whose abundant living is testimony to what the Home has done for them and the generations that followed.

Robert Campbell Edwards had a great vision and did something about it and Ken Masterton has given a valuable historical summary of what happened as a result of that vision.

**Hector Davis, OAM, JP**

Former resident of the Burwood Boys' Home

## PREFACE

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One hundred and twelve years is quite a long time for an organisation to have survived: wars, fires, floods, droughts and depression, all of which have seemed to conspire against the development of charitable work in the crowded inner city. However, there is something unique about the Burwood Boys' Home and its successors – Burwood Children's Home, Child and Family Care Network and **bestchance** Child Family Care.

For three years I taught at Brighton Beach Primary School no. 2048, where each of my classes included children from the Melbourne Orphanage and 'outsiders' – children from families in the community. This provided me with an insight into, and an appreciation of, the mentality of the 'homeless' children whom I taught. Even as I write this, thoughts come to mind of unforgettable incidents which occurred inside and outside the classroom, and I feel again the sorrow I felt as the 'orphanage kids' expressed the sadness and disappointment of their lives. I was blessed with loving parents, a sister and two brothers. So many of these children were from broken homes or were placed in temporary care because of illness or other tragic circumstances. Indeed, in my three years there, I only taught one boy who was a genuine orphan.

I was privileged to have spent a few minutes at odd times with the late O.S. Green (Ossie), who was the principal of Wattle Park Primary School, where most of our children attended. He was a remarkable man who liked to know as much as possible about the pupils at his school. He became interested in the Burwood Children's Home – an interest which – as one of the Education Department's historians, led him to spend many hours' in researching the Home. I would have liked him to have written this book, but I think that the Education Department involved him in their own historical research. Nevertheless, he did produce a monograph, which he entitled *The Ensign Bearer* (being a brief biography of Robert Campbell Edwards).

Another who commenced research into the Burwood Boys' Home was the late H. (Bert) Lloyd who, on his retirement, set out to record highlights of its history. Bert became interested in the Burwood Boys' Home through his close friendship with members of his University High School Lodge No. 517 and because of their January meetings when audio visuals showed activities undertaken by the boys. On these nights, donations were received for the Home too.

I have put this publication together as best I could, considering that I am not an historian. Nor was I able to find all the records needed to complete the definitive book, as important records and documents had disappeared due to fires and transfers. However, I hope that I can present for you in these pages enough of the history of Burwood to foster your interest in the development of the organisation, and impress on your mind the value that this organisation has been to the community. Dare I say it, I trust that it will also dispose your heart to provide support to this wonderful community-focused enterprise with which I have been closely associated for more than thirty-five years as a member of the Committee of Management, Secretary, Public Officer and now Historian.

**Ken Masterton**  
Compiler



## CHAPTER ONE

### Robert Campbell Edwards – The Man and His Vision

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The story of the Burwood Boys' Home cannot be told without reference to the magnificent contribution and vision of Robert Campbell Edwards, who was a Melbourne tea and coffee merchant at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, and who established the Home.

Were he alive today, I am sure that he would espouse the same philosophy and lead another movement to take the homeless children and young people off the streets and into a warm and loving home situation.

I imagine he would be in the forefront of an organisation that sought to repair the fractured family, or in the case of complete family breakdown, would be the one crusading for roofs over homeless heads, for windows and walls to enclose but not imprison, and for loving care to rebuild shattered lives. I could see him continuing his role as President-Emeritus.

I never knew Robert Campbell Edwards, but I would like to take you through some aspects of his life so that you can appreciate this stern-looking, bearded, Christian businessman and the breadth of his vision. If I can do this, I feel that I will have achieved a peak in my life; for my sixty-plus years of association with Churches of Christ and my twenty-five years on the Burwood Boys' Home/Child and Family Care Network (CFCN) Committee of Management have led to the development of quite a proprietary interest in O.S. Green's *Ensign Bearer*.

Robert Campbell Edwards was born at 'Three Trees', a family property near Londonderry in Ireland, on April 19, 1862. On the very early death of his father, the family moved to Londonderry, where he proved his educational ability by winning various awards before his formal education ceased at the age of fourteen.

His uncle had earlier migrated to Melbourne, in the developing colony of Victoria in the distant southern continent of Australia, to escape the financial problems caused by the effects of the potato famines, but had returned in 1877 to visit his relatives. Uncle Thompson was sure that Robert's mother, Grace, could not do better for her now fatherless sons, than to bring them to this growing town of Melbourne. So, at the age of fifteen, Robert, his fourteen-year old brother, Thomas, and Grace set up home at 4 Wangaratta Street, Richmond, quite close to the Richmond Railway Station.





After a short time at various jobs, Robert began work in the Tea and Coffee Department at Messrs Rolfe and Co, wholesale grocers and importers, near the western end of Bourke Street, Melbourne. Young Robert's work included the tasting and blending of tea and assessing and checking all the costs associated with this. Having noted the profit made from the blending, he soon determined that this would be the foundation of a solid business that he could conduct.



His friendship with an agent, who supplied some of the teas, and the financial support of his mother, helped him to establish his own thriving business at the age of nineteen. Hard work didn't frighten him. He even bought a horse and gig, which he drove down through Gippsland selling his tea in bulk to the farmers.

His business, Edwards and Co, was in competition with the bigger merchants, which included Griffiths Teas, whose signs adorned the platforms of railway stations and boldly proclaimed how many miles to Griffiths Teas. Rail passengers looked for these signs to ascertain how far they were from Melbourne, and in doing so unintentionally recorded the name of the product in their minds. However, Robert built up his clientele through his personal attention and also because he carried other items that would save the farmers' wives from having to rush off to the distant stores.

The business continued to grow and grow, and in 1904, his brother, Thomas, joined him in the newly named Edwards and Company Ensign Tea. The company's slogan 'There is Only One Tea in AusTralia' reappeared early in 1996, but was soon withdrawn. (I've often wondered if someone told the advertising agency that the catch phrase was not an original.) The company then erected the first five-storey building at 100 Flinders Street between Russell and Exhibition Streets. This photograph shows just how it stood out from its neighbours.



It was said that the first passenger lift in Melbourne appeared in this building. I imagine that he was quite keen on this piece of equipment because it could speed up the movement of his staff from floor to floor. The company's ornamental sign atop the building was backlit by light globes, giving Melbourne one of its first illuminated business signs.

In 1921, a fierce fire completely destroyed the building, but by that time Campbell Edwards had expanded his business to Sydney (and later to Brisbane), so he was able to continue operating almost without a break by drawing on products from his Sydney offices. At the time of the fire his brother, Thomas Dill Edwards, was Managing Director and Campbell Edwards was Senior Partner. Two years later they moved to their final location at 310–318 King Street, near what is now the Night Club area.

The company established by Robert Campbell Edwards became a casualty of World War II. Food rationing meant that the purchase of tea for households required ration book tickets or tokens for just a small family allowance. Import of tea was not as regular and was of limited quantities, and manpower regulations reduced the number of male staff who were travellers and salesmen. Following the cessation of war the company continued, in a small way, to supply its special customers whilst becoming manufacturers of high quality clothing at their West Melbourne factory. This venture was later discontinued.

The land boom of 1881 eventuated into an economic disaster by 1891 for the building societies and banks, but as Campbell Edwards had his finances in Union Bank (one of the two banks which did not collapse) and had not yet indulged in land speculation, he remained in a very stable situation. This was despite lower profits from his tea and coffee business brought about by the smaller demand for his quality products, and the economic constraints within the community.

He was, however, in a very good position to buy into real estate in a very big way, purchasing about a hundred cottages in Richmond which he encouraged tenants to buy back by putting down a nominal deposit and making regular repayments that they could afford. He also bought extensive property in Burwood Road bounded on the south by Burwood Highway; on the east by Edwards Street; on the north by Warren Street; and on the west by Somers Street – an area known as Ensign Park.

He also purchased four farms in various parts of Gippsland. Among other properties that he later purchased was one in Station Street, Box Hill and another in Elm Road, Glen Iris (the former, later becoming Kingswood College and the latter, the College of the Bible). Some of the properties became homes for Robert Campbell Edwards and his wife Gwendolyn. Their son Campbell suggested that in twenty-five years they must have lived in twenty-six different houses.

With all that has been written to this point, there has been very little mention of a family, but in 1905 Robert married Gwendolyn Llewellyn Pritchard, who was twenty years his junior. Campbell was born the following year, siblings Llewellyn in 1907, Gwyn in 1909, Jean in 1911 and Robert in 1914. Gwyn, unfortunately, took ill on board ship while returning home from Ireland and died soon after arriving home at the young age of nineteen. Campbell entered the family business, but Llew spent much of his time engaged in farming on the property at Tarwin Lower in South Gippsland, after spending less than ten years in the tea business. Jean married a timber merchant, Alan Fulwood. Robert, the youngest, studied at Melbourne University and gained his qualifications in order to practice medicine.

Robert Campbell Edwards died on August 25, 1946 at the age of eighty-four, from cancer. His wife, Gwen, survived him by twenty years. They are both buried at the Box Hill Cemetery with a simple, but massive bluestone pillar created from the burnt out ruins of the old Flinders Street property to mark the gravesite. It bears one word ‘Edwards’.

He didn’t require a monument to remind people of him, for his monuments were in the community that he served: the Burwood Boys’ Home, the College of the Bible, numerous Churches of Christ that had been financially assisted through the Campbell Edwards Trust or the Edwards Foundation, his family, and the countless numbers of individuals who had been physically assisted or spiritually strengthened by the man or by those who, in turn, had been inspired by him.

At the age of seventy this lay preacher of the Churches of Christ taught himself Hebrew so that he could read the Scriptures in the original language, and even at the age of seventy-three he could be found teaching within the Sunday school at Hawthorn. It seemed that his life’s theme was to help people to help themselves and, in turn, to encourage them to help others.

Cliff Taylor, editor of *The Australian Christian* in the issue of September 11, 1946 suggested that, at the moment of his conversion, Robert Campbell Edwards heard a Voice. Thereafter, his life was lived according to the highest standard of Christian ethics of which it was possible for him to live. He preferred to see the Good in Man rather than the Bad.

What prompted Robert Campbell Edwards into the philanthropic area? There doesn't seem to have been any single reason, but rather a series of prompts, which built up a firm resolve. From an early age he supported Dr Barnardo's Homes for the underprivileged boys of England. Through the Churches of Christ Overseas Missions he contributed greatly to the welfare of children at Dhond in India. He experienced at first-hand the homeless boys of Melbourne, for some of them 'squatted' in the sheltered entryway to his Flinders Street offices and warehouse.

Undoubtedly too, he would have encountered those who begged for handouts around the streets in those troubled times. Crowning all these was his Christian belief that 'freely you have received, freely give'. He believed that he had been blessed by God with a loving and caring home life, despite the death of his father while he was only a toddler, and thus he should be prepared to share a great deal of his worldly possessions with others. Even today, more than fifty years after his death, funds continue to be made available for support of Christian activities and for some youth and family projects through his wise investments and those of the members of the Campbell Edwards Trust and the Edwards Foundation.

Robbit John Clow in *The Book of the Ages* tells of the extensive problems confronting the Melbourne community in the early 1890s: 'What's to become of the hundreds of poor unfortunate little beings who came into existence in our great cities, seemingly unwanted and undesired, usually called waifs and strays?' Clow suggests that Campbell Edwards thought seriously upon this subject when he was only a lad, and when he became prosperous in business his thoughts began to take definite shape. Campbell Edwards talked the matter over with his brother Thomas and very soon they were wholeheartedly into the suggestion of doing something about the problem. Remembering that this was the time of the Depression following the land boom, their business was still nevertheless on a solid basis, although not generating as much profit as previously and they had used much of their capital. Robert Campbell Edwards had only £500 with which to launch the Home for Destitute Boys. However, due to cheap land being on the market, a choice parcel of land in a prime position at 155 Warrigal Road Burwood was obtained and a fairly large wooden house was erected on the property. All this for £500!

## CHAPTER TWO

### The First Fifty Years (1895–1944)

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In 1895, the Burwood Boys' Home was instituted as 'a Home for Neglected, Orphaned and Fatherless Boys'. We have very little information available to cover adequately this very vital period of Burwood's development. It was at this time that the patterns were set which established the Home, independent of government finances and virtually independent of any church. It was, however, wonderfully supported by a Committee of Management which included many members of the Churches of Christ, and by donors from among these churches, who were encouraged in the Churches of Christ national paper to make gifts to the work.



*The original Burwood Boys' Home in 1895*

The front-page advertisement stated, 'Of all the work in which Christians can engage, this is the most encouraging and reproductive. You sow today, and tomorrow you reap the harvest. Our readers everywhere are asked to assist the great work of saving the boys.'

When in 1895, Robert Campbell Edwards had become so vividly aware of homeless boys he discussed his concerns with his mother and younger brother, coming to the decision that he must do something to alleviate their problems.

As was mentioned earlier, he was a very keen supporter of the Dr. Barnardo Homes in England, and could not see why that type of accommodation and programme could not succeed in Melbourne. In this, he was also encouraged by Messrs Miller (State Neglected Children's Department), Barber (Gordon Institute for Boys) and Forster (Try Society).

He appointed a horticulturist, Mr. William Richard Hawkins, as superintendent on his farming property in Warrigal Road and arranged for the erection of two wooden cottages on the property. The Home was now ready to accept a number of homeless lads, who would be fed and clothed and able to live in much better conditions than those from which they were rescued.



*Mr. William  
Richard Hawkins*

*The Burwood Boys' Home was formally opened by Lord and Lady Brassey (new Governor of Victoria) on 31st May, 1896. It was fitting that the then president of the largest work among destitute children in the world (Dr. Barnardo Homes – London) should have the opportunity of opening a similar work in the state of which he was, at the time, the Queen's representative.*

*Jubilee History – Burwood Boys' Home*

Campbell Edwards and Hawkins were firm believers that lads who understood working the land would never be out of employment, would be of a good physical condition, and have a positive attitude to life. They believed that the boys would become farmers, dairymen or miners.



As the boys were in full residential care they were expected to learn how to handle the work on the farm. Hawkins set all the boys specific duties around the farm so that they would learn skills, which would be advantageous to them when they sought employment. They would also be taught to love their country and their God. A small, almost self-contained community was established with an excellent market garden, from which the surplus produce was sold and the money used to cover other expenses. Dairy cows enabled them to produce their own milk supply, thus serving an important and regular area for saving on expenditure.



*The first Burwood boys and staff*

Unfortunately, there were some in the community who felt that Campbell Edwards and Hawkins were exploiting the boys as cheap child labour. This really hurt Campbell Edwards in particular, so a Committee of Management was set up, comprising a range of interested people in the community, to oversee the wide-ranging activities and to ensure that everything done was completely within the law.

The following list appeared on the back of the Annual Reports between 1905 and 1929 and explains the Home's philosophy:

#### *DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE BURWOOD BOYS' HOME*

- *A home for boys between ten and fifteen years of age*
- *Any really destitute boy admitted without question*
- *Boys having relatives must be at least partly supported by them*
- *Boys having parents, who can or should support them, must do so as far as possible*
- *A boy's doubtful character no bar to his admittance*
- *Destitute boys have at all times the first consideration*
- *Moral improvement is ever kept in view*
- *Good physical conditions and discipline an aid to right conduct*
- *Work on the soil is a restorer of health and healthy aspirations*
- *The boy who understands working the land need never be out of employment*
- *The Home aims at turning out boys for country life*
- *Burwood Boys become gardeners, orchardists, farmers, dairymen and miners*
- *The Home teaches boys to serve their country as well as their God*
- *Service is the supreme offering which one can give to another*

It is of interest to read the Superintendent's Report as presented in the Annual Report of 1906:

*Since my last report twenty-nine boys have been admitted to the Home, making it a total of 183 who have received the care, attention, discipline, and instruction that the Home provides for all those boys who are in need of a helping and guiding hand, together with the home life and influence to be found there. The orphan lad here finds a Home and a tender loving sympathy and interest in his present and future welfare; to this he generally responds with obedience and love.*

*The neglected boy finds on entering, that he is surrounded by that comfort, neatness, and order, which will soon impress him with the fact that henceforth he will have by his side those who will study his needs, and by teaching and practise will enable him to develop the best qualities he possesses. The incorrigible boy, or more correctly, the boy who has been allowed to follow the desires of his own will, much to his parents' sorrow, and his own disadvantage...find they have for companions boys of their own age who were their equal for playing truant, but now have lost the desire to evade the responsibilities of education. They soon fall into line with their new companions and their truant experiences are soon adventures of the past. By firm, but kindly discipline, they are taught to strive for that which is high and noble in life.*

*All boys do not take so kindly to their new life; some make many attempts to gain what they have come to look upon as freedom, but which is in reality bondage; time and again they have to be sought for in the glittering city, the thronged market, or the crowded wharf, and brought back home. At present, nineteen boys are in situations, mostly on farms where they are earning their own living and at the same time saving money. Twenty-three boys have been discharged, fifteen returned to their parents after varying times of residence and eight, attaining eighteen years of age, boldly started out to fight life's battle.*

In its early years, Campbell Edwards invited a number of people from the Churches of Christ to join him on the Committee of Management to replace others who retired or moved away from the area. Indeed, after a few more years, he apparently invited the Victorian Conference of Churches of Christ to purchase the property at Burwood and undertake the management of the Home as an outreach or mission of the church.

I'm not sure whether it was inability or unwillingness to take up that offer which saw it withdrawn, but I do know that Will H. Clay, who was Director of Social Services of the Churches of Christ and a member of the Burwood Boys' Home Committee of Management, was of the opinion that Churches of Christ were committed to caring for elderly folk and not young people. Thus, the Burwood Boys' Home in its earlier days was only a de facto Home of the Churches of Christ. In my opinion if the position had occurred in this first decade of the twenty-first century, the lay people would have risen to the challenge and taken on the work.

By 1908, when the Burwood Boys' Home became incorporated under the Hospitals and Charities Act of Victoria, more than 200 boys had passed through its care. Burwood had established and was fulfilling its aim to provide 'a home for destitute boys and from which no really destitute boy would be refused admission or turned away'.

Recently, while reading obituary notices in the daily paper, I was able to locate some brief detail about life at Burwood around the time of World War I. Robert Lether Fraser, his twin brother, Norwood, and younger brother, Beverley, were admitted into care at Burwood in 1913 for about two years. They reported that 'the Home was hard, meals were poor and we suffered homesickness'. It would seem that Robert's ninety-six years of life could be summed up by saying that he was a battler, always supportive of others in their worries, and helpful and friendly to all.

In post-World War I times, church members offered to act as hosts to the boys, and whenever holidays came around, the boys would be invited to spend time in their homes, or to accompany them on family outings and holidays. Some of the boys maintained association with holiday hosts well into adult life and made wonderful family friends.



*The boys working on the property*

It was also part of the continuing work at Burwood to ensure that the boys should be placed in employment where their skills could be put to work. Many of them were placed on dairy farms. Not all placements were satisfactory, as records confirmed that some of the boys returned to Burwood after some very hair-raising experiences. They told of living in barns, being given only pocket money despite working solidly from dawn to dusk, and even being physically beaten for real or imaginary misdemeanours. However, there were some young men whose work was deeply appreciated and this led to Burwood receiving glowing letters of testimony to the industry and skill of the young men. Some of the lads were able to bank most of their wages and thus, quite soon after establishing themselves in employment, were able to buy their own clothes and means of conveyance; be it pushbike, motorbike, or even a car.

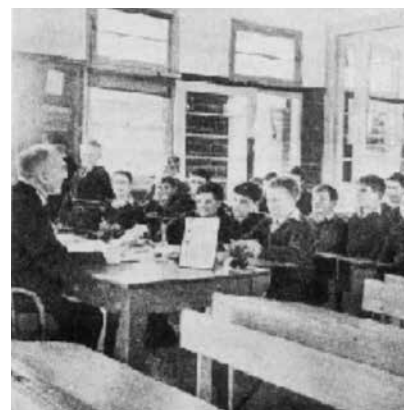
In order to gain some further understanding of the conditions at the Home, let me share with you two essays written by John R. Brown who attended the Boys' Home State School No. 3841:

### ***Our Home***

*Our Home is situated on a rise, and so we have a very good view of the surrounding country. It consists of one big building and several other smaller ones at the back. The big building consists of the kitchen, dining room, rooms for the staff, a big cold-water bath for the boys, a hospital ward, a small dormitory, and a large hall. The smaller buildings comprise of two small dormitories, a hot-water bathroom, the lavatory basins, and a wash-house. From the Home to the gate leading on to the road is a long drive, on the left-hand side of which is a large lemon orchard. On the right-hand side of the drive is another large orchard in which are grown many varieties of plums, apples, cherries and pears. Much of the fruit is sent to the Australian Jam Company, and the money is used toward the upkeep of the Home. At the back of the Home is a large vegetable garden, which the boys help to cultivate. In it are grown many vegetables, such as parsley, lettuces, cabbages, broad beans, French beans, silver and red beet, tomatoes, rhubarb, and radishes. The animals of the Home are three cows, two horses and a few fowls. The machinery consists of three ploughs, a spray pump, a cultivator, harrows and a chaff-cutter.*

*We have plenty of amusements, such as picnics, concerts and socials. At present the boys are engaged in clearing a large tract of land for a playing field. On Sunday morning the Manager takes the boys to church, and in the afternoon we have Sunday school in the large hall. Most of the boys who come here have been playing truant from school, and come here to be made better boys. They are kept under strict discipline with not much*

*punishment. As soon as a boy comes here he is initiated into the Rechabite Lodge, where they are induced not to touch alcoholic drinks. Boys should show their gratitude to the people who look after them by turning out good and honest citizens. The staff who are employed try to help the boys to the best of their ability, and see that the Home is kept perfectly clean. The Committee is a body of good men who will not spare themselves in trying to reform boys.*



*The Burwood Boys' Home children attending school*

### *My Last Year at School*

*On the 27th of January, after five weeks of pleasant holidays, I returned to school. The first day was nearly gone by the time we had settled down to our somewhat tiresome work. As the weeks passed, the work became harder, and I could only do, without help, about one sum out of six. Even when I could do one it was after a lot of attempts. It always took me a long time to get a clear idea of the solving of equations and the problems in algebra. The geometrical theorems were easy at first, but after a while they became very hard to learn. As soon as I had got them off by heart, I could prove some of the things we were asked to prove, but some of them I could not prove even after many attempts. I got on all right at reading, poetry, history, science, and literature because I had a liking for them. At geography, I never did much good, because I could not draw maps very well while looking at an atlas, and was a failure without one. I was not very good at drawing anything from nature, but was better at model and scale drawings.*

*In the half-yearly examinations, I passed in every subject. When the inspector, Mr. Henderson, came in October, he said that my mate and I were better than any other boys he had examined for the year. Our teacher asked him would he give both of us our merit certificates without being examined for it, but as I was the only one who had passed in the qualifying examination I was the only one who got it without being examined. My opinion of the teacher is that he always gave me the best advice, although it was not always too pleasant. Very often when I rightly deserved the strap I was let off, and when I did get it I more than deserved it. Altogether, my last year at school was a very happy one.*

*Annual Report 1925*

I am sure that, as you read these essays, you could very clearly visualise the setting and experiences better than I could ever describe them.

A.E. Knight, the Organising Secretary, wrote these words which focused attention on the worth of seeking to raise funds and indeed, the value of the Home:

*Frequently the question is put as to whether the expenditure in the work in which we are engaged is worthwhile. Many, no doubt, think that the boys we are trying to reform will, when they leave the Home, gradually drift back into their former bad habits, and that the trouble and money spent is not worthwhile. The boys who are sent to the Home are a class on their own, quite distinct from the ordinary boy. They have had no proper home training. In many cases, they have been encouraged to tell lies and to steal. Failures to reform do occur, but in the majority, the boys greatly benefit by having been placed in the Home, where they are taught to be regular in their habits, clean, industrious, tidy, unselfish, honest and truthful, and to be kind to animals. Our Home was never intended for the boy who is criminally inclined, but more for the destitute,*



*and orphan, or the boy who is out of control, who needs a Home where wise counsels, strict discipline, combined with love and example, prevail. Such a Home as this the Committee is endeavouring to provide. Its effects are seen in those men who, after many years, come back to the school to see their former teacher, and to thank him for the benefits they have received under his tuition while they were inmates of the Home.*

*After twelve years of continuous service our school's Head Teacher, can speak with authority of the good that is accomplished in the Home and school. These are his words: 'Speaking for the school, boys who have come here truants and idlers, with a dislike for school, have become interested in their studies and have gained their Merit Certificate before leaving. In frequent visits and letters I receive from my old pupils, and the positions of trust that some of them occupy, is quite sufficient to convince me that it is worthwhile. During my twelve years' work in this school, I am sure that over ninety percent of the boys have made good'.*

*Annual Report 1927*

Collectors were employed to solicit donations towards the work, especially throughout country Victoria. It was noted that these collectors were paid £2 10s. (\$5) per week to cover their expenses (travel, accommodation, meals, etc.) and retained one-third of the amount they were able to collect. In today's climate, this would lead to quite an outcry as moves have been made to ensure that we streamline fundraising to get as close as possible to having 100% of each donated dollar going towards the charity and as close to zero for the expense of gathering in the amounts.

At one time a collector reported the theft of money and receipt books. This led to press and radio announcements to prevent genuine donors from being duped. It was interesting to note that one country collector had been gathering more than money in his regular rounds. Over a number of years, he had been given cattle, especially calves, sheep, 400 bushels of wheat, wool, etc. At one point, he sought a loan or gift from the Burwood Boys' Home to purchase a two-ton international truck as the panel van that he had was not big enough to meet his needs. It seemed that the Committee raised his commission to help pay for his instalments on the vehicle.

Let me hasten to add that these collectors were responsible for gathering thousands of pounds for the Burwood Boys' Home over the years and across the state. Some collectors and their contributors left sums of money in their wills to continue their support of the Home, something greatly appreciated. Quite a number of donors and their families have continued their support even up to this day, mailing in regular gifts and very generous bequests, a truly excellent way of ensuring that your money works when you can no longer derive benefit from it yourself.

From 1934 to 1936, an amalgamation was attempted between the Burwood Boys' Home and Minton Boys' Home. The economic re-structure proposed, would have meant being able to care for more boys and at a higher standard. However, the efforts to amalgamate eventually came to a grinding halt; it was considered prudent to develop the building plan, which had been shelved for almost ten years. This, however, did not prevent the threat of de-registration from becoming a reality, for you see, the Premier of Victoria had stated that within twenty-eight days from October 9, 1936, he would proceed with the de-registration process if amalgamation with Minton was not achieved. On December 7, a notice of de-registration appeared in *The Herald* and in the *Government Gazette* two days later. The Premier, Deputy-Premier (Mr. Hogan) and Mr. McVilly (Hospitals and Charities Commission Secretary and Inspector) could not be persuaded to rescind the notice.

As our plans for rebuilding had been formulated and costed between £6,500 and £8,000, and a benefactor (Mr. Cartwright) had left one-quarter of his estate to the home (£2,650), Mr. T.R. Morris (a businessman) and Mr. D.S. Abraham (a solicitor) were appointed to wait upon Mr. McVilly, to discuss the best means of carrying on the work of the Home, or to undertake some kindred work.

A suggestion from this meeting was that we should amalgamate with the Try Society (South Yarra). This was not satisfactory to the members of the Committee of Management, so at their meeting on January 26, 1937, it was resolved that ‘...steps be taken to erect a new modern building on the present site (including fittings and furniture) approximating £6,000...’

Remember that the original house built in 1895 was still in use and that the two smaller dormitories were added soon after the establishment of the Home. Committee members were invited to view other modern Homes. I don’t know the significance of the minutes of March 16, 1937, which read ‘The Committee approved of plans submitted finally by the building committee.’ By the way, I also note that money from one estate was misdirected to Burwood when it was supposed to be for Tally Ho Boys’ Village. (How we would have liked to put that amount towards our building costs, as we were barely solvent due to the de-registration. However, I am delighted to report that we did forward the correct amount to nearby Tally Ho Boys’ Village.) The contract was let for the building, at a cost of £5,414, but I noticed that Mr. McVilly invited the Committee to apply for re-registration before commencing the building programme. That matter was deferred until the next meeting, at which they agreed to apply. Further correspondence ensued when Mr. McVilly asked for ‘... information as to why the Committee proceeded to build without the Board’s consent’.

However, it seemed that all was resolved and arrangements went ahead for the opening of the new building by the Hon. A.L. Bussau, M.L.A., State Attorney General, on Saturday, November 13, 1937. The foundation stone for the new building had been laid, previously, by Robert Campbell Edwards on July 17, 1937, and the silver trowel, suitably engraved, was presented by J. Plottel, FRAIA and is now displayed at the CFCN offices. The boys began their occupation of the new accommodation on October 16, four weeks before the official opening.

New letterheads appeared very soon after, featuring the grand entrance of the Home.

The number of boys in care had been lowered from twenty-six to thirteen, due to the building programme of 1937, but soon grew again. In compensation for the lower numbers that year, only one boy needed to be placed in employment. Absolutely no difficulty was encountered in placing this young man. By the following year, the number of boys in care had been increased to thirty-one.

A new set of by-laws was drawn up and adopted at the 1937 Annual Meeting; the last meeting presided over by the founder, Robert Campbell Edwards. At the first meeting of the new committee, it was moved that the title of President-Emeritus should be conferred on the Home’s founder and long-serving president. That year was also the first of two instances when the Home was placed under quarantine – once due to an infantile paralysis (poliomyelitis) epidemic and another due to an outbreak of diphtheria. The dedication of the staff and the Honorary Medical Officer was lauded at the 1938 Annual General Meeting of the Home (incidentally, for many years the A.G.M. was conducted at the Melbourne Town Hall. It sounds very grand, but the meetings were held in one of the smaller rooms within the building).

Dr. W.A. Kemp stated that he personally felt that the 1939 Annual Report indicated that Burwood Boys' Home was well in the forefront of the Children's Homes of this state.

Mr. Eric Hammond, who later joined the Committee of Management, was invited to design the garden area around the new building. Eric was a resident of Box Hill and attended the local Church of Christ along with 'Doc.' Kemp, who, of course, knew of his skills as a landscape gardener (Eric had worked with the famous Edna Walling, a garden designer of great note). Amongst Eric's own high profile work in later years was planning and developing a part of the garden surrounding Rippon Lea Mansion, and the overall supervision of the landscape and floral display at the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. This quiet gentleman gave outstanding service to the Burwood Boys' Home for almost fifty years.

As previously mentioned, when boys 'graduated' from Burwood we always ensured that they had employment to go to. At one time several attempts were made to find employment for one lad, but all possibilities failed until a position was obtained at the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation at Fisherman's Bend. As rent for his accommodation was higher than expected, the Committee subsidised these payments. Another time arrangements were made for one lad to learn painting and sign-writing at the Melbourne Technical College.



The welfare of the boys, after they had entered the work-force with all its attendant problems, was a very important area of the Committee's work, and back in 1938, Les Searle was appointed Convener of the Welfare Committee. A staff member, under the supervision of the Superintendent, was also appointed to be responsible for the care and welfare of the boys who were still at the Home. Unfortunately this appointment took place while the staff member, who had previously undertaken this task, was on holidays. He was then notified in writing that his services were terminated as he was deemed to be unsuited to the position. This led to the immediate resignation of a married couple on staff who were close friends of the man dismissed, and who also felt that they should have been considered for this position. The newly-appointed man came into a very disturbing situation, but remaining staff members took on extra duties and were assisted by Committee members, in order to overcome this predicament.

This discontent seemed to transmit to some of the boys who absconded from the Home. For some of these boys, it was not the first time that they had 'done a runner' and returned to the Home, accompanied by the local constabulary. The ringleader of the 'runners' was not allowed to return, and the others were grounded for a short period of time. (In a later report, the Committee relented and readmitted the chastened ringleader. I also noted that two persons were authorised to administer corporal punishment 'for recalcitrant truants'). Four months on, the minutes recorded that the final resolution for the problem of the six runaways was brought about when one boy was returned to the Children's Welfare Department as 'an undesirable character'.

On another occasion, a special meeting was called to consider the bad behaviour of some of the boys – money had been stolen from the purse of the laundress, and the bad language of some of the boys had been directed at the Matron. Part of this breakdown of discipline was attributed by some to the fact that some visitors were going directly to the boys instead of reporting first to the Matron. One visitor, who frequently offended, was often under the influence of liquor when he visited. He probably knew that he would

not be allowed to visit until he was sober. Visiting days were then decreed to be limited to the first and third Sundays and the second and fourth Saturdays.

While this was going on, in December 1939, a bequest of £2,500 was received from the estate of the late George Kiel, for the rebuilding and renovations, with the condition ‘that the Home is conducted strictly on Christian un-denominational lines and that such principles would always be adhered to’.

A letter was sent to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior in 1940, intimating our willingness to assist in looking after evacuee boys from Great Britain. Even though the Committee fully supported the Executive in the invitation, I did not notice any further references to the letter or the admission of any of these boys.

I wondered when I would come across references to World War II, other than the reference to the evacuees. Burwood seemed to be insulated from these hostilities, until the Air Raid Precautions Regulations were drawn to the attention of the Committee of Management, particularly the ‘blackout requirements’. The House Committee was ‘authorised to go ahead with whatever it considered necessary to comply with the authorities’ requirements’. I recall cloth netting glued to the inside of windows to prevent shattering; windows painted black on the outside; and shields covering external lights so that illumination was not much more than a pin-point or small pool of light. Only a few months later, mention was made of drilling the boys in necessary routine for evacuation of buildings and assembling in slit trenches, but there was a slight problem – the slit trenches had yet to be dug!

Following the death of the former President and Honorary Solicitor, Mr. Daniel S. Abraham, Mr. J. Coltman, of Herman and Coltman, was invited to become our honorary solicitor. He accepted and there began an association which has continued for more than fifty years with the Burwood Boys’ Home and CFCN, now known as Coltmans Price Brent. During much of that time, Miss Pat Kennedy, recently retired, spent many hours of her valuable time and expertise to assist the Home and CFCN to cope with problems as they occurred.

So many of our Committee members were very busy and important community figures. At one meeting, Cr. W.A. (Tich) Fordham, a councillor of the City of Camberwell, congratulated Dr. W.A. Kemp, on being elected to the Box Hill City Council. Both of these committeemen became mayors of their respective cities. Many years later, Hector Davis, one of our ex-boys, became Mayor of the City of Heidelberg on no less than three occasions and also served a period as Commissioner of the City of Manningham.

A very special meeting was called on September 1, 1942, when the recently appointed superintendent, Mr. R. Way, presented, as requested, a comprehensive report of his observations and impressions. What a list he had! Crowded conditions in dormitories and recreational areas; staff shortage (only one other man besides the superintendent, to supervise the boys); lack of storage space; need for another sewing machine; more tools and equipment required to assist in the training of the boys in practical skills; levelling and drainage of frequently used external traffic areas; and the need for a Ladies’ Auxiliary (already in its formative stages). To add to the problems, the school mysteriously burned down only nine days later. The need for a new residence for Mr. Way was another committee priority. All of this came at a time when expenditure exceeded income. Mr. Way resigned after only a few months after his appointment as Superintendent. No reason was stated in the records.



A committeeman, Mr. Andrew A. Hughes (Minister of the Swanston Street, Melbourne, Church of Christ), who was to become a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and who had served as President of the Melbourne Try Boys' Society, offered his services for an interim period.

The appointment, late in 1942, of Mr. Alfred J. Wignell to the position of Superintendent, was a very positive move, and as we look back, appeared to be the launching pad for great development in the conduct and the morale at Burwood. In the context of endeavouring to have all the boys placed with host families over the Christmas and New Year period, Mr. Wignall said in the minutes of October 26, 1943, that he thought it more desirable to endeavour to create homes and home life for orphaned, destitute and neglected boys. He was of the opinion that boys who lived for long periods in institutions usually developed a distorted outlook on life and although institutions such as ours were filling a need, a great deal more could be done for needy children if they were brought up in a private home where individual attention could be given to them.

Life at Burwood never seemed to be calm for too long at any one time. The General Secretary of the day submitted his resignation because of personal attacks on his integrity by two fellow members of the Committee. The Committee expressed its appreciation of the contribution he had made and in a special motion, dissociated themselves from this criticism of his magnificent contribution and sought the withdrawal of his resignation. This was achieved. The following month, two members of the Committee resigned and their resignations were accepted. The Secretary, however, still resigned!

The Committee recommended that the new brick school should be named 'Wattle Park State School' instead of 'Burwood Boys' Home State School'. The reasons given were that with the possibility of expansion of the school to admit other children of the district, a district name would be desirable. The Committee desired to create, in the mind of its charges, the impression and concept that they were a part of the community and not an isolated unit. At the following meeting it was noted that the Education Department would not change the name. The Superintendent contacted the Minister of Education personally and the school became State School No. 3841, Wattle Park.

On a plan of the property, there was a wedge of land between two sections of our land. It was owned by Sir William Angliss, but because of its situation it was considered that it would be of more value to the Burwood Boys' Home if it became a part of our land parcel. An approach was made to Sir William, whereby we would arrange the transfer to him of a suitable tract of similar value. Sir William agreed to transfer his wedge of land to us provided that he could have the value of his land allowed as a tax deduction from his income tax. It was, however, decided that we would buy the land for £2,700 which, in turn, Sir William would donate to the Home and thus receive his tax deduction. Despite appearances, Sir William wasn't just a tough businessman. He was very caring and supportive of the Committee's work and the Sir William Angliss Trust has continued to provide financial support to the work at Burwood and then later, at Goulburn Valley.

Sandwiched in the minutes at this time was a report given by Dr. Kemp, that he had been approached by a well-known gentleman regarding the establishment of an orphanage for the Melbourne City Mission to discuss this matter in greater detail. I could find no further record of this matter so I must assume that no further action was taken. Perhaps it had been an idea that had been dreamed up by somebody who saw the extent of our property and thought that it would be a great opportunity to provide facilities away from the heart of the city.

Mention was made earlier in the minutes of the suggestion to establish a Ladies' Auxiliary. This was discussed formally and at length by Committee member, Mrs. Wunderley, with staff members and other Committee members, the principal aims being to raise money for the Home, and also to assist staff with 'a woman's touch' where they felt that assistance could be given.

Their first venture was a Market Fair, which produced a great net result of £120. Then, on April 28, 1942, Miss Lois Savage, a local pharmacist, was appointed to the Committee of Management. No time was lost – she was very quickly co-opted to the Ladies' Auxiliary and some time later became the chairperson.

During this wartime, moves were being made, seeking our support, by a group known as 'Welfare of Youth Crusade' to construct or adapt a building as a city youth hostel. As no further reference was made to this matter, I don't know whether the venture failed because of the wartime lack of manpower available, building materials, or lack of finance, but it is most interesting to note that even at the turn of this new century, there have still been proposals submitted for converting unused factories for homeless youth and families.

In 1943, the Administrative Office was moved from the city and onto our own property. It had for some time been at the offices of Mr. D.S. Abraham, our honorary solicitor. Before that time, it was at 1 Queen Street, Melbourne, which later became the Melbourne outlet and headquarters for the very famous 'Fletcher Jones and Staff'.

I would like to include a couple of episodes to illustrate the nature of daily life within the Home.

One of the boys was taken away from the Home by his father without authority. The boy had been entrusted to our care by his mother. A letter was sent to the father, demanding the return and another was sent to the mother to inform her of what had happened. Once again, there was no further reference to what occurred from that point on. Today, it would be a case for the Family Law Court, but in that period, I think that negotiations would have had to be taken to resolve the issue.

Another time a complaint was received from a golfer at the adjoining Wattle Parl Golf Course, that some of our boys used bad language in his presence, and not the other way round. It also seemed that some of the boys had a lucrative business selling used golf balls to some of the golfers. We also heard rumours that some of the balls had been 'found' before they had stopped rolling!

I insert here items from some of the Annual Reports, which very succinctly summarise aspects of the work and indicate the philosophy of management and staff:

*In submitting our Annual Report to subscribers and the public, we desire to testify to the unfailing providence of God, which has sustained the work during all the past years, and is with us today in bounteous provision, so that it is with a deep sense of gratitude we make our report for the past year.*

*Eighty-three boys were admitted during the year. Forty-six were discharged, having completed their term, one returned home, the discipline having been effective and the boy showing a disposition to do better if given another opportunity. The value of the influence of the Home on the lives of the boys cannot always be measured by the length of time in residence. In many cases a few months has been sufficient to give a new vision of life and create a turning point in the whole outlook of the boy. Of course in some cases it takes years of steady discipline and instruction to effect the necessary change in the boy's character and aspect of life. The removal from pernicious surroundings to*

*the better moral atmosphere of the Home has a wonderful effect. These are the things which encourage us to go on, and at the same time show the value of the work of such a Home as the Burwood Boys' Home, even in this prosperous and well-to-do age in which we live, when many would be ready to question the necessity for such a work as is conducted by us.*

*Few really know or appreciate the heart-ache and sorrow through which many boys endure. What a privilege, then, to ease the burden and brighten the lives of these little fellows, and give them such a new view of life as to set them on their way rejoicing. We wish to assure our generous donors that their money is not spent in vain, and that a harvest is being reaped in which they have an important part. Would it not be a good thing to take as a motto for the year, 'Let us brighten the lives of the little ones as we pass by?' The healthful work among the vegetables and plants in farm and garden has an exceeding beneficent effect morally and physically, besides creating a love for nature and things that grow.*

*Annual Report 1927*

*During 1927 to 1928, there were seventy-eight voluntary admissions, one committed under Section 38 of the Education Act, and one committed under Section 71 of the Neglected Children's Act, making a total of eighty admissions for the year. Thirty-six boys are in the Home, and two in service in the country. The Home DOES NOT RECEIVE A GRANT from the GOVERNMENT, but is depending solely on the beneficence of the public. They have NEVER FAILED US YET, and we look forward with confidence to their continued generosity, AND PRACTICAL SYMPATHY.*

*Annual Report 1928*

*In presenting this, the 34th Annual Report, of the Burwood Boys' Home, to our large circle of friends and generous supporters, we do so with both pleasure and gratitude for the loyal and consistent support, which has been given us. It will be, we feel, a source of satisfaction to our numerous friends that their kind support of the work has not been in vain. Good work has been done; work difficult to estimate in its far-reaching effect. We have recently been reminded by our first manager of the home, Mr. W.R. Hawkins, of Box Hill, that the first boy who entered the Home under destitute circumstances is now married, has a family, and is doing well. His children are above average in intellectual attainment, and may in future leave their mark on the community by attainments of no ordinary character. This in itself is a consummation which speaks volumes.*

*We know of others who have likewise done well, and stand well in the estimation of their fellow-citizens. There has never been any question as to the value of the work. There are hundreds of boys going the wrong way in life who could be saved if shown in a proper and kindly manner the true issues of life, and that success can only come in the well-recognised Paths of Honesty and Integrity. The Book tells us that the Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and the Home tries to act on that principle. 'If a boy is really to be saved by the community, he must be taught to fear God and love the Lord Jesus Christ.' If we fail in this, we fail in the best part of a boy's life. True reformation must commence in heart and conscience. The foundation of national greatness must be laid in the fear of the Lord.*

*The garden work in the Home should be a factor for physical development, and lead to an appreciation of country pursuits, which is one of the aims that should always be kept in view in this great country of ours in which there is such splendid possibilities of development.*

*Annual Report 1929*

*We have set out with a very definite object, and that is not only to help the destitute and neglected boy towards physical well-being, but also to inspire him with correct ideals and aspirations towards moral fitness. The result is evident in the improvement, which is gradually taking place in the boys. This hopefulness in the work is a stimulus to the workers to persevere in their efforts. A boy, recently returned from a situation of special opportunity, on account of being impudent to his employer, confessed that he deeply regretted it, and if he got another chance would be careful to improve and deserve it. We are anxious to assure our friends that in supporting the work of the Burwood Boys' Home they are supporting an institution of real worth, and one whose ultimate results cannot easily be estimated. The Word of God says, 'He that turneth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.' This is true in the work done among the boys of the Home. We are builders of men, formers of characters, constructors in a nation's true greatness.*

*Annual Report 1933*

*The past year has been a difficult one mainly due to staff shortages and war conditions. However, as we enter another year, we are happy to report that prospects for a greater service to boys in need, and the scope for development and extension of the Home's activities, are most encouraging.*

*During the past twelve months we have assisted eighty-seven boys. There were fifty-seven boys resident in the Home at June 30, 1943 – our present capacity is sixty.*

*Annual Report 1943*

*In addition to directly assisting seventy-five boys during the year, we have been able to render a service to some parents whose applications for the admission of their children have had to be refused for various reasons, by making representations on their behalf to have them admitted to suitable institutions. The grateful parent of one very backward boy we assisted in this way writes, 'I am writing to express my thanks for your kindness and thought for my son and myself – I will not forget what you have done for him. My health has greatly improved, and I am now working in quite a nice position'.*

*On June 30, 1944, there were fifty-one boys residing in the Home.*

*Following representations made by members of various child-caring institutions in this state, the State Government has agreed to provide and finance hostels in which children who have no relatives to whom they may go when leaving an institution to begin work, will be properly cared for and supervised during their adolescent years. Your Committee, realising the need for hostels of this nature, has given its assurance of full support to the scheme.*

*Annual Report 1944*

*Ladies and Gentleman:*

**WITH YOUR HELP**

*We have assisted seventy-six boys during the year.  
They have been provided with*

*A home and home comforts  
Food, Clothing, Education  
Spiritual, Moral and Physical Training  
Technical and Rural Training  
Recreation and Entertainment*

*On leaving the Home suitable positions are found for them, after which they are supervised by our Welfare Officer until they reach the age of eighteen years.*

*Annual Report 1945*



## CHAPTER THREE

# Attempts to Force Amalgamation

With the meanings of the words ‘amalgamate’ and ‘amalgamation’, and the benefit of twenty-twenty hindsight, we can see that rhetoric could never form a solid base for amalgamation. The Burwood and Minton (Menzies) Boys’ Homes seemed to be just too far apart – physically and even, dare I say it, philosophically.

Why was amalgamation unlikely?

<b>Burwood</b>	<b>Minton (Menzies)</b>
Poor accommodation with buildings old and inadequate	Recently constructed, dormitory accommodation
Forty boys in residence	Approximately sixty boys in residence
No truly needy boy refused admission	No boy with behavioural problems admitted
More than 40 acres (by 1936 down to 27 acres) plenty of room for expansion	5 acres, limited room for expansion (this land was later doubled by obtaining adjoining land)
Property free of encumbrance. Cash at bank £1,300, with investments of a further £900	Burgeoning overdraft in excess of £3,000 – hopeful of grant of £5,000 being made available for re-building on amalgamation
Supported amalgamation on Burwood’s spacious campus or amalgamation on new property somewhere between Frankston and Burwood (Dingley or Heatherton area)	Supported amalgamation on Frankston’s compact campus – not interested in moving off site
Hospitals and Charities Commission keen to de-register Burwood due to accommodation problems not having been addressed over several years – apparently Burwood had proposed plans but took no action. Claim made that the hold up was due to the Depression	Desirable location and better buildings more attractive to the Hospitals and Charities Commission as less likelihood of need for funding (although the admission would need to be bailed out)

This saga – covering more than two years (1934–1936) and well researched by having access to the minutes of each organisation; the correspondence of both organisations; and through ‘Letters to the Editor’ in the daily papers – is one which neither organisation emerges ‘squeaky clean’ nor, do I believe, does the Hospitals and Charities Commission Board.

In all discussions, I have felt that the genuine welfare of the boys in care (and the hundreds more who weren’t able to be accommodated) was not always paramount, for, had the amalgamation proceeded, there would have been opportunities for more boys to be cared for, and most probably at a higher standard, due to its proposed economic re-structure.

In the compilation of this material, I must acknowledge gratefully the valuable assistance afforded me by Mrs. Shirley Davis (historian of the Menzies Homes for Children Inc.) who with Dr. Ken Runciman (former Director) granted me access to all their relevant material. I hope that this has enabled me to be more informed and hopefully, too, more balanced in looking at this period of turmoil for both organisations. This access too was most important, given the scarcity of records at Burwood.

The proposed amalgamation immediately poses two questions: rural or beach? Wide open spaces or relative confinement?

These questions took on a most important role at this time. Due to my association with the Burwood Boys' Home (and Child and Family Care Network Inc.) it would be easy for me to cast members of the Minton Boys' Home Committee of Management (now Menzies Home for Children Inc.) as the villains in this saga of attempted amalgamation. This would, of course, have cast Burwood as 'shining white knights'. But when I read what some of the latter have said and done, the brightness fades to become just a little grey!

I believe that each group would have been happy to absorb the other without having to sacrifice anything of their own programmes or facilities. Distortion of truth, or an unwillingness to let facts speak for themselves, seemed to surface occasionally. The Hospitals and Charities Board also seemed to throw its weight behind Minton and Frankston as the preferred option.

For a brief history of Minton, see Appendix 4.

The initial discussion took place on January 11th, 1934, at the offices of the Charities Commission Board with Mr. C.L. McVilly, Secretary of the Board and Inspector of Charities, in the chair and seven representatives of Minton and four representatives of Burwood (an apology was received from its other representative). Obviously representation was proportional to the number of boys in care at the time.

Mr. McVilly explained the purpose for which the conference had been called. The first speaker was Mr. Abraham, who said that in his opinion, an amalgamation was most desirable, firstly for the savings which would be made overhead expenses. He mentioned that the Burwood Boys' Home had forty-three acres of land and that he considered the Burwood site the better one. In reply to a question, Mr. Abraham stated that in 1929 the Burwood Boys' Home land was valued at £16,000.

Mr. James Menzies (of Minton) stated that there would be a saving of time if the Chairman stated the powers of the Board. Mr. Menzies said that they had to decide whether the Homes were carrying on as economically as they could. He stated frankly that they were going backwards, and that this applied to each Home. An addition of double the present number of boys would bring down the per capita cost at the Minton Boys' Home considerably.

Mr. McVilly, in reply to Mr. Menzies, said that the Charities Board was definitely in favour of amalgamation. It had been discussing this question constantly during the previous three years. There had hardly been a meeting of the Board during the last three years when the matter had not been brought up for discussion. There was nothing that was not favourable to both homes in regard to the treatment of the boys. The Board had no definite powers under the Act. Mr. McVilly stated further that it could amalgamate or make powers for amalgamation or closure. This was in regard to subsidised institutions; but he pointed out that neither home was subsidised in the strict sense. Regarding those which were not subsidised, the Board could de-register these institutions. This meant that they must cease. After de-registration, they are not allowed to appeal for, nor accept, voluntary contributions (I believe that endowments and regular, or 'unsolicited' gifts could be accepted).

Mr. McVilly stated that, at first, he was favourable towards the Burwood Boys' Home site, but, after looking at the Home, he considered that there were definite advantages in the Frankston site.

He stated that, in addition to advantages in administration costs, the proceeds of land sold would provide an income which would be available for maintenance. Mr. McVilly stated that the regulations regarding management are very definite. The amalgamated home would become a corporate body, which would be controlled by a committee. He favoured Mr. Abraham's suggestions to bring the committees together. He thought that they should appoint one or two to discuss the matter and any matters upon which they could not agree, the Board would decide. He preferred for the time being not to be on the committee. Mr. McVilly stated that in homes of this nature the Board favoured voluntary management.

Mr. Edwards said that he agreed with every word which Mr. Menzies had spoken and that the Burwood Home had too much land. Mr. Edwards stated that he thought the Burwood land should be sold, but, stipulated that the proceeds should be invested properly. Mr. McVilly replied that this would be the case and the proceeds would be invested only in the manner authorised by the Act.

Mr. Edwards moved and Mr. Menzies seconded that a sub-committee of three from each home should be appointed (with the secretary of each) to attend a conference to discuss the question of amalgamation. Before the motion was put to the meeting, Dr. J.F. MacKeddie (Minton) raised the question of whether the Burwood Home would, if removed, take its local support with it, and he referred to the fact that at Frankston, some of the residents were not favourable towards the present site of the Minton Boys' Home. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. McVilly said that the first thing the committee appointed by both homes would have to do would be to examine the powers of each institution itself. Mr. McVilly intimated that he would be willing to act on the committee, if desired by each committee.

It was suggested that, should the recommendations of the conference be adopted by the committees of each Home, the sub-committee to be appointed should meet at the office of the Charities Board on Tuesday, January 23, at 7:30pm.

Dr. MacKeddie pointed out that the chairman of the conference made it clear that the amalgamation would take place. The President said that, in his opinion, the Charities Board would not readily use arbitrary powers. He knew that Mr. McVilly desired that the details of the amalgamation should, if possible, be agreed to by the representatives of each Home.

Also in the minutes of that meeting it was recorded that:

*The President stated that there was a very great difference in the amount of maintenance paid by parents and guardians of the two homes. He said he had noticed from a Burwood Boys' Home report that contributions for this purpose totalled about £400, equal to about four shillings per capita, per week. The total received at Minton Boys' Home for one year was only about £18. Mr. Menzies stated that the Minton Boys' Home was doing work of infinitely more importance than the Burwood Boys' Home. Most of the boys in Minton would be Wards of the State if the Home did not exist. Mr. Menzies mentioned that, in respect of thirty-three boys at the Minton Boys' Home, nothing is paid at present. For four or five, part payment is made, and for twelve the amounts promised are paid.*

*Minutes of Minton Boys' Home,  
January 18, 1934*

I think that had these minutes been made available to Burwood in 1934, the discussions would have come to a very sudden stop. Burwood firmly believed that they were performing a most valuable service for the boys and the community at large.

It is of great interest to read the initial report of the Burwood sub-Committee which consisted of R.C. Edwards, W.H. Clay, G. Murray and T.R. Morris. In part, this was what it contained:

*The Question of Amalgamation, which we were asked to consider, presented a number of problems, and the sub-Committee has considered:*

1. *The question of increased responsibility to ourselves.*
2. *The welfare of the boys.*
3. *The general efficiency and reduced taxation on the public, and the commendation of such to the Contributors.*
4. *The Government support of the work.*
5. *The improvement of the by-laws governing the work.*

*We therefore had statements prepared by the accountants, showing that they represent the cost per boy under various headings for both Homes, then a combined budget for the amalgamated Home.*

*From this information we have made a detailed comparison of the various items of cost per boy. This statement is very informative, and fully justifies the Charities Board in preferring its request that the two Homes be amalgamated.*

*The question of our increased financial responsibility was considered at length in view of the higher cost per head of the maintenance at Minton and the debt of £3,145, which they are carrying, and the need for further expense on buildings and probably also for additional land.*

*The budget statement, which is included with the report clearly shows what a material advantage is to be gained in reducing the cost per head of our own boys by £7 or £8 – per annum effecting a saving on the basis of forty boys, of £300 per annum, and in the case of Minton Boys effecting a saving on forty-eight boys of £780 per annum.*

*The interest on the overdraft of Minton, which stands at approximately £3,145, was left out of this estimate, as the Board is prepared to grant a subsidy of £8 per annum per boy, for all boys who are not wards of state. This is estimated, on the basis of fifty boys, to provide a fund of £400, which was agreed, should be put into a Sinking Fund to provide for the interest on the debt and its liquidation. Subsequently, this will create a fund, which could be used for the development of work along such improved lines as the Committee from time to time might determine – including the acquiring of additional lands for expansion of the work.*

*The capital cost of additional buildings at Minton, to accommodate all the boys was then next considered, and the Charities Board is prepared to provide £2,500 for the extension of the buildings, which will be ample for the requirements. This in our judgment has satisfactorily disposed of our problems under the heading of Finance.*

### **The Welfare of the Boys**

*We consider the site at Frankston a delightful and inspiring one, and the surroundings such as would help the boys in their ideals and outlook in life – a lofty position on the edge of the farm land overlooking the sea with the adjacent facilities of state and high*



*school education. The town of Frankston has a good train service to the city and good roads. Nevertheless, the distance from the present centre at Burwood presents some problems, which of course are difficulties common at any site that might be chosen as desirable further outside the city limits.*

*It is suggested that arrangements might be made for the Committee to meet alternatively at the Home and Frankston, those of us with cars arranging to take other members, so that we might inspect the working of the Homes – maybe arranging to take tea at the Home before the meeting, similarly Miss Landman and others undertaking their gracious ministries for the boys, could be provided for, and so an increased interest given in the work.*

*In the third place the general improvement on the efficiency and the reduced cost must be very thoughtfully considered. Mr. Thom of the National Homes of England in his talk with us pointed out that in Australia we had far too many institutions for efficiency and economy. His homes care for upwards of 4000 and in particular one of their homes – in which he is mostly concerned – 250 inmates, while we have two institutions with, but an average of forty-four boys each. The saving as you will see from the dissected budget is £12 to £15 per boy, and this on the basis of a hundred, which it is suggested we should provide for, represents wastage of £1,275 per annum.*

*If more advanced work on behalf of the lads is contemplated, here is the money, if it could be made available.*

*Finally, the Charities Board is saying – Burwood and Minton, put your house in order, adjust your machinery to an economic administrative system and we will help you.*

*The proposition of the Board is not that we now adopt new by-laws or form a new committee, but on the approval of the amalgamation the First Committee will consist of the present Committees of both Homes. The proposed by-law is to be considered by the joint Committees and recommended to the joint contributors after being approved by the Charities Board.*

In a note dated February 21, 1934, Mr. A.E. Knight wrote to the Secretary of Minton Boys' Home setting out the conditions under which Burwood had agreed to amalgamate. Minton called a special meeting on February 26, 1934 to discuss these items.

1. That the name of the amalgamated institutions be: 'The Burwood and Minton Boys' Home'. Both parties agreed.
2. That the whole of the assets and liabilities of the two institutions be respectively transferred to, and undertaken by the amalgamated institution. Both parties agreed.
3. That the sites and buildings of the two institutions are sold and another site be obtained and a new building be erected thereon. An alternative clause here stated: 'That the new home be carried on at Burwood in a new building to be erected for that purpose'. Minton disagreed unanimously.
4. That the first Committee of the amalgamated institution consist of a President, Vice-President and twelve other members; eight of the twelve members shall be elected by the present Committee of the Burwood Boys' Home from its present Committee and four from the present Minton Boys' Home Committee, by its present Committee. Minton disagreed strongly.
5. That the President of the Minton Boys' Home Committee shall be the first President of the amalgamated institution.

6. That the President of the Burwood Boys' Home Committee shall be the first Vice-President of the amalgamated institution.
7. That the first Honorary Treasurer shall be appointed from, and by the Committee when appointed.
8. That the Secretary and other paid staff, and also the Honorary Officers, shall be appointed by the new Committee. Both Committees agreed.
9. That a new Constitution be prepared by the Honorary Solicitors of two institutions and submitted for approval to a joint meeting of the Governors of both institutions, who shall be accepted as the First Subscribers to the amalgamated institutions. Both Committees agreed.
10. That the government make a grant of £5,000 towards a new building. Both Committees agreed with eager anticipation.

The sticking points three and four showed just how far the organisations had to go before they could amalgamate.

With point three, Minton believed that they had the better site which could be expanded to accommodate up to a hundred boys. They also had the better buildings. They were not interested in moving off campus, whether it be to the more spacious, but poorer accommodation which sorely needed upgrading and/or rebuilding, or to some new property somewhere between Burwood and Frankston, even in new accommodation. With point four, it was considered to be grossly unfair that Burwood should have nine representatives on the new Committee (Vice-President and eight members) whilst Minton have only five representatives (President and four members), especially as Minton had fifty boys in care and Burwood only forty.

The President said that the proposal by the Burwood Boys' Home Committee that the Minton Boys' Home site and buildings should be sold could not be agreed to. Mr. Menzies remarked that for practical purposes, the Burwood Boys' Home and site could not be entertained. The President stated that, in his opinion the value of the Burwood site is not more than £6,000. (This was the first real sign of sharp disagreement, for, at a previous meeting it had been stated by D.S. Abraham – Honorary Solicitor of Burwood that the 1929 value – a Depression year – had been assessed as being £16,000).

This appeared to be the first wedge in the previous accord expressed by both Committees. Dr. MacKeddie suggested that the reasons which should be submitted for retaining the Minton Boys' Home site and buildings were:

- the site was a good one;
- Minton Boys' Home has a good building; and
- there is room for expansion.

I believe that it is safe to say that the proposed amalgamation was never going to be a viable proposition even though the Charities Board, through Mr. C.L. McVilly was able to indicate more positives than negatives. His position was definitely for amalgamation, and for the combined establishment to be on the Minton property at Olivers Hill. (Burwood was threatened with de-registration if they didn't agree to amalgamate).

It might be a little unfair to think that the Charities Board may have been ahead of its time as economic rationalists, for they viewed each of the small organisations (Minton fifty boys; Burwood forty boys) as uneconomical, and by combining them, a more efficient product would result. On paper, this was certainly shown to be possible and

desirable, but, (and it was a very big BUT) there was too great a distance between the two campuses. Also, many of the Burwood boys had come from the surrounding area and were visited quite often by family and friends.

The Burwood Committee members believed that they would find it too hard, too far, and too awkward to attend meetings at Frankston, and by the same token, Minton Committee members would face similar problems if the meetings were to be held at Burwood. For local residents who were donors, interest would in all probability wane and support (finance, goods and service) would decline because of the distance required to deliver services. We must remember that public transport was not as speedy, nor as frequent, nor as convenient in the mid 30s, when all this occurred. Not everybody had motor vehicles either and most of the Committee members lived in close proximity to the respective Home. Another suggestion that meetings could be held at Frankston and at Burwood on alternate months was never really countenanced.

But where would the Burwood – Minton Boys' Home be established?

Minton was set upon 4.5 acres (with the possibility of doubling its area for about £1,500 – later amended to £1,000) on Olivers Hill, on the outskirts of Frankston, with access to, and a view of Port Phillip Bay and the Frankston Beach. Burwood had in excess of forty acres on Boundary (Warrigal) Road, Burwood in a semi-rural setting. Minton had a steadily growing bank overdraft (over £3,000) but with limited assets. Burwood had a bank balance of £1,300 with investments in excess of £900, property freehold with clear title and very conservatively estimated property valued at £13,500.

The buildings at Minton had been well maintained, having been built later than those at Burwood. Instead, considerable repairs and re-building needed to be undertaken at Burwood, but had not proceeded due to the Depression. Minton believed that theirs was the better site. Burwood disagreed and felt that if the Frankston property was sold, the money would enable the re-building and extensions to go ahead at Burwood. (Minton expressed similar thoughts for other buildings following on the sale of Burwood). Another exception that came from Burwood was that a suitable alternative site should be sought between the two existing properties (such as Springvale South, Dingley, Heatherton or Keysborough – this would have necessitated both Homes selling their properties and new buildings being constructed).

This was the worst scenario as the new Home would have been very isolated and would have posed even more problems to obtain Committee members and support.

Minton was adamant that they would not move, and even though Burwood had no desire to move, when faced with what appeared inevitable, agreed to move but set those conditions which would give support to the work and influence of the Church of Christ.

They were:

1. To amalgamate the two Homes under a Common Seal – to be known as 'The Burwood and Minton Boys' Home'.
2. That the home would be an un-denominational one.
3. That delinquent boys would not be admitted (remembering Campbell Edwards in founding Burwood had said that no deserving child would be refused admission). Would this be against the spirit of the founder's desire?
4. That the Churches of Christ would be allowed to exercise their influence for good within the Home. (Was this un-denominational?)

As would be expected, Minton had no hesitation with items one and two, and was not unduly concerned over item three, but spoke out quite firmly with respect to item four, suggesting that none of the mainline churches should be given priority over any other.

At the various sub-committee meetings, all the ‘correct’ statements were mouthed. At annual meetings, queries were raised by supporters and answered, but these made me think that many sub-Committee members wanted to be seen as giving support to amalgamation. I wonder whether each person was hoping that another would raise a telling point, and that they could all go home feeling good within themselves because they personally were not guilty of sabotaging the venture – even though they may have secretly hoped that it would never eventuate.

Each group was fiercely protective of what had been developed and achieved on their campus and were not keen to see it replaced by anything, which they could not be sure would give them a higher profile and a more prestigious organisation.

I also believe that both Homes had determined to capitalise on the strong features of their policies and would trim some of the lesser features. Both Committees of Management were dedicated men and women. Undoubtedly they believed in their own boys as if they were of their own families. (Having known some of these people personally, I can guarantee the truth of the statement).

It does indicate the dedication and foresight of each Committee of Management that both organisations have maintained and extended their services and today are still actively engaged in community assistance programmes. Both have adapted to today’s needs, and have moved from their earlier sites.

Even though the threat to Burwood of de-registration was carried out for several months, and some boys were actually transferred to Minton, the sense of determination shown by Burwood’s Committee of Management and the supporters of the Burwood Boys’ Home enabled it to re-build and re-structure for more than sixty years.

In summary:

An extensive and very lively (even acrimonious at times) debate occurred through reports in the Melbourne press (the *Argus* and the *Age*) and ‘Letters to the Editor’ over much of the period of the saga. Material seemed to be re-hashed and the same ground re-visited and covered with monotonous regularity. Burwood agreed to amalgamation, but only because of the threat of de-registration. In doing so, however, they set conditions Minton couldn’t, or wouldn’t, accept, so they just re-submitted earlier conditions. Letters and decisions were passed back and forth.

I found myself frustrated in reading all of this material. I don’t think that Burwood ever really wanted amalgamation, but rather than put boys back on the streets, was, as a last resort, prepared to allow forty years of distinctive service to lapse, provided that there was some tangible record of the work of Robert Campbell Edwards. Minton Boys’ Home also had a very proud tradition and although they were in financial difficulties, did not want to give up their property in that very pleasant setting at Olivers Hill, overlooking Frankston Beach. Besides that, the Minton buildings were of much better quality than those at Burwood, which were referred to as ‘dilapidated and unsuitable’.

Mr. C.L. McVilly made no secret of the fact that he wanted amalgamation and on the Minton campus. Burwood’s assets outstripped those of Minton and may have been saleable. Amalgamation on their own terms, and on their own campus, with their own



management, was what each group wanted. If they couldn't get that, it seemed that they would look at all the points that would block amalgamation.

The following quotes from members of the Committee support this argument:

*'The Burwood Boys' Home is unnecessary. It is unwise to build again at Burwood when only additions are needed at Frankston to accommodate more boys.'*

Mr. McVilly (Hospitals and Charities)

*'Some people may say that it was impossible to carry their enthusiasm twenty-six miles' (Referring to young people from the Churches who provided voluntary service at Burwood).*

*'Burwood representatives have had a very rough passage, the representatives at the conference are united, but we have a Committee and some are against amalgamation. There is some opposition.'*

*'The Churches of Christ will have to be asked to accept the auspices of the Home.'*

Mr. Clay (Burwood)

*'Some of our people believe that they will not be in a position to help when, and if, the home is at Frankston.'*

Mr. Murray (Burwood)

*'Members of our committee will have to be taken by cars to attend the Committee Meetings at Frankston.'*

Mr. Morris (Burwood)

*'It is the practice of the Minton Boys' Home to hold one meeting each quarter at Frankston, and the others in the city offices.'*

*'With regard to Burwood 'the doubtful character of the boy shall be no bar to his admission', I have never considered that the Minton Boys' Home is in a position to deal with boys of a bad character. We have had experience of one or two bad boys there. There has always been trouble while such boys have been in the Home. It was very difficult to help that type alongside the other kind of boy who was not of bad character. We ought to put out of our minds that we should deal with recalcitrant boys.'*

Mr. Menzies (Minton)

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Amalgamation Successful but Temporary

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As early as 1940, the Gordon Institute for Boys had been invited to amalgamate with the Burwood Boys' Home by our Committee of Management, but they declined the invitation.

However, on January 27, 1942 they sent a letter to the Burwood Boys' Home, seeking the possibility of space being made available for temporary accommodation as the Department of Defence had required the Gordon Institute's property in Bowen Street, Melbourne, (now a part of Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) for the Royal Australian Air Force, as a training facility. (This temporary need stretched out to almost eight years).

Early meetings of the joint committees of the organisations were concerned with the location and erection of the new school building for the Burwood and Gordon boys, to replace the previous wooden structure which had been burnt down prior to the arrival of the Gordon boys. (I hasten to add, lest any may infer, that the arrival of the Gordon boys had anything to do with it). This joint committee was eager to go to the top to achieve a speedy solution. I think that it was Sir Julius Bruche, the President of the Gordon Boys' Institute, who said that they would interview the Director of Education, Mr. J.A. Seitz, while G.L. Murray, the President of the Burwood Boys' Home, suggested that Burwood had a line of approach to the Premier of Victoria, the Honourable Albert A. Dunstan. The former approach was taken successfully, but to speed up the process, the assistance of the Premier was sought.

### REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE

1. The President of Burwood Home, Fred Saunders, conveyed to the meeting on February 2, 1942 the decision of the General Committee that accommodation could be found for the twenty-five Gordon Institute boys. He stressed the point that whilst such boys were in the Home they would be regarded and treated in all respects as members of the Burwood Boys' Home and there would be no distinctions between the boys. This principle was endorsed by the Committee of the Gordon Institute.
2. Additional beds and bedding would be supplied by the Gordon Home.
3. The Burwood Home would be supplied with additional cutlery and crockery as necessary.
4. Storage space for some of the Gordon Institute furniture would be made available at the Burwood Home if required.
5. Extra staff would be required by the Burwood Home (two ladies). The following suggestions were made by the Gordon Institute:
  - Matron of Gordon Institute, Mrs. Milner, to join the staff of Burwood Home at a salary of £9 10s.10d. per month.
  - Miss Ash (cook and assistant to Mrs. Milner) to join the staff of Burwood Home at a salary of £1 15s. per week.

- Mrs. Milner and Miss Ash would, if necessary, share a room.
  - Accommodation would also be required for Mr. Milner. He takes no part in the management and would occupy a single room.
  - The extra staff would be entirely under the control of the Matron of Burwood Home and would carry out such duties as would be assigned to them.
6. The Gordon Institute would pay the Burwood Home an amount of sixteen shillings per week in respect of each boy taken; this would include board, lodging and the renewal of apparel, as this became necessary.
  7. Each boy taken would be fitted out with good wearing apparel before being transferred to the Burwood Home.
  8. The Gordon Institute suggested that their teacher, Mr. Norm Hazlett, be transferred to Burwood and that the Burwood Home make available a room at the Home to be used as a schoolroom for the Gordon boys. The Secretary of the Education Department writes 'Permission has been secured from the Director of Education for the Gordon School and teacher to be transferred as a unit'.
  9. The Gordon Institute proposes that 'arrangements be made for the mutual representation at general meetings of the Committee of Management of both institutions. It is preferred that two members of the Burwood Boys' Home Committee be appointed to attend committee meetings of the Gordon Institute, and two members of the Gordon Institute Committee be appointed to attend general committee meetings of the Burwood Boys' Home. These four members would act as Liaison Officers and form a sub-Committee body to confer on matters of mutual concern to both institutions.'

The following decisions were made in connection with the above report:

**Equipment** – that we ask the Gordon Institute to supply for the accommodation of their boys and staff the following furniture and equipment:

- Cutlery and crockery – enough for twenty-five boys
- Beds – twenty required
- Bedding (including mattresses, pillows, bed linen and blankets) enough for twenty-five boys
- Floor bedside mats – as many as possible
- Towels and toilet requisites – enough for twenty-five boys
- Furniture – for the room of Mrs. Milner and Miss Ash – beds, bedding and general requisites
- Wearing apparel – each boy would be fitted out with all necessary articles of wearing apparel including an overcoat

**Staff** – That this Committee, desiring to implement the spirit of the arrangements arrived at in consultations, but not being entirely convinced of the ability of the Gordon Institute staff to meet the needs of the Home, agrees to take over Mrs. Milner and Miss Ash at their present salaries, as additions to our staff on a temporary basis and retained only if satisfactory.

**Mr Milner** – That owing to the need of providing for additional male staff, we regret that we have no suitable accommodation for Mr. Milner.

**Payment** – That the amount of sixteen shillings per week is acceptable and approved.

**School** – That if the Education Department approach this Home for the use of a room for the Gordon Institute boys, the request be granted as a temporary measure only.

**Storage Space** – We regret, owing to the heavy demand upon our space occasioned by the arrangement, no space is available for the storage for surplus equipment of the Gordon Institute.

**Commencement** – That upon the above arrangements being accepted by the Gordon Institute, we are prepared to receive their boys into the Home on March 1, 1942.

**Joint Committee** – That this matter be deferred until the next meeting of the General Committee.

It was at this stage that a move was made for the erection of a residence for the Superintendent; such building to be sited on the Burwood campus.

The Acting Superintendent was Mr. Andrew A. Hughes, a former Church of Christ Minister, who shortly thereafter entered State Parliament as the Independent Member for Caulfield in the Legislative Assembly. He had served on the Committee of Management at the Burwood Boys' Home prior to this. It was also very interesting to note that he was exploring the possibility of establishing an Area School for Agricultural Education. This move was unsuccessful.

When the Gordon Boys arrived there was a time of confrontation with the Burwood Boys who were inclined to resent the 'invasion'. This, however, was soon smoothed over as the Gordon Boys' teacher, Mr. Norm Hazlett, affectionately known as 'Bags', very astutely oversaw the period of integration. *'All boys who have not been away on holidays should be taken to the Zoo. Refreshments to be supplied by both Homes.'* This simple minute indicated the attempts, which were made to bring the children together and to compensate those boys who did not have holiday hosts.

Only a few months later, I read that there was a rise in the cost of maintaining the boys.

This report came in June 1943, just after the appointment of Mr. Alf Wignell as the Superintendent (who made a magnificent contribution during his time at the Burwood Boys' Home) that costs had now risen to twenty-three shillings a week for each boy in care. At that stage only sixteen shillings were received for Gordon Boys, a shortfall of seven shillings, for each boy for each week. This amount was adjusted very quickly so that there was no claim that Gordon Institute wasn't contributing its share. The rise was due to increased staff and the higher cost of provisions and clothing. A comparison with the costs at the Melbourne Orphanage in Brighton showed that the Burwood Boys' Home was very prudent in its management. Twelve months later the cost per boy had risen to twenty-three shillings and nine pence. Manpower shortages were blamed for the inability to recruit the best or most desirable staff.

Late in 1944, the Chairman of the Gordon Institute for Boys informed the Burwood Boys' Home representatives that the Gordon Institute had purchased a block of land at Highett, on which it proposed to erect a suitable building for their boys as soon as possible. State Government assistance had been offered. It was envisaged that when completed it would cater for about eighty boys in pleasant surroundings. Almost twelve months later they were planning two cottages of fifteen boys, having received £10,000 from the Hospitals and Charities Board in addition to a State Government grant. A tender was accepted in 1947, but no indication was given as to when the work would begin. Even though some of the boys had been accommodated at other facilities, it was



recommended that the Burwood Boys' Home continue to reserve twenty-five placements for Gordon boys, some of these positions being for older lads who were in employment and thus were at The Palms (see Chapter Six). I note that after eleven months, it was reported that there was a shortfall of £84 5s.6d. sustained due to the three Gordon boys at the Hostel. It seemed that the contributions from the Gordon Institute had fallen short. However, following the preparation of a detailed statement, the Gordon Institute Chairman said that this shortfall would be met before June 30, 1949.

It seemed that the Burwood Boys' Home was concerned that they would be losing the Gordon Institute boys due to the building of their own complex at Highett. Shortly after this there was further trauma, as Alf Wignell, the Superintendent of the Burwood Boys' Home had submitted his resignation and the Rev. Selwyn Harris was appointed to succeed him. The Gordon Institute was most concerned because Mr. Wignell had been advising them with regard to their new complex at Highett. Alf offered to continue in the role of advisor.

Even though the costs per boy compared more than favourably with those of other institutions of a similar nature, by December 1949, they had risen beyond thirty-nine shillings and one penny, but the costs at The Palms seems to have been cut back considerably to only £2 1s.6d. Three months later the costs at the Home had skyrocketed to forty-six shillings and one penny, but I must be quick to indicate that much of the increase was due to building maintenance costs.

All was not well at The Palms, as two psychiatrists had examined one of the Gordon Boys and recommended his removal because 'he was having a bad influence on the other boys'. He was to be 'removed' to Janefield or some other institution.

Then came the task of relocating the Gordon Institute boys to their new premises on the Nepean Hwy in Highett. It was hoped that not all the boys would be transferred at the one time. It was suggested that if the oldest boys only had one more year at Highett and then they could be put out into the community. Breaking up friendships formed at the Burwood Boys' Home also needed to be considered.

It was suggested that each Committee of Management should appoint a sub-committee of three members to form another joint committee to devise a detailed scheme of transfer as soon as possible. This was the recommended action on June 7, 1950, but as that was the last joint meeting for which there appears to be any minutes, there is no record of who were the six persons who needed the wisdom of Solomon, but who obviously managed to devise some plan, as both organisations have continued to function effectively from 1950 until today. Their programmes have changed dramatically over that time, but both are still operating in the interests of children and families.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# Community Support

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The more I read, the more I am staggered by the army of people and organisations who, over the years, have given their labour and skills, gifts of home-made and bought produce, and financial support to the Home. At one point, it was claimed that we had 26,000 names on our donor base, however, not all of them active. That would have been just a drop in the bucket when compared with those people who were not recorded as individuals by name, but just as members of the Younger Sets, Social Services Leagues at schools, Mums' and Dads' Associations, Masonic Masters' Groups, Australian Banjo Club, Country Women's Association, social clubs of public companies, auxiliaries, service clubs such as Rotary and Lions, and so many other groups that I cannot call to mind.

From the very beginning, extremely valuable support was rendered by Honorary Officers – doctors, dentists, veterinarians, opticians, pharmacists, chiropodists, auditors, solicitors and others. Votes of thanks and letters of appreciation in annual reports over the decades attest to this.

Almost from day one, the Home utilised and became reliant upon staff members serving far beyond the time for which they were paid, and even their spouses often became involved. On one occasion, it was announced that Miss Levingston, one of the staff members, had completed the bottling of 1,100 pounds (500 kg) of fruit! She gave twenty years of sterling service to the Home and hers was a marvellous contribution, far beyond what was expected of her.

At one time and as the result of a discussion between the Treasurer, Alan Cleland, and the Superintendent, Selwyn Harris, it was felt that one penny per week church collection money for older boys was not adequate. These boys would now give threepence. Mr. Cleland made a special donation of £10 towards the extra cost per week.

Great numbers of volunteers have conducted gymnastic activities, shown films, arranged and supervised outings, relieved cottage parents, sewn and knitted garments and undertaken repairs, shared cooking, taught manual skills and so on. In doing so, they saved the Home many thousands of pounds and dollars. One group that featured over several years was 'The Woodpeckers', a group of furniture and cabinet makers.

In 1944, approval was sought from the Hospitals and Charities Board to conduct a big public appeal for funds to mark the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Home. Hopes were dashed when the Charities Board advised that, for bureaucratic reasons, they couldn't grant permission for an appeal in 1945, but eventually an appeal date of June 1948 was allocated. A budget of £2,592 was approved and £48,200 was the target, which would enable the building of cottages, a gymnasium, swimming pool and oval.

Support for the appeal was given by the Victorian Premier, the Honourable Thomas T. Hollway, and Chief Justice Sir Edmund F. Herring, and in the Annual Report of 1951, it was recorded that the total raised from this long-awaited public appeal was £26,907. Building supplies and other items of a practical nature were often donated or given at cost. Any person or group who gave a donation of £50 or more was awarded a Life Governorship of the Home.

Perhaps the fundraising event which captured the greatest interest during the Appeal was 'The Penny Trail'. This line of donated coins extended from the front door of the Burwood Boys' Home along Warrigal Road to Riversdale Road, then via Burke Road, Burwood Street, Bridge Road, Spring Street, Collins Street, finishing at the front door of the Melbourne Town Hall where the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sir Thomas Nettlefold, placed the last coin with great ceremony. The profile of Burwood was given quite a lift and the sum raised of £2,194 formed an important part of the total raised by the Appeal.

It is interesting to note that when we needed some adjoining land owned by Sir William Angliss as mentioned earlier, he sold it to us for £2,700 on the basis of a £700 deposit and four annual payments of £500. This was approved by the State Treasury. We received an initial donation of £700 and then a little later, a further donation of £2,000 from the Angliss Family.

It seemed that our attempts sometimes had a hoodoo over them. Especially was this so with that planned for November of 1949. There was to be a giant bonfire with fireworks to celebrate Guy Fawkes Night and people from all around the area had been invited to help the boys share in the fun. Unfortunately, but understandably, the State Government refused to allow it to proceed as planned due to a poliomyelitis scare. The boys, staff and committee members didn't let the opportunity pass without a celebration although as a fundraiser it was a fizzer as they didn't raise a 'cracker'. The boys had a wonderful night virtually all to themselves.

From the very early years, the Burwood Boys' Home and other Children's Homes have been generously helped by Freemasons over many years. Perhaps the best example of this was the No. 4 Group Masonic Masters who adopted Burwood as their special charity. They later renamed their group 'The Mums' and Dads' Association' to allow them to involve more of their friends in the social activities which raised much needed money to provide improved facilities in the cottages, as well as Christmas and birthday gifts for each child in care. This was done each year until 1985 to 1986 when residential care was phased out at Burwood. The group conducted several annual carnivals for Burwood, with one held in 1951 raising £911 to help towards the cost of erecting a recreation hall. Over many years they held theatre nights, card evenings, picnics and other social and fundraising events, which not only built up our funds, but also developed a very cohesive and supporting group of friends.

Over the years other Lodges conducted 'Grocery Nights' or 'Fill the Trailers' nights which proved of great benefit when we were cash poor. University High School Lodge No. 517 set aside their January meeting night to provide cash donations for Burwood and they were always eager to hear the latest news about the Home. After every one of these nights I came away with three-figure amounts and enthused by their support. Two Lodge members served with distinction on our Committee of Management and another began the documenting of our history. Lodge Antioch No. 570 also gave great support. Each year they conducted a special Charity Concert which brought in amounts like those of University High School. Over the years ten of its members served on the Committee of Management.

The Lodges of this local area have also sought to raise several thousands of dollars to assist with the building costs associated with current projects. On an individual basis, quite a number of Freemasons continue to make regular donations to our work. 'Masons look after their own' and they certainly have adopted us as their own.

Other such generousities occurred throughout the Homes' history. Colonial Oil Refineries offered the Home a block of sixty seats for one full day at the Olympic Games at the MCG in 1956. The Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) offered to construct a swimming pool if we would pay for the materials. The offer was accepted and the pool opened on December 19, 1959, as the Selwyn Harris Pool.

A very well-known neighbour in Somers Street was Major General Sir Robert Risson, who was the Chairman of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board. He was approached by Superintendent, Mr. W. Phillips, who asked him for a disused tram. This suggestion was happily received and Mr. Risson promised a very good one, as he would see it himself every day on his way to his office. It was duly placed near the swimming pool, where it acted as a windbreak and a shelter.

The Chadstone Lions Club, under the leadership of the Manager of Myer Stores, after having agreed to pay for the erection of the cyclone wire fence around the pool, also adopted the Burwood Boys' Home as its supported charity. They pledged £300 per year from their funds. This Lions Club was a small, but exclusive club made up of the Executive Staff of the Chadstone Centre, and all members had agreed to do their best for us in any purchases that we might make there.



*Children enjoying the Selwyn Harris Pool with tramcar in background*

The Unity Club of Dandenong, which had supported the Menzies Boys' Homes for many years, offered late in 1964 to turn their financial and physical support to Burwood. They commenced on a wonderful note for the boys by holding a Sports Day and barbecue. They cooked 280 sausages and 97 steaks; each boy had four bottles of Tarax soft drink (small ones, I hope!), and received a new pair of Dunlop sandshoes. The evening finished with a film show. The Club paid for the presentation cups and medallions and at the Christmas break-up each boy was presented with a gift.

Without churches and church groups, the Burwood Boys' Home would probably not have survived the Depression years, for it was not until the late 1960s that the State Government began to provide regular funding to assist in maintenance or re-building. Every annual report for the first seventy years thanked ministers and congregations for gifts of food, clothing and equipment. I have spoken personally of the involvement of Oakleigh Church of Christ quite often.

On one Sunday of each year we celebrated Harvest Festival Sunday. We used to have a number of market gardeners in our fellowship and they would contribute boxes of carrots, parsnips, potatoes, onions, cabbages, cauliflowers and pumpkins. Other members contributed fruit and other vegetables. Many of the ladies baked cakes and made jams. All of this made an outstanding display. The boys came across to our church on the Sunday afternoon and were paired up with members, taken home and entertained before sharing the evening meal. They then came back to the church for the evening service. It was not unusual to see the younger boys cuddled up to their hosts and hostesses fast asleep.

They were long and exciting days for the 'littlies'. The lads were frequently given toys, items of clothing and even food or sweets. We enjoyed it and so did the boys. At the conclusion of the service the display would be dismantled and the goods were allocated



to Burwood and to the Churches of Christ Social Service Homes. The fruit, veggies, jams etc were then taken out into the truck for the trip to Burwood with the boys. It brought smiles to many faces to see the boys tramping out to the truck carrying pumpkins, cabbages and cauliflowers. I know that similar activities happened at other Churches of Christ and in several other denominations. It was reported at one time that ladies from the Surrey Hills Church of Christ had made 14½ pairs of pyjamas. (Was that last one topless, bottomless, or with only one leg?)

Perhaps the most successful home-grown fundraising activity occurred on November 1, 1969 when 1,000 lots were put up for auction on the oval. The whole area was covered with almost everything you could think of – including kitchen sinks! The net profit was an amazing \$3,188 and the day's exciting activities have kept people talking of it ever since.

Such support and fundraising helped overcome budget concerns. However, there were two ongoing problems. In 1961, the cost of caring for a boy averaged out at £7 16s. 4d. per week, yet voluntary placements paid a maximum of just £4 per week. To add to our problems, not all of our investments came up trumps. We had £4,000 in Reid Murray shares and lost almost everything when the business collapsed and was wound up.

By 1965, costs had risen to just above £9 and the government paid a mere £4 5s. for each of the forty-three wards of state. There were also twelve private placements and three boys for whom no payments were made. By 1980, the cost per head had risen to \$149 and by 1986; it had escalated to \$230.77.

In cases of emergency the Superintendent, in consultation with the President, was given the power to subsidise the board of 'Old Boys' in necessitous circumstances. These emergencies occurred several times, unfortunately, but have never been ignored.

In 1970, the telephoning of members of the public to seek their financial assistance was commenced by members of the office staff. The systematic approach of ringing people engaged in similar professions or occupations, using listings obtained from the Yellow Pages, proved to be quite effective and most certainly brought many sympathetic and caring donors on board.

This telephoning for donations, now referred to as telemarketing, although highly successful, was also very time consuming, so an extra office assistant was appointed to handle the calls, to count the donation amounts and to issue receipts. As receipts were issued and addresses recorded for each donation, we had the beginnings of a donor base which has now expanded to consist of several thousands who are extremely regular, loyal, and generous. Computers are streamlining the new form of telemarketing today.

Today, the fundraising division is but one facet of the Public Relations (PR) Department, which is also responsible for the attractive seasonal newsletters which keep donors, friends and businesses up-to-date with programmes and happenings across the Network. The PR Department has included annual golf days and special interest activities within its ever-expanding portfolio.

We are able to report to our supporters that we are one of the most prudent of charitable organisations. Like all not-for-profit groups however, and in the words of young Oliver Twist "Please sir, I want some more".

## CHAPTER SIX

### Post World War 2 (1945–1984)

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There was quite an air of optimism in 1945 with World War II drawing to a close and wartime rationing being tolerated because of an expected post-war boom when everything would be much better for everybody. This was also the Golden Jubilee year for Burwood, which was developing and proceeding well under the leadership of Mr. Alf Wignell and his caring staff. There was a general satisfaction with the improving staff conditions and accommodation. The newspapers were supplied with press releases, which indicated that 1945 was the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Home.

A Jubilee Souvenir 1895 to 1945 was published with the 1946 Annual Report and contained the following acrostic:

BOYS  
UNDERPRIVILEGED  
REQUIRE  
WAYS  
OF  
OBTAINING  
DEVELOPMENT  
  
BURWOOD BOYS' HOME  
OFFERS  
YOUTH  
SELF-RELIANCE  
  
HEALTH  
OPPORTUNITY  
MORALS  
EDUCATION

The newly appointed Honorary Medical Officer, Dr. Weigall, visited the Home as part of his comprehensive plan to examine each of the boys thoroughly. He was very much impressed with the physique and condition of the lads, which was very pleasing to hear. As the doctor was to watch and note the development of each boy at least twice each year, this initial examination had to be detailed and thorough. Dr. Weigall furnished a full report to the Committee, which included observations on the exemplary manners and very high standards of personal cleanliness and hygiene. He emphasised how particularly impressed he was with the high standard of nutrition and physical development in the boys as a whole. It was a report of which to be proud.

The need for a hostel for boys aged fourteen to eighteen at a separate location had been a concern for sometime. May 22, 1945, was a memorable meeting night at Burwood, for this was when the Committee gave authority for the purchase of The Palms, a two-storeyed house of nine rooms with ample gardens and



*The Palms*

a tennis court, situated at 1 New Street, Hawthorn, as a hostel for working boys and/or senior students. It was just four miles (6.5 km) from the GPO, had a frontage of sixty-six feet (20m) and a depth of 198 feet (60m), and cost £5,000. It had its own tennis court and another small area of land beside it. The State Government had contributed £3,300 towards its establishment by the time it became fully operational on February 23, 1948, with about eight working boys in residence.

Suitable employment had been found for each of those boys and an application was made for a government subsidy for managing this venture. Mr. Ray Alexander, a former Methodist Minister, and his wife were appointed to supervise the boys.

Leisure time was catered for and local churches assisted with games and sporting facilities. A billiard room was provided and radio every Saturday. One of the keen supporters of the Home, who had use of the facilities at Albert Park Lake, provided a boat and offered to teach the boys yachting skills. This was a great privilege for the lads who appreciated this gentleman's patience and communication skills. He spent many hours over a number of months to develop and foster this wonderful interest.



In March 1949, it was reported by the Treasurer that in its first year of operation, a loss of £425 was incurred. The boys contributed board and lodging, but this was insufficient to cover costs, which were subsidised by the Home. The work done by Mr. Alexander was appreciated greatly by the Committee. He used his truck to commute between Hawthorn and Burwood with the laundry and also the vegetables.

The Palms proved to be quite popular with the boys, giving them independence unknown before, yet with a great sense of support from the adults in charge and the Committee members. However, as the costs were increasing each year there was an even greater need for input from general funds.

Reluctantly, in July 1958, after just ten years the decision was taken to close The Palms because there had been a loss of £797. It was expected that the Children's Welfare Department would take it over, but that was not to be. It was then put up for auction, with a secure price of £10,000 and the sale realised £13,150.

Boys normally at The Palms were to be put out in the community with private board and lodging being subsidised by the Committee for as long as necessary. The idea of another hostel to prevent exploitation by unscrupulous landladies and/or their husbands was never far from the Committee's thoughts, as cases arose of young people being deprived of food or made to live in poor conditions. One such teenager at a special 'get together' meal with other working boys and Committee members crammed food into his pockets, as well as his mouth. During a pause in the evening's programme, the lad told his story to a member of the Welfare sub-Committee. His evening meal normally consisted of bread and jam washed down with tea. He had to buy his own lunch each day so he had no money to buy extra food for himself.

In 1972, Kemp Lodge, a hostel for senior students and working boys, was opened.

Leaving the hostel story, let us return to other events from this period.

On one occasion it appeared that an attempt was being made to improve the cultural pursuits of the boys when Committee member, Colonel Thomas R. Collier, suggested that the Home contact the Youth Operatic Society with regard to a performance of ‘The Gondoliers’ as a fundraising venture for the Home. Colonel Collier’s daughter, Marie, was a performing member of this society. She later became a Sun Aria winner and a star of opera and musical comedy and was awarded a Life Governorship. This approach led to a very successful and most enjoyable performance at the Box Hill Town Hall, giving us a net profit of £112 15s. (Today’s equivalent would be in excess of \$1,000). The Youth Operatic Society assisted us at other times also.

One of the boys, who happened to be a ward of the state was invited to practise with the Australian Boys’ choir in 1948, and it was interesting to note that the Committee decided that they should cover any costs associated with this, and a subsequent tour on which he went, if the Children’s Welfare Department were unable to find the necessary funds to cover his expenses.

I was most interested also to read of another lad who was at Burwood in the late 1930s, and who had been employed on a wheat farm for a couple of years before spending several more years on a Western District sheep property. The Home had reason to be very proud of this boy, Bernie Monk, who was now twenty-one years of age and doing well in his position. He expressed a wish to assume control of his bank account, in which there was £276. Bernie had also invested £70 in War Savings Bonds. Members of the Committee felt so confident in Bernie’s ability to take control of his own affairs that this request was approved unanimously. At today’s values this would equate to several thousands of dollars. Later, Bernie, with his wife, gave many years of service at an aboriginal mission station in Western Australia.

The Annual Report of 1945 printed a letter that he had written to the Home:

*‘Kanawalla,’*

HAMILTON

*June 28th, 1945*

*I am writing this letter to express my appreciation to you and the Committee for all it has done for me while I was in the Home, also for looking after my bank account and other interests.*

*Having been out working for 6½ years, I can look back on the five years I spent at the Home, which I realise now, was the training ground for me to be fitted into this world as a good citizen. I am sure the training I had there has helped me in the years that have passed, and I know it will in the future, both spiritually and socially.*

*I have also been helped by coming up to Hamilton and working with such fine Christian people, who have helped me to lead a decent life. I thank God for His guidance in helping me through the years that have passed.*

*To show my deepest appreciation for all the Home has done for me, I enclose a small donation which I hope you will accept.*

Amongst papers which I was reading, I found an eight-page duplicated issue of ‘Burwood Boys’ Home Crier’, a two-sheet folded newsletter produced by the boys. It served as a means of recording their sporting achievements, impressions of life at Burwood, and even a cartoon of a staff member drawn by one of the lads. The cost of its production was covered by a number of small advertising blocks taken by local businesses. This



was a monthly production with a circulation of 400. How many issues were produced, I haven't been able to ascertain, as only that one copy seems to have been preserved.

One of the real highlights for the boys occurred in June 1967 when the boys were driven to Mordialloc in a convoy of vintage cars from the Vintage Car Club. In grand style, they were the guests of the Mordialloc Yacht Club for lunch, after which they were taken for a spin on Port Phillip Bay, before returning in those glorious cars. The thrill continued even longer when, on the following evening, they saw themselves on the Channel 2 News. I know that some of the 'boys' still have memories of the day out as I heard them talking about it only two or three years ago.

### **Buildings and land**

In the late thirties, when money was in such short supply and we had to rebuild in order to have the de-registration lifted, Mr. Abraham persuaded a friend of his who was a successful businessman and philanthropist to make a gift to help with the planned constructions.

Money continued to trickle in for the building programme which had been held up due to a severe shortage of bricks. A gift of £1,800 was made from the will of Mrs. Foster, in memory of her son, so that when the new gymnasium was erected, it would bear a plaque on it reading 'Fred Foster Memorial'.

The Australian Banjo Club, which frequently provided entertainment for the boys and some of their parents, also took part in fundraising activities. They undertook a very special project and set themselves the target of raising sufficient funds to redecorate and refurnish Kiel hall as a lounge and library.

In 1953, after three months of discussion, we considered putting up for sale by auction some of our land, which was in surplus to our perceived needs. The need to rationalise was quite obvious as there were many plans for building on our Burwood site, but insufficient income to fund them. The auction raised £25,600. Over the next few years other surplus land was sold off to our advantage, partly to the Education Department for the projected Wattle Park High School.

### **Sport and the community**

With the construction of the oval behind the buildings came a greater interaction with the general community. The boys played inter-dormitory games and on many occasions played against visiting teams from community and church groups. On one occasion Burwood kicked more than thirty goals to the visitors' two goals. This was not uncommon. I umpired one of these victorious games and was condemned by the boys when I plucked out a couple of very doubtful free kicks, which enabled the visiting team to record its total score of one goal! Our boys were fiercely competitive at all times.



*The boys playing football*

As the result of the football matches between the boys and the Burwood Boys' Home Old Boys Association, it was recorded in *The Age* on March 1, 1952, that the Richmond Football Club had invited some of the boys and two of the 'Old Boys' to train at the Punt Road Oval. None, however, reached the heights of league footballer status.

For a number of years, one of our boys was selected to bear the Brownlow Medal on a blue velvet cushion on to the Melbourne Cricket Ground for presentation on the day of the first semi-final. I note that on September 3, 1960, Wayne Brocket carried the medal out for presentation to John Schultz of Footscray. John had a grocery store less

than 5km from our property and came out to the Home on September 22. In 1964, thirteen boys who took part in the football ceremonial, were named in ‘The Football Record’ and were televised as they performed their allotted duties. They were a credit to themselves and to the Burwood Boys’ Home.

### **His Philosophy – Our Philosophy**

In his introduction to the 65th Annual Report, the President, Mr. Frank Cheshire expounded his philosophy as he wrote:

*‘There is only one reason we are all involved in the running of the Burwood Boys’ Home, simply because the work has to be done; we are not doing it just to perpetuate our own existence. We have a proud heritage to carry on, and it is obvious to all of us that the need is, if anything, greater than it has been in our lifetime.*

*It is always a sad thing, no matter what the reason, if we have to refuse admission to a needy child, and we seek to do all we can to obviate the necessity of refusing admission to children on grounds of lack of accommodation or for any other reason, and we always try to accept the child with the greatest need, but surely all those seeking admission must have need of our help.*

*Most of our effort is, of course, concerned with the immediate needs of each child, but our greatest ambition is to contribute as much as we can toward the total development of each child’s character, so that when he leaves us to take his place in Society, he is fully equipped physically, morally, and mentally to do so. It is often years after, when we hear of one of our boys justifying our efforts and becoming a success that the effort proves to be worthwhile.*

*We are told that contributions to the Home are tax deductible. Indeed, every contribution is an investment, an investment in the future of this country. Without such Homes as these, the cost of keeping these children would place a tremendous burden on every taxpayer in the whole country.*

*The coming year will tax both our effort and our resources, and we will have to redouble our efforts if we are to maintain the Home with the present standards.*

*The most important part of our work, and the least publicised, is the rehabilitation of each child after admission; this part of our work is, in fact, essential if it is our intention to discharge a child who is going to face the world with a solid character, which will stand up to the stress and strain of present-day demands. Our children are emotionally upset when they arrive, and it is no exaggeration to say that it could be several years before the effect of a bad environmental background can be overcome.*

*The lack of parental love and understanding before the child arrives here, very often has the effect of giving the child a feeling of complete and absolute rejection.*

*The two most important necessities that every child must have are love and security; these two qualities are the birthright of every child born. Nearly all our boys have been deprived of the love of at least one of their parents, and some who come to our Home have never known what it is to be wanted, much less to be loved. The result of such deprivation is seen after the arrival of the child here.’*



Cheshire Cottage

It was noted that holiday hosts and hostesses were frequently gained as the result of appeals on television (Channel 7) and radio (3DB and 3UZ). Some of these hosts took the boys for many holiday periods. Some have become part of their extended families. Some have retained written contact with frequent cards and letters exchanged. Some of these hosts have acted as foster-parents and foster-grandparents to their children also. Over the 1962 Christmas to New Year period, all the boys were holiday hosted and apparently had a wonderful time. All the hostesses were full of praise for the way the children behaved; we never had one complaint about any child at all, and it was a great relief to hear that they had all been so good. A very positive relationship developed through the new hostesses who had the children that year, and many of them asked for the children to go back at Easter, and for all other holidays throughout the year.

The Education Department, for some reason unknown to us, cut back some of the travel allowance for boys going to secondary schools and this led to concerns relating to travel costs in our budget. The principal transport company for our boys was Ventura Bus Lines. The Finance Committee's minutes of August 4, 1960 stated 'the Superintendent advised that the Ventura Bus Service had arranged that our boys should travel free on the buses for the time being, the matter to be reviewed at the beginning of the next school year. He stated that he had written, thanking the proprietor for his very generous action'. The proprietor of the Ventura Bus lines, Mr. Ken Cornwall, was awarded a Life Governorship of the Home. He accepted it with pleasure and continued to be a great supporter of our organisation until his death in the late 1990s.

*Despite the shortage of funds, we were inundated with offers of fresh fruit...with a wonderful effort on the part of all concerned, up to this time; 605 lb (270kg) of fruit has been bottled, to start off the winter.*

*Superintendent's Report, 1962*

At one time, an architectural company made an extensive examination and survey of the storage, preparation and cooking of food at the Burwood Boys' Home. The comprehensive report estimated that in order to up-grade the kitchen facilities they would need to spend around £5,000. It was referred to the Building Committee with recommendations to be made and with power to act.

In February 1963, a canteen-cum-tuckshop was opened for the boys so that 'we could buy and supply items for which they now pay inflated prices. We shall open it to visitors and serve tea and cakes, thus building up a fund for the purpose of buying wholesale so that we can sell cheaper to the boys' (Superintendent's Report). In later years the profits from the canteen tuck shop were used to purchase small items of equipment to benefit the children.

In 1964, one of our boys, Arthur Carson, was appointed Head Prefect at Wattle Park High School, and at the same time was popularly elected as School Captain.

For the statistically minded – we had, in September 1965, fifteen sets of brothers. By this time, too, the costs of caring for each boy were just above £9, of which the State Government paid a mere £4 50s. for each state ward. By 1967, we had forty-three Wards of State, twelve private placements, and three boys for whom no payments would be made toward their care.

One of our boys, on his discharge, was appointed temporarily to the staff at Government House, Victoria and frequently served breakfast to Sir Rohan and Lady Delacombe. He was a very good ambassador for the Burwood Boys' Home as he frequently told them of the aspects of care he had received.

Following on that report was another about the graduation of one of the boys from the Police Training College. This was followed by another telling of an ‘Old Boy’ who, ten years after he had left the Home, had studied for a commercial flying license thanks to contacts formed through a Committee member. At the time of the report he had progressed to flying solo.

References have been made to the 1948 No. 4 Group Masonic Masters and the Burwood Boys’ Home Mums’ and Dads’ Association. They were virtually one and the same; I discovered in the course of my reading, for in February 1955, the former group took the latter name. Yet in 2000 we received a letter from the Secretary of the 1948 No. 4 Group informing us that age and deaths had forced them out of existence (several were in their nineties). This group of Freemasons and their wives had sought an outside charity instead of limiting their activities to the Freemasons’ Homes and the Freemasons’ Hospital. Some of their members also served on the Committee of Management of the Burwood Boys’ Home.

Some of their early projects included:

- Funding for the laying of the most suitable type of cricket pitch.
- Running a special carnival to raise funds for the erection of a gymnasium, this produced a net balance of £911. (By today’s fundraising standards, that and other amounts seem very small, but when you consider that an annual wage was only between £600 to £800, you can see that it represented quite a generous return).
- Conducting a ball (net £51), theatre nights, card evenings, picnics and other social and fundraising activities, not only built up our funds, but also developed a very cohesive and supporting group of friends.
- A bi-monthly newsletter known as ‘The Mums’ and Dads’ Rag Bag’.
- Provision of pocket-money, birthday presents and Christmas gifts for each of the boys.

At one point in their history it was moved that each member be asked to make himself responsible for at least raising £5 during the year. If this were done they were told that the group would be assured of meeting their obligations regarding pocket money and birthday presents.

Two members of both groups were Frank and Dulcie Whittaker who lived for many years in Warrigal Road, Burwood, where the boys passed by on their way to and from Church and Sunday school each week. Frank was the treasurer of the Mums’ and Dads’ Association and Dulcie was the President. On their deaths, several items of furniture and memorabilia came into our possession. Even after their death they still contributed to our support. But back to the developing story.

There was a special dinner held at the Home on November 23, 1977 at which there was an acknowledgement of at least twenty-five years of service to Burwood by five of our most respected Committee members:

**Frank Cheshire:** thirty-nine years (publisher, President of Committee of Management, Chairman Education sub-Committee)

**Miss Lois Savage:** thirty-seven years (a pharmacist and founder of the Ladies’ Auxiliary)

**Don Little:** thirty-two years (Minute Secretary for many years and member Finance sub-Committee)



**Fred Veitch:** thirty years (Manager State Savings Bank of Victoria, President of Committee of Management, member Finance sub-Committee, Welfare Officer and former Physical Education Instructor)

**Harry Garrett:** twenty-seven years (Builder, member of Mums' and Dads' Association, Chairman of Buildings and Grounds sub-Committee and member of Finance sub-Committee)

In this very select group there was more than 150 years of service to under-privileged children in the community. I believe that all of them had met Robert Campbell Edwards and had caught something of his vision. Only a very short time after this, poor health and death deprived us of these stalwarts, so it was wonderful that we could take this opportunity to acknowledge their splendid contributions. If it was needed, there was a living tribute in that the President, at that time, was a former Burwood Boys' Home resident, Hector Davis.

Much change was taking place in residential child care throughout the state with more emphasis being placed on residential units being developed in the community within a few streets of the organisation's office premises. We opted to remain with the 'cottage' system. However, a review took place in 1975 by the Superintendent, Colin Tutchell, to assess the system and to make recommendations.

### **Milestones**

An important event in our history was the Diamond Jubilee. Celebrations were quite costly, but the publicity, goodwill and financial returns with the Diamond Jubilee Appeal, justified the leap of faith. (A gentleman from the Appeals Secretariat had offered to conduct this appeal at a cost of £18,000, plus a further £780 to cover his salary for six months, plus the cost of stationery, stamps, etc. Needless to say, the offer was not accepted!)

A brochure was prepared, entitled 'A Pageant of Youth' as part of several weeks of activities:

<b>October 9</b>	Programme of entertainment
<b>October 27</b>	Donation of playground equipment to be installed at Campbell Edwards Cottage
<b>November 4</b>	Official opening by Sir Edmund Herring, KCVO, Lieutenant Governor of Victoria and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria – music supplied by Box Hill City Bands
<b>November 5</b>	Fireworks display
<b>November 6</b>	Inter-home sports
<b>November 8</b>	Gymnasium display
<b>November 10</b>	Pageant of Youth

The admission of girls to the Home was discussed, but deferred in 1959. The Department of Children's Welfare Services indicated in 1961 that they would require the Home to care for both sexes. The matter was raised again at Committee level in November 1962, but was not agreed to. When it came up again, almost ten years later, the result was much more positive and sisters of boys in our care were able to be admitted immediately. The name was changed to the Burwood Children's Homes to reflect this and also the change to cottages instead of large dormitories. At a later stage, it was possible for any girl to be admitted.

## Cottages

In 1965, we received the first grant to the Home from the Hospitals and Charities Commission. We were offered £20,000 on the condition that we proceed with the building of a new cottage. It was an amount which, together with an almost equivalent amount given by the President of the Committee of Management, Frank Cheshire, not only guaranteed the construction of the Margaret McAlister Cottage, but hastened the erection a little later of a third cottage above the oval which was called the Frank W. Cheshire Cottage.

During the 1970s, much change was taking place in residential child care throughout Victoria with more emphasis placed on residential units being developed in the community within a few streets of the organisations' office premises. We opted to remain with the cottage system and in 1975 the Superintendent, Colin Tutchell, assessed the system and made the following recommendations:

### *CHESHIRE COTTAGE PROJECT*

'A critical look at the living pattern of the children in care in our cottages gives rise to a recommendation that a pilot project, incorporating an improved child lifestyle, should be considered for implementation by the Committee of Management.



*Frank Cheshire opening the school with his wife Jean Cheshire and President Glen Quantrelle*

Much has been achieved in recent years to provide improved facilities for the children by way of greater involvement in community activities, improved décor and equipment within the cottages and a reduction generally in institutional forms of care.

The advantages gained by the children are realistic and obvious. Much improved communication and relationships exist between the staff and the children, between the children and their peers in the community and certainly a higher degree of self-esteem is held by the children.

There is, however, a need to establish an improved child care programme and with this thought in mind it is recommended that we set up a revised programme in Cheshire Cottage and for that programme to be the subject of evaluation at the expiration of six months. The success or otherwise of the project to be the subject of reports periodically from the Superintendent to the Committee.

The following areas of the child care pattern would receive attention:

- Facilities provided by means of fencing a defined area around the cottage to enable the children to keep pets and to experience gardening under the guidance of the cottage parents. The fence would provide an additional opportunity to experience a normal 'home-like' environment. Young children would have a defined area in which to play and be under the watchful eye of cottage parents when so required. This would seem preferable to having children exposed to twelve acres of property each time they left the house.
- Additional home-help of a domestic nature should be provided to relieve the cottage parents and the children from many of the domestic chores of a large household containing fifteen people. Much more time would then be available to the staff to engage in child care to a greater degree. So many of our children need individualised attention because of the severance from their families. Ample time should be provided for staff to build a meaningful relationship with the children and the emphasis moved

from household chores. It is considered that home help for two days per week would make this possible.

- Opportunities should be provided for the children to accompany the cottage mother when shopping for some of the cottage food requirements and certainly to have the experience of shopping for personal clothing. The present system of obtaining most items for the child and for the house from a central store on the property may have some desirable aspects from the financial point of view, but does little for providing what should be a natural experience for the child.
- Provision of pocket money should be between the cottage mother and the child in reverse to the current situation of the child attending an impersonal Administration Centre for his pocket money. Banking in an actual bank building would be also a desirable experience in place of the present system of leaving a portion of his pocket money with the office staff for banking.
- The provision of bed-lamps and pin-boards in the children's own rooms is desirable, and whereby the current system has the bedrooms used only for sleeping we should provide the opportunity for children to display their creative achievements (pictures etc.) in their rooms. The opportunity to read before sleep would be introduced with provision of power points for bed-lamps.
- Art and Craft and general play material currently available should be improved upon in quantity and quality with more active and meaningful participation by the staff.
- Professional assessment and attention to specific problems of the children should be readily available where the problem is outside the scope of the child care staff. Staff counselling by qualified people such as those available from the Citizens Welfare Service would be of distinct advantage.
- The sum of \$3,000 would be the maximum required for a period of six months for this pilot project.
- A number of patterns conducive to a normal family life setting will be introduced during this period to further minimise undesirable institutional aspects of our way of life at Burwood.
- It is considered that we currently have desirable people in our employment who are sufficiently flexible in their outlook and sufficiently dedicated to their role as child care staff to make a successful start on the project. These people, along with children who have little or no parental contact, would be transferred to Cheshire Cottage.
- A more relaxed atmosphere within the cottage is envisaged to provide a congenial environment for both children and staff to live in greater harmony with opportunity for improved mutual trust and improved atmosphere for natural child development.'

In the Annual Report of 1981, the President, Hector Davis, reported:

*There has probably never been a year when the Committee of the Homes has more closely examined the nature of its child care programmes and faced the future with more honesty and courage.*

*As the issues have been examined, it has become clear that the type of children for whom we care are faced with greater personal problems than children cared for in earlier years. It is a sad fact that though the community enjoys a much higher standard of material living than in the past, there are parents and children whose emotional disturbances and physical needs are at very serious levels even in spite of the tremendous*

*increase in government funding of Welfare Services. As the Committee during the year has been clearly confronted with this situation, it has resolved that the work at these Homes should continue in its present form, but be upgraded and developed to meet the particular needs of the children coming into our care.*

*In earlier days, the Homes cared for 'normal' children who in the main were the 'victims' of broken family relationships. In the 1980s, the need will be for care to children whose emotional and educational needs are such that the 'cottage type care' provided at Burwood is best suited to their development.*

*It is for these reasons that the Committee has resolved that we will, in the foreseeable future, maintain our present patterns of child care with greater emphasis on meeting the special needs of particular children.*

## **Education**

From the early 1960s student teachers from Burwood Teachers' College provided homework support for the boys and were given credit for an overall academic improvement made by the boys. Trainees from a number of nearby tertiary institutions continued this excellent service for the next twenty years.

Even though it was continuous, it did have some hiccups. With the appointment of one of our tutors to a country school and another undertaking post-graduate study, the programme looked to be in danger of collapse until two members of Surrey Hills Church offered their services. Further assistance was provided with the appointment of an Education Officer, who was to work in conjunction with the schools and the remaining tutors. The Monash Social Involvement group also joined with the support group of tutors.

The Superintendent reported:

*We are now entering into the second half of the school year of 1970 and from the reports that have come in, and from the discussions with the various teachers, it is most encouraging to find an overall improvement in attitude and output of work. This has been largely due to the fact that the boys, who commenced at secondary school this year, have now ample time to settle in and adjust to the new routine of secondary school life.*

*Another factor with some of the older boys has been in their will to succeed, so as to be able to pursue more desirable employment upon leaving school. This attitude has been fostered during the welfare dinners, visits to Vocational Guidance Centre, Camberwell, homework tutorials and with individual discussions.*

*The majority of the Monash Social Involvement students, who do such great work with the lads, are now going to the cottages and helping many boys in an individual capacity, or in small groups.*

*Annual Report 1970*

By July 1967, the Superintendent had received £42,000 from a friend of George Murray, a former President of the Home. This was placed in a trust fund to educate to tertiary level a boy with potential to enter a professional career. The boy chosen by the Superintendent wanted to become a naval officer so naturally he was truly excited by the prospect of undertaking sixteen months of training at the Royal Australian Naval College. Further gifts of \$200 and \$1,000 were promised to follow the initial amount. The lad's name was never disclosed.



I seem to recall another trust being set up to educate a boy to his full potential. It was an extremely generous trust, but for several years it was not taken up, as the donor wanted the lad to take the name of his benefactor. This would have been an extremely delicate affair unless the child was a true orphan with no living relatives. Protracted negotiation enabled us to utilise the trust funds for educational purposes without that original qualification.

In the early 1970s, an exhaustive programme of testing all the children in care was undertaken, to ascertain their skill levels. The results indicated that there was a problem in literacy and numeracy with many of the admissions. It was proposed that we should withdraw some of these children on a sessional basis to receive specialised treatment from our Education Officer.

When the need arose for withdrawal of some for longer periods of intensive tuition, a special unit in which to house the teaching facility was required. With the erection of a new cottage for the Superintendent, the former residence was pressed into service as an education unit and it was adapted to provide classrooms, counselling and testing facilities, office space and a storage area.

Due to the quality of the individual teaching and resultant progress made by the children, many of them were able to be readmitted to their normal classes on a full-time basis. The Education Department's Counselling and Clinical Guidance staff made a presentation to the Home to have some non-residents and the numbers of 'outsiders' increased.

When it came time to relocate the organisation to the new property at 583 Ferntree Gully Road, Glen Waverley, we transferred Special School No. 1743 and its pupils. It was not long before the building required renovation and reconstruction as we tried to keep abreast of changes of emphasis in education. This became an extremely costly programme, but as we were committed to this work, fundraising appeals were directed to this project.

The refurbished centre was reopened as the F.W. Cheshire Education Centre, by Frank Cheshire himself, just a few short weeks before his death. Frank had been one of the driving forces behind the appointment of an Education Officer and the establishment of the Special School. He was also the first chairman of the Education sub-Committee and maintained his interest until his health deteriorated.

Since that time, we have seen physical reconstruction and programme development aimed at enlarging the building to cater for the increased numbers of pupils. The aim is still to encourage and assist the educational, emotional and social progress of each child so that they can return, with confidence, to the mainstream school system from which they had been withdrawn. Watching the changes taking place in these children at the Centre is justification enough for its continuation.

We were to find in time that as many of our residents left, the Children's Welfare Department did not want to replace them unless they were deemed able to benefit from the remedial education programme. Educational dysfunction seemed to be a prerequisite, but I am probably a little warped in my judgment. Fortunately, having fewer children in our care we were able to devote more time to each. The downside of this was that the cost per child reached \$200 per week, with the State Government only contributing part of the costs in the form of government allowances.

Despite the emphasis, time, effort and resources being channelled into educational programmes, we did not have many studying at Universities. However, many more studied and graduated from TAFE Colleges with financial support from charitable trusts, government allowances and special funds from our own resources. The young people in care were also encouraged to participate in a wide variety of outside activities and to bring friends to share some of the activities within our boundaries. The emphasis changed from educational and training programmes for agricultural and pastoral pursuits to more general programmes as a basis for a much wider variety of occupations.

### **Living in the community**

Once a quarter the Welfare sub-Committee used to meet with the ‘Old Boys’ and working boys from the Home and have a specially prepared, nutritious evening meal which was followed by a programme, either at the Home or another suitable venue. One of the sessions was most suitable and valuable, being aimed at helping the young men in the preparation of their Income Tax Returns. Despite the outdoor excursions and practical sessions which followed the social get-togethers around the meal table, lack of support led to the phasing out of the regular welfare dinners.

This, in many ways, was a great disappointment as it had provided opportunities for closer monitoring of the boys without the appearance of ‘big brother’ restricting them. Three working boys whose plight became known at one of the welfare dinners led to a resolution that the Burwood Boys’ Home should rent an unfurnished flat in the nearby community. We could charge each of the boys \$55 per week. It was further resolved that this should be a pilot scheme for a period of three months and subject to monthly visits of a Welfare sub-Committee member. It was further required that each boy occupying the flat should sign the agreement with the Burwood Boys’ Home regarding the conditions of their occupancy, and that each boy would be required to pay a bond of \$20 on entering the agreement, such bond being refundable at the discretion of the Committee.

This lease was later not renewed, but a twelve month lease was taken out on a house at Box Hill South to cater for another three working lads. This was at a weekly rental of \$36, with each boy contributing \$30 and the remaining \$6 being paid by the Home.

Later, four working boys had an extended lease on a house in Warren Street, just beyond the Homes boundary at a rental of \$48 per week, with the boys paying the total amount. The lease was relinquished at the end of 1977. Two of these lads found themselves facing charges relating to robberies committed in the area. The cost of legal representation, about \$1,000, was covered by the Burwood Children’s Homes. While their actions neither would, nor could, be condoned, support was provided because they were ‘Old Boys’. They were found guilty and spent time at the Ararat Gaol. Since their release they have settled down and become good members of the community.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Goulburn Valley Family Care

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It was a privilege to be the CFCN's representative on the Goulburn Valley Family Care (GVFC) Committee of Management for a number of years. During this time, I witnessed the gradual development and expansion which allowed Goulburn Valley to become independent of the Burwood Children's Home within ten years of its establishment.



The cut-back in funding for campus/institutional care was a not-too-subtle indication of a change of emphasis in policies formulated by the Victorian State Government in the late 1970s and early 1980s, on the advice of officers of Community Services Victoria and Children's Welfare, in their forward planning.

This led to a re-allocation of services and resources from the larger institutions to more of the smaller community based units in rural centres where there was shown to be great need, but a lack of local service facilities.

The State Government believed that the Burwood Children's Home was part of the over-supply of residential child care facilities, which could be closed in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. (As an editorial comment, I suggest that if this were so, why have there been, and why are there still so many homeless young people in these suburbs today? Part of our original charter was to admit such young people into our organisational care.)

In the Annual Report of 1981, the President, Hector Davis, reported:

*As the Committee considered its role for the future, it became aware of unmet needs in country areas, and has therefore resolved that an investigation be carried out concerning the feasibility of extending services to a country region where needs for child care are urgent. Such an investigation will proceed on the clear understanding that:*

- *the work at Burwood should continue to be upgraded and maintained and should not be adversely affected by any extension project; and*
- *any extension to a country region would be dependent upon adequate funding from appropriate sources and significant involvement by local community groups.*

Although the minutes of the Burwood Children's Homes from September 1980 to May 1983 relate to the initial request from the Department of Community Welfare Services (DCWS), Shepparton, the first indications of a move to redirect our services away from the Eastern Region which was supposedly over serviced, goes back to a Forward Planning Committee meeting of Burwood Children's Homes held on November 1, 1978. At this meeting with a representative of the Inner Urban region of DCWS it was suggested that the Burwood Children's Home should look at offering service to that region. It was necessary to research the needs of the Inner Urban Region. Bennettswood Lions Club provided \$1,500 for that research survey. Dr Len Tierney, Reader in Social Studies at Melbourne University, advised that concise research, as required, would take up to two years to complete. Additional funding came from the Campbell Edwards Trust and State Government help was obtained to assist in funding the appointment of a temporary Social Worker.

With the State Government presenting documentation outlining the processes to be adopted by the child care agencies, when considering new projects, it became even more important that no moves should be made without sitting down with relevant bodies and really assessing accurately the needs of the Inner Eastern Region. The continuation of substitute residential care and developing varying types of service was still seen as essential, yet it was also necessary that there be no over-servicing.

In September 1980, the Department of Children's Welfare Services outlined three areas of priority. The Inner Urban Region, Western Suburbs and Shepparton. In this study it was noted that each of the city regions had similar needs in their programmes which were: Family Group Homes; Foster Care programmes; Family Counselling Services; Adolescent Units; Small Campus Units and Emergency Care Units; but the expertise of our staff members did not appear to be one of them. To me, it seemed that what they wanted most was the money that would come from the sale of our property, at least \$4 million. Shepparton needed sixty beds and appealed to us because we had a family in care at Burwood who had come from the Goulburn Valley. At that time, they only had eight beds and were also negotiating with the Aboriginal child care agency to establish two additional residences.

Two months later, Colin Tutchell and Jim Billings, Education Officer, met with DCWS officers at Shepparton, and these gentlemen were requested to give urgent consideration to setting up service in the Goulburn Region. It was only two days later that representatives of the Inner Urban and the Western Regions met our Forward Planning Committee to press their case for our full support of each one's region exclusively. When these people left the meeting, the Forward Planning Committee recommended to the Committee of Management that a pilot scheme be entered into by the Burwood Children's Home as soon as possible, to provide a residential unit for Goulburn.

Shortly thereafter, I note that the Committee was considering a proposal to purchase two units and furnishings on a dollar for dollar subsidy from the State Government, with the cost to Burwood approximately \$90,000. How they would obtain the money was yet to be addressed.

For the next few months there were many meetings with DCWS officers and representatives of the Burwood Children's Home, which led to plans being formulated to ensure that:

- any development work at Shepparton would be with continual involvement of the Burwood Children's Home in that project; and
- the development of the Shepparton project would be subject to adequate funding from appropriate sources.

At this time the Wangaratta diocese of the Anglican Church had undertaken a survey of the needs of the region and we were advised to co-operate with them in their research as a further guide to needs.

The project began apace at the beginning of 1982 with Mr W. Jona, Minister for Community Welfare Services, granting \$70,000 for the purchase and establishment of an Early Adolescent unit and a Family Group home – to be used within three months or it would be returned to the Treasury. This amount was actually \$16,000 short of the amount anticipated and the funding for the year had all been allocated. The message added that we should reapply for establishment costs in the coming year when they should receive high priority.

It is exciting to read of the frenetic pace at which things began to happen before that deadline of April 1982. Properties were checked out and purchased (Lenne Street, Mooroopna, ideal for a Family Group home and Power Avenue, Shepparton, suitable as an Adolescent unit). A \$50,000 gift was made to establishment costs by the Campbell Edwards Trust and the Jack Brockhoff Trust. The Hon. Peter Ross-Edwards gathered a group of local community leaders and municipal representatives to gain support and encouragement for the venture and an interim Committee was formed for the purpose of public relations and fundraising (to be disbanded as soon as sufficient funds came to hand). Cr. John Gray of Rodney Shire Council was elected as Secretary of this interim Committee consisting of:

- The Hon. Peter Ross-Edwards MLA (Deputy Premier) Chairman
- Cr. John Gray (Rodney Shire)
- Ross S. Turnbull
- Cr. T.M. Cochran (Shire of Shepparton)
- George Cranwell
- Jack Devenport
- John R.G. Gayland
- Harry M. Ford
- Cr. Roger D. Furphy (City of Shepparton)
- H.A. Parkin

On May 6, 1982, the Hon. Peter Ross-Edwards chaired a meeting of fifty-six persons held at the Victoria Hotel, Shepparton, to inform people about the background of this special community venture. He gave an outline of the Burwood Children's Home history and explained its role. Support was also sought from service clubs to the extent of \$20,000 by the end of that financial year in seven weeks. An amount of \$500 was received from the local branch of the Country Women's Association and further \$1,000 cash from the Shepparton Rotary Club and Mooroopna Rotary Club. Other donations received were: Shepparton Soroptimist Club \$100; Tatura Apex Club \$500; Merrigum Lions' Club \$100; Shepparton Rotoract Club \$200; Mooroopna Lions Club \$200; Mooroopna Jaycees \$200; City of Shepparton \$2,000; and Tatura Milk Products \$250.

The property at Power Street was named 'Campbell Edwards Lodge' in token of the fine donations from the Campbell Edwards Trust and in acknowledgement of the work of Robert Campbell Edwards in establishing the Burwood Boys' Home almost ninety years before.

The *Victorian Government Gazette* sealed the issue when in October 1982 it declared approval for both Goulburn Valley Units to operate as 'Approved Children's Homes'.

### **A Year of Difficulty**

If this report is to be a factual report then it needs to begin with a comment on the disappointments and frustrations arising from our attempts to extend our child care services to the Goulburn Valley Region. An exert from the 1983 Annual Report stated:

*Last year I spoke of the investigations carried out and the consultations held with the Department of Community Welfare Services which persuaded the Committee to purchase several properties at Shepparton for the commencement of what is described as an urgently needed child care service. Early in 1983, we were able to commence the Family Group Home in which young children are to be cared.*



*Regretfully, the proposed adolescent unit has still not commenced and the property remains unoccupied. The view of the Community Welfare Services Department is that the service should not commence until a locally based social worker is appointed to provide oversight of the staff and the work at the several centres. Consequently until the appointment is made no government funding will be available. Despite extensive and constant advertising for an appropriate person no application from a person considered to be suitable was received and therefore the work has not commenced. The Committee has been very disappointed that the children who were reported to be in need of care and support remain unhelped almost two years after the decision to commence the work was taken.*

*As a result of more recent advertising there are high hopes that a suitable appointment may now be made, which will enable the work of the adolescent unit to commence in the near future.*

*H.L. Davis, President*

*Burwood Children's Home Annual Report 1983*

At the beginning of 1983, Mr. and Mrs. A. Jolsz were appointed as Cottage Parents for the Lenne Street home and the first children took up placement on March 30. The Cottage Parents resigned less than six months later to travel overseas, and Mr. and Mrs. C. Garrett were appointed to take over the role of caring for these children.

Colin Emonson, who had served the Kildonan Homes for Children, was appointed as Superintendent of the GVFC as from October 1983 in conjunction with the support and input from the Community Services Victoria (CSV) Officers of the Goulburn Valley Region. Colin's enthusiasm and energy saw him as a regular at the offices of the CSV and at Children's Welfare, to ensure that the entitlement of support for Goulburn Valley should always be fully maintained. He also spent many more hours in planning fundraising activities throughout the length and breadth of the Goulburn Valley District. His dedication to his work provided inspiration for this fledging group which operated from a portion of a small office in the main street of Mooroopna. It seemed that with Roger Furphy, Mayor of the City of Shepparton, on the interim Committee, they had taken to heart the famous quotation embossed on the Furphy water tank:

*'Good, better, best;  
Never let it rest  
'Til your good is better  
And your better, best'*

On Sunday May 27, 1984, an official ceremony was held to formally open GVFC. The ceremony was held at the Shire of Rodney Council Chambers at Tatura and the Hon. Peter Ross-Edwards who was one of the inaugural promoters of GVFC presented a charter to the Burwood Children's Homes and Goulburn Valley Family Care programme on behalf of the Goulburn Valley. The signing of the charter was witnessed by state and local dignitaries and a large number of interested people. This Charter charged the Burwood Children's Home with the responsibilities of establishing and managing the work in the Goulburn Valley for that time and into the future to serve the needs of children and their families and help to shape the lives of the community's future citizens. Prior to the formal signing, a group of children dressed in period costumes arrived in a vintage car and a horse-drawn carriage to add to the spectacle by presenting a pageant representative of the 1890s when the Burwood Boys' Home commenced.

## A CHARTER

*From The Citizens Of The Goulburn Valley  
To The Committee of Management Burwood Children's Home*

*WE CONGRATULATE your Committee on the service given to the children of Victoria during the past eighty-nine years.*

*WE ARE PLEASED that together with us you have become aware of the needs of children and families in the Goulburn Valley Region.*

*WE ARE GLAD that together with citizens of the Region you have decided to commence a service to meet the needs of those children and families.*

*WE ACKNOWLEDGE that this service is to be provided through GOULBURN VALLEY FAMILY CARE, a programme of the Burwood Children's Homes.*

*WE THEREFORE CHARGE YOU:*

- To care with compassion and understanding for the children who are deprived of the basic human rights of the child.*
- To establish them in a SECURE family situation.*
- To serve these needs whatever the race, colour or creed.*
- To encourage the people of the Goulburn Valley to share in the work of caring.*
- To remember and act in the knowledge that the urgent care of children at risk should be the first and main consideration of the Committee of Management.*

*WE BELIEVE that in fulfilling this charter the Committee will serve the needs of children and their families and help shape the lives of the community's future citizens.*

*This charter is given and accepted in mutual trust and confidence on the occasion of the Official.*

*Opening of the Goulburn Valley Family Care at Tatura on the twenty-seventh day of May 1984.*

*GIVEN ON BEHALF OF THE CITIZENS  
OF THE GOULBURN VALLEY*

*(PETER ROSS-EDWARDS, MP)*

*ACCEPTED ON BEHALF OF BURWOOD CHILDREN'S HOMES*

*(HECTOR L. DAVIS, JP)*

The first or inaugural meeting of the local Committee was held at the Shepparton City Council Rooms on Thursday December 13, 1984, under the chairmanship of Cr. Roger Furphy (in the absence of the Hon. Mr Peter Ross-Edwards). It was to operate as an interim committee for twelve months, virtually as a sub-Committee of the Burwood Children's Homes. At this meeting, there were four representatives of Burwood, the persons of Colin Tutchell, Hector Davis, John Moore and Nancy Chambers. On this same night they spoke of the possible structure of the ongoing committee having four representatives from Shepparton and a further five from other districts. Colin Edmonson, the recently appointed Superintendent of GVFC, presented a paper outlining the aims, objectives and process of development for the committee to study and to be prepared to discuss at the following meeting.

The Committee was looking for representation from Mansfield, Seymour, Cobram, Numurkah, Kyabram, Tatura or Nagambie, as these were the areas that it was hoping to service. It also wanted to cover the area by seeking nine members from the area of Greater Shepparton as it was impractical to have representatives from the more distant places. I noticed that at this meeting in April 1985, Albert Kellock was formally invited to join the Committee. (This was a very far sighted move as Albert later served for many years as Chairman of the GVFC and as the representative of GVFC on the Committee of Management of the CFCN. After stepping down from the Presidency, he continues to serve as Treasurer.)

In those early years, fundraising results fluctuated with the emotional drawing power of the theme and the publicity given on TV, radio, and in the local press. Opportunities were afforded and accepted to speak at church and community groups to inform them of the monumental needs within 'The Valley'. A subscriber list from 1986 to 1987 showed eighty-three donors (including that character to whom we all owe our debt of gratitude – Anon, Anonymous).

For some Shepparton folk there was a perception that because GVFC was like a sub-Committee of the Child and Family Care Network (formerly the Burwood Children's Home) perhaps some of the funds raised in the Goulburn Valley were being placed in CFCN's general funds for administration, etc. This was proven to be absolutely incorrect, but a formal motion was passed by CFCN to satisfy all those who were concerned, stating that all monies raised, or donations given from the Goulburn Valley area could only be used within the Goulburn Valley.

A third property was purchased out in the Lemnos area. The 1986 Annual Report of the Burwood Children's Home recorded, in the Goulburn Valley Family Care section:

*We are especially proud to have been able to cater in a unique way for the special needs for a family of six young children who could not continue to live with their family.*

*These children were faced with life in an institution, or separated in small family group homes, or foster care. With the support of the Burwood Children's Homes, the local community and Community Services Victoria, Goulburn Valley Family Care has been successful in establishing a home specifically for the children, so that they can stay together in their own community. They are country children and we have been able to set up a home in a country environment. They are able to attend a small country school. With the Burwood Children's Homes special school staff supporting the local school, the children are receiving all the special attention that is required to help them catch up educationally.*

The headquarters of GVFC were moved into larger offices in Edwards Street, Shepparton, just at the edge of the shopping centre, thus making it more accessible and enabling the engagement of additional staff. The need for a family group home developed at Benalla, as it lessened at Mooroopna, so a new house was set up there. A Fundraising Committee was set up and began to function very effectively to eliminate part of an operating deficit of \$75,000 which had built up during the year. It is interesting to note that there was no thought given to minimising the goals that they had set, which had included employing a social worker. In reading the minutes and reports, it is refreshing to note the positive approach to problems.

The 1987, a GVFC Report included in the CFCN Annual Report, states:

*Meeting the needs of disadvantaged families needs to involve supporting both child and family, from either the family group home setting or the natural home. It also requires support from schools, employment, marriage counselling, housing etc. Preferably this support is provided prior to the need to place children in family group homes. It is the goal of Goulburn Valley Family Care to apply its resources in this manner whenever possible. However, it becomes increasingly difficult as demand for the Goulburn Valley Family Care residential care service increases as it has in the past months.*

*At the time of writing this report, Goulburn Valley Family Care was providing homes for sixteen young people, and another six will be accommodated in the Benalla Home. However, we have been informed by Community Services Victoria of another twenty young people from this region in need of placement in substitute homes. The need fluctuates and is at present at its highest level since the establishment of the Goulburn Valley programme by the Burwood Children's Homes four years ago.*

This led to the GVFC initiating a prevention programme in residential care, which could reach out to other similar organisations across the state. This was known as Contextual Residential Care, which used family therapy to help families while the child care team and therapist worked to help the child. This programme showed remarkable improvement in achieving re-unification of the family and child in its operation in Sydney. The GVFC Report of 1988 stated that the results of this programme could not be ignored and therefore should be incorporated into the operation of our three houses.

*We have introduced innovative programme methods and are extremely encouraged by what has been achieved in dealing with families in crisis. For example prior to 1989 the average length of stay for a child in our family group home was 480 days. GVFC wanted to be effective and cost efficient as the cost to the community and to the tax payers of keeping a child in care for 480 days was \$36,480 (based on current costs and property charges). With the length of stay now reduced to ninety days (in the year ending June 30, 1990) the average cost is \$6,840. Obviously more children are able to be helped for the same dollars and GVFC is leading the field in reducing the length of stay and successfully re-uniting children with their families.*

*CFCN Annual Report, GVFC, 1990*

It was about this time that A.V. Jennings was developing out by Kialla Lakes, to the south of Shepparton and proposed the construction of a 'Dream House' on land supplied by GVFC and with many of the building materials and household fittings donated or contributed at/or below cost. Contractors also undertook sections of the work at no profit to themselves. To put the completely furnished house on the market, there was an outlay of \$168,600. Unfortunately when auctioned it only realised \$180,000. Understandably, GVFC was a little disappointed with the return on the investment which had offered so much.

A regular fundraising activity which operated for several years was a 'Bingo' session, but with the placement of an increasing number of poker machines in the locality, this was closed down.

In 1990, GVFC commissioned a Forward Planning Report to be prepared by Kate Redwood and Associates. This provided guidelines to steer GVFC into the new century, but one section was not accepted by CFCN. It concerned the provision for GVFC to be given complete autonomy, but with a large injection of funds from CFCN. This would have meant that, if proceeded with, programmes of CFCN would have to be curtailed,

limited or severely jeopardised. Autonomy was finally achieved on June 30, 1996, but as each organisation had a representative on the Committee of Management of the other, each organisation was aware of, could support, and encourage each other, and even utilise staff expertise and facilities of each unit.

In the Annual Report of 1992, there was such vibrancy coming through as more positions were made full-time and two new programmes were added – Family Therapy and Family Support (the latter being operated in conjunction with CSV). Only four years later it was reported that in one month they were looking after 347 clients or families.

In 1996, Chairman Albert Kellock paid tribute to Child and Family Care Network for their foresight in commencing the GVFC, encouraging a local committee to assist and later on allowing them almost free rein to mould and build the organisation to meet the requirements of the local community. He wrote also that GVFC aimed at starting the same process in the Seymour area. This Southern sub-Committee of Management was in action by 1997. At that time six staff members and five programmes were operating in Seymour under Margaret Findley, Manager and Family Counsellor, and also supplied services to Kilmore for one day each week.

As the work continued to develop without too much trauma, some continued to campaign for exclusive autonomy whilst others appreciated the back-up or support afforded them by their close association with CFCN. The greatest concern was financial, so they sought outside fundraising assistance at great cost. A capital appeal for \$1 million was conducted, but this venture took place too close to the time of a similar appeal by the Goulburn Valley Base hospital. They raised approximately one half of their target, but most of that money was taken up by expenses involved in setting up the fundraising department infrastructure.

A house was purchased in Wyndham Street (up near the RSL Headquarters) to provide more office space and counselling rooms and thus cater more adequately for the expanding programmes. Very soon after that they were fortunate to purchase a house on Welsford Street directly behind the Wyndham Street property. It now meant that all operations were being run from adjoining premises. The fundraising organisation set up its appeal office in the front room of the newer building.

It was at this time that Colin Edmonson, after serving as Superintendent/Director for just over ten years, tendered his resignation. He had given unstintingly of his time and abilities for GVFC and we owe him a very deep debt of gratitude for his wonderful service in establishing and guiding the new venture.

Phil Stevenson, the new Chief Executive Officer, came from a non-welfare background, but began with a very vigorous publicity and fundraising drive, putting to very good use his media experience and contacts.

He reported that partnerships developed with other care providers such as The Salvation Army; G.V. Community Health Services; Cutting Edge Youth Services; G.V. Base Hospital; and Upper Murray Care; all of whom enhanced this service to the community, while at the same time helping to avoid duplication of, or competition for, services and funding. This was most important considering the limited funds for welfare work in the region.

Another activity for the community development was the establishment of the ‘New Mother and Baby Unit’ at the Welsford Street Centre. In conjunction with the G.V. Base Hospital Maternity Department and Gynaecologists, concern had been expressed



that mothers with new babies faced many problems, which could not be catered for adequately at the hospital due to the lack of space, etc. These mothers were admitted to units at either Albury or Melbourne Hospitals. By setting up an out-patient type unit in Shepparton, the families would be able to come in on a sessional basis and there would be no need for the expensive treatment or the necessity of spending much time away from the rest of the family. It proved to be invaluable.

### **Seymour**

As many requests for assistance and services came from the struggling Seymour district, GVFC and Community Services Victoria realised that something had to be done to set up reference points from which to develop some activity. Operating from a shared local government facility, and with some support from local identities, Margaret Findley commenced work on a 'shoe string' budget. The work grew rapidly and the expansion meant more and more operating space was required. At the time when frustrations over lack of space were becoming almost too much to cope with, the Sisters of Mercy, finding that their convent was superfluous to their needs, put it 'on the market'. Its locality between the residential section of Seymour and the Seymour Hospital and the space it provided made it a desirable piece of real estate for GVFC's purposes. The move was made and a welfare programme, similar to that of Shepparton, was developed and expanded.

(It is now coming to the point where Seymour may soon seek independence from GVFC, as their work now covers areas like Euroa, Seymour, Yea, Cobram, Wallan, Kilmore, Broadford, Avenel, Wandong, Nagambie and Kinglake. This southern sub-committee is providing extensive services in regional and rural Victoria. One of their innovative and valuable programmes, which have been greatly appreciated, has been the 'Men in Relationships').

When Phil Stevenson felt that he needed a change of vocation, GVFC was extremely fortunate to obtain the services of the well-qualified and experienced Sue Medson, who with the full cooperation of the staff and Committee of Management instituted a Strategic Plan in 2000 and closely monitored and adjusted their goals to suit the progress of community needs.

In summary, their vision was: to work in partnership with communities, to be dynamic, responsive and pro-active; to work with families and individuals throughout their life stages; and to do this in a manner that reflects best practice.

In 1998, Roger Furphy and Albert Kellock were awarded the first Life Governorships of GVFC. (Both had previously been awarded Life Governorship of Child and Family Care Network.)

*Volunteers are not a way of getting cheap service. They are a way of adding incredible value to the services that agencies are able to provide and richness both to the agency and to the lives of people who accept volunteers into their lives and appreciate the selflessness of the services they perform.*

*Quote from Sue Medson in GVFC Annual Report 2001*

The way for Goulburn Valley Family Care is forward. Already this service area extends from Cobram and Yarrawonga in the north to Kinglake and Wallan in the south. The vision statement of GVFC states that they will, in partnership with our Committee, work with families and individuals, to enhance their strengths in a manner that is reflective of best practice.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### A Decade of Rapid Change (1985–1994)

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Let me begin this chapter with a prophetic statement made by Colin Tutchell, former Director of the Burwood Children's Homes:

*The severance from a stable environment for a prolonged period in the life of any child is a traumatic experience that has formed the basis for our services in these Homes since 1895.*

*We are charged with the responsibility to continue with our endeavours of reducing family malfunction. Developing new programmes, strategies and skills to meet the ever-increasing pressures which face the total family is our new focus; this is a significant difference to providing care for disadvantaged children in isolation from their families.*

*Plans and preparations to develop a broad-based community welfare and more specialised family orientated support programme are well advanced. Our Committee of Management assisted by a skilled team of advisors is taking up the challenge of change and responding to the identified service needs of the family. This will result in major changes for all of us in the almost immediate future.*

*Annual Report 1985*

On July 27, 1985, we made the historic decision to sell the five hectare property at 155 Warrigal Road, Burwood and relocate to 583 Ferntree Gully Road, Glen Waverley. Our President, Glen Quantrelle, wrote:

*Whilst many surely will be grieving with us in the loss of our long established home base, the majority will, I am sure, be supportive of our firm commitment to continue utilising all our resources to help those who we know are disadvantaged.*

*Annual Report 1985*

Ms Brenda Fitzpatrick was appointed as Project Officer to review existing services and explore options for forward planning. By the time of her appointment, the Department of Community Services and Burwood Children's Homes had taken the decision that traditional campus care would not be required by the Department, so a revision of the terms of reference took place. This excellent document was most valuable, as it contained guidelines for the welfare and education services, programme directions, and some budget estimates to accommodate the recommendations. It became a valued reference for the next eight years until labour market training programmes assumed a much greater role. Even today reference is made to some aspects of its contents.

Using the Fitzpatrick Report to provide background material, two consultants from Wesley City Mission, Sydney, commenced a review of the work of all aspects of the Homes. All Committee members and staff were interviewed, along with other interested people. Each person was invited to explain their relationship to the Homes, what they contributed, what their aspirations were, what concerns they had and where they felt we should be heading.

The consultants also made their own study of what they observed, linking it to our mission statement and the new by-laws and our Constitution, which was prepared

when we sought incorporation under the Association Incorporation Act of 1981. Some dissatisfaction was expressed with this report, but we did use it as the basis for our own internal review, achieving what we believed was more satisfactory, relevant and realistic expressions and aims. Judgment on this issue will come with the passage of time.

It was in 1986 that the number of children in care at Burwood was reduced to zero, when the last child left us on March 18. According to the Annual Report of 1986, the resident children had arrangements made for appropriate adoptions, fostering, return to families and relatives, work placements, and suitable board and lodging for children ready for this stage in their lives.

We changed our name to the Child and Family Care Network when we moved to the new site at Glen Waverley at the end of 1986 after the magnificent event, 'Back to Burwood', on November 9 of that year. 'Old boys', former staff and Committee members, friends of the Homes and their families enjoyed the many features of the day. A commemorative newsletter was issued to mark the occasion and a metal key ring which featured the official seal of the Burwood Children's Homes was made available. A continuously screening audio-visual history of the Homes compiled from old photos and coloured slides, and memorabilia in the form of books, papers, photographs, tools and equipment stirred the memories of all associated with the Homes – especially the dental surgery and equipment, about which many comments were made and memories revisited.

Our work at Glen Waverley developed from our Special Primary School No. 1743, now known as the Frank W. Cheshire Education Centre, and the fledgling Youth Development programme known as PALYA. This is apparently an aboriginal term meaning 'You're/I'm OK'. It was not long before we were joined on campus by Berengarra Secondary School. An informal partnership was also developed with Waverley Emergency Adolescent Care and with Women for Sobriety, the latter group being accommodated on our property. Parkinson's Disease Association was provided with office space during 1987 and remained with us until 1993, as part of our expanding network of community contacts.

The canteen was set up in order to provide suitable food for the children and staff on site and to avoid the need to cross Ferntree Gully Road. This was done with the assistance and very generous support of Fowles Purdy of the Fowles Auction Group, who supplied all of our needs for a very efficient canteen which passed all health regulations and satisfied the needs of around one hundred persons per day.

The new property was officially opened on November 20, 1988, by the Premier of Victoria, the Hon. John Cain, who was accompanied by his wife Nancy.



*Child and Family Care Network is officially opened*

With the retirement of Colin Tutchell, due to periods of illness and concerns over his health, the organisation went into 'caretaker mode' and two Committee of Management retirees were asked to oversee and continue the programmes already in developmental progress. Glen Quantrelle, President of the Committee of Management, became CEO and I, as Secretary to the Committee of Management, became Secretary and Public Officer. These were to be full-time appointments for a period of three months, but instead lasted for three years due to lengthy debate, discussion and differences in opinion with regard to the leadership of the Child and Family Care Network and the development and value of areas of programmes operating.

Applicants were called for the position of Chief Executive Officer and from a wide range, Nicholas Woodlock, MBA, were appointed. The conflicting ideas of leadership re-surfaced and the term of leadership by the new CEO came to an end.

The Committee of Management once more sought advice as applicants were called for a new CEO. We had hoped to announce the name of the successful applicant at our Centenary celebrations, but that was not to be. Instead, it was not until just before Christmas that the announcement was made.

On March 28, 1990, ‘Wanda Round’ was opened in Mulgrave by the Mayor of Waverley, Cr. Barbara Thompson. This community-based programme was to retail goods manufactured in our Youth Training programme workshops and by members of the community who had needed to supplement their income simply to make ends meet. This shop was staffed by the Waverley Volunteer Outreach, now Monash Volunteer Resource Centre, which was another part of our network located on site, along with the Palliative Care programme and the Waverley Adult Literacy programme.

### **Programmes**

In 1992, the CFCN programmes really took off. The canteen, which had provided training for PALYA participants, now also became the centre for the Pre-vocational Training programme in Hospitality.

In 1993, there was even more expansion in the area of programmes, beginning with the opening of the second ‘Wanda Round’ shop in the Glen Waverley Shopping Centre. This lasted for only a few months, as it had been provided to us at no cost by a real estate company until such time as a tenant could be found. Unfortunately for us a tenant appeared all too soon.

The Certificate in Occupational Studies (Retail) was developed as an entry level course into Retail Studies at TAFE Colleges. The expansion of programmes, which kept the very capable Youth programmes coordinator very busy but very happy, meant that Federal or State Government funding and accreditation had to be sought and obtained before starting each of them. Due to our staff’s teaching ability, planning and support for the participants during the courses undertaken, and the concerned follow-up contacts and encouragement, we were viewed favourably and gained as many courses as we could handle. An information technology course was also introduced and others refined to comply with the Department of Education and Employment Training guidelines for accreditation.

Alongside these programmes, our counselling service developed from being a single family therapist, educational psychologist and counselling service to a diverse field of professional counsellors trained in psychology and family therapy. The expanded services utilised a range of therapeutic principles and practices to suit the wide range of clients. The aim of our counselling team was to respond promptly and provide early intervention to prevent, where possible, family breakdown or youth homelessness, as well as the loss of dignity, wellbeing and even human life, which might result when problems escalate without appropriate support and intervention.

## The School

In 1991, a perceptual motor programme room was built on the north side of the school building and a variety of equipment was supplied and purchased in order to assist the pupils with hand-eye coordination and other activities of physical coordination designed to build up self-esteem and to assist their general and educational development.

This enabled them to be readmitted to mainstream schools where they had under-functioned prior to their admission to the Frank W. Cheshire Education Centre.

We considered that we had succeeded when children had been successfully reintegrated into the mainstream school system that had rejected them. One of our teachers continued to liaise with the school to which each child was returned, to ensure that our success rate remained extremely high.

## Crisis accommodation

With the development of the welfare aspect of our work with families came the need for some form of crisis accommodation. In conjunction with local and state government support, some houses were obtained/rented in the community for families in crisis. We found that there were never enough, and with our houses always in occupancy, it was necessary to work in conjunction with other community groups to relieve some of the pressure. This programme was often where family counselling proved very beneficial.

Later, we became involved in the Foundation for Homeless Youth. This was an initiative of the Rotary Club of Oakleigh and aimed to build a number of houses for homeless youth in the community. Land was made available by the State Government, materials were donated by corporate sponsors, and the houses were constructed by the local TAFE Colleges. Our role in this work was to be responsible for the overall coordination and arrangement of sponsorships.



*Cheshire Ball*



*Construction of home for homeless youth*



## CHAPTER NINE

### Even More Rapid Change (1995 and Beyond)

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The centenary of the Burwood Boys' Home, now Child and Family Care Network, celebrated on November 18, 1995 was frenetic, frustrating and fulfilling. We had to prepare for this without allowing any diminution of our programmes. We needed extra part-time workers and volunteers, but where could we locate them? The Waverley Volunteer Outreach, as so often in the past, found assistance for us. The planning required funding, but we had none to spare. Many of the staff served beyond the call of duty, and sponsors enabled us to ease financial worries. Invitations were sent out. Messages were heard nationwide over radio, and contact was made with as many 'Old Boys' as we could find through the attendance register which was used at the Back to Burwood Day in 1986.

We felt it appropriate for the Governor of Victoria to be our special guest, as, when the first Home was opened, the foundation stone was laid by the Governor of the day. His Excellency, the Hon. Richard McGarvie, AM, QC, was accompanied by his wife Lesley at this Centenary celebration.

Inclement weather marred the day, limiting activities and visitors, but those who attended, seemed to enjoy the fellowship, the displays and the programmes. The Victorian Police Pops Band provided music throughout the day. The official part of the afternoon was chaired by former President and 'Old Boy' Hector Davis. Hector Davis invited participation by local politicians and the oldest of the former residents in attendance, Bernie Monk, who, with his wife, had made the trip from Western Australia to be present.

The gathering was most impressed that when the lights failed as the Governor was delivering his speech, he didn't falter in the 'off the cuff' version of his address. He had certainly researched his subject thoroughly, quoting people and dates relating to our history. Past committee members were acknowledged and the presence of the last Director, Colin Tutchell, was recognised. Trainees of the hospitality courses worked with staff members to prepare and serve a special afternoon tea after the centenary cake had been cut by Mrs. Lesley McGarvie and Bernie Monk, who had been invited by Mrs. McGarvie to join her in this act. The friendliness and informality of the day was captured when the Police Band invited and encouraged visitors to get up and dance. The Vice-Regal couple took up the invitation, while others soon followed. The Governor was seen dancing with the female vocalist from the band and one of the former hospitality students was delighted to be dancing with the Governor's Lady.

The Child and Family Care Network was well and truly launched into a new century of service. The publicity given to the day, the support of so many sponsors, and the enjoyment of those who attended, all proved to have enhanced its standing. Some of the local residents were able to satisfy themselves that they would now know a little more about 'what goes on behind the chain wire fence'. As a public relations exercise, the day was most successful.

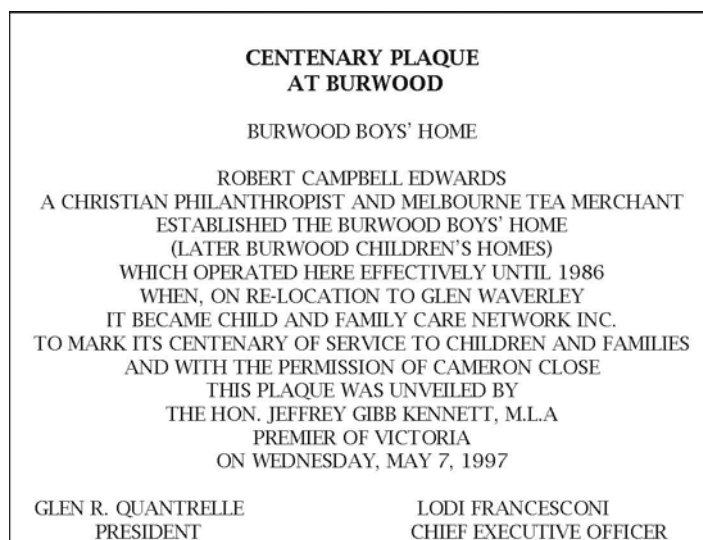
In 1995, the Fowles Auction Group undertook the sponsorship of a Holden Commodore in the Round Australia Mobil Trial, but instead of just using it to publicise all their own work, Police Sergeant Gerry Bashford and Denis Baker provided us with the opportunity to exhibit our logo across Australia. They entitled it 'Rallying for Kids' in support of 'Handbrake Turn', a programme aimed at helping young offenders picked up for car offences.

Incidentally, part of the training in the 'Handbrake Turn' programme consisted of learning how to strip down and dismantle vehicles and to rebuild them so that the vehicles were then in A1 mechanical condition. Even the Commodore rally car underwent that process right down to a new repaint – a first class job!

Our PALYA group were the ones who represented us in this venture by monitoring the car's progress.

From 1997 to 1998, there was a full review of our programming, as accountability in all areas was pursued. Some areas of training needed to be assessed very closely as we were now in competition with commercial training organisations, under the government's competitive tendering system. New developments were made in the former PALYA Vocational and School Support programme to make it more structured and motivational. We also had the whole workshop area covered, at minimum cost, due to corporate support, and this gave more space in which to work.

On May 7, 1997, the Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Jeffrey G. Kennett, unveiled a plaque at the Cameron Close Retirement Centre, the original site of the Burwood Boys' Home over 100 years before. This took place in the presence of guests from the retirement centre, members of the Campbell Edwards family, staff, past and present Committee members and friends of CFCN. The Premier, about twelve months later, opened one of the Foundations for Homeless Youths homes at Ashwood, in his own electorate. On each occasion it was obvious that he had researched our organisation and its programmes as he highlighted details not generally known by many of those present.



The maintenance of our property was important to us, so we entered into a contract with Programmed Maintenance Services, who attended to our buildings and grounds and kept them in top-class condition. They also have a Foundation associated with their organisation, and from that we were able to benefit greatly in the building of the Art and Craft room at the Frank W. Cheshire Education Centre. This was the first stage of the rebuilding and extension of the Centre to cater for approximately twenty-four pupils.

The rebuilding and site works commenced in 1998, but were beset with more problems than we ever thought possible with one small construction. Extensive drainage problems and roads and parking areas contributed to a budget over-run, but for all that, it resulted in an excellent facility being built. The opening of this new facility for the Cheshire School took place on August 6, 1999, with the Hon. Senator Kaye Patterson representing the Federal Minister of Education and Training, unveiling the plaque. Among the honoured guests was Mrs. Jean Cheshire, widow of Frank W. Cheshire, who spoke of her husband's love for children and his desire to do the best he could for them.

As with businesses in the community and other charitable organisations, technology and contract employment has led to frequent changes in our programmes and personnel over the years. As an organisation, we are committed to producing the greatest community service from every dollar raised or donated. Special volunteers are used for specific tasks, most noticeably in the fundraising area – the 'boiler room' of the organisation. Regular newsletters continue to provide details of activities being undertaken and are an opportunity to appeal to the generosity of recipients. Some of these individual donors, groups and businesses have been supporting us since we were at Burwood.

I have greatly enjoyed being asked how the Homes were going, or what was happening at CFCN. This would happen very often when my connection became known or when I was able to recognise the person as a donor. Perhaps my greatest thrill came when I was visiting a near-country area and recognised a name on a group photograph, as that of someone to whom I had written several letters of thanks for wooden toys that he had made and brought to us for distribution. This gentleman was in attendance that night and was surprised and delighted when I remembered his home address. We spent quite some time talking about his contributions and the work of CFCN.

I have also received several calls from past residents of the Homes wanting to know if they could view their recorded information from our files. Unfortunately, I have not been able to provide much information to them, but I have derived great pleasure from listening to them tell of their experiences at Burwood. Some have been adamant that, without the loving care, interest and support of the superintendents, cottage parents, fellow residents, holiday hosts and other friends of the Homes, they doubted that they would be able to cope so well in the community. Their careers, their families and their friends all have an added richness of value to them. Some have brought their children along to see and hear of their exploits.

Not all experiences recounted were as rosy. Some remembered spartan and crowded conditions, tasteless food (no Big Macs) with plenty of cabbages and cauliflowers, and firm to severe discipline. After attending groups of 'Old Boys' re-living those days, I might suggest that sometimes the truth suffered a little for the sake of a good story and much laughter.

At an early stage in our history we did have some voluntary placements to help adjust the behaviour of some of the boys, but during my time on the Committee, while there were one or two parents who thought that their troublesome child would benefit from some of our social, emotional and educational programmes, we were unable and unwilling to accept voluntary placements; all of our admissions were on referral from the Children's Welfare Department or Department of Community Services.

## **In conclusion**

What was begun as residential care for boys now has many caring programmes, under the new name of **bestchance**, which include:

**Parent and Child Support:** provides professional family assistance, personalised 'in home' support and assisted playgroup facilities.

**Early Childhood Intervention:** offers a family-centred programme specifically for children up to six years of age who are experiencing developmental delays.

**Cheshire School:** provides a specialised twelve month Intervention Programme for children who have demonstrated significant social, emotional and behavioural problems in their mainstream schools.

**Childcare:** offers Sessional Care, Long Day Care, and Three and Four Year Old Kindergarten.

**Kindergarten Cluster:** undertakes the management of a group of local kindergartens.

**Training Services:** provides career opportunities and skills to adult learners and the unemployed.

**Community Support:** offers proactive client-focused support to individuals and families in crisis.

**Foundation for Homeless Youth:** helps homeless young people to continue their education with the support of Rotary International, TAFE Colleges and business people.

I was thrilled to see the Children's Centre completed in 2006. To me, this structure, built in the north-east part of the **bestchance** property, will be the fulfilment of a secret desire I have had for many years. My vision has been that we must offer support to the community beginning from the birth of a child (even pre-natal), continuing throughout their life as part of a family structure and even after their death by offering counselling and support to their family.

### **The Children's Centre**

To describe everything that you will find within this centre would require another book in itself, so let me just say that within its walls there are special activities for all levels of pre-schoolers with opportunities for parents to observe their child at play. Although it is referred to as the 'Kid's Centre', it is also a teaching centre to assist in parenting skills for new mothers and those who want assistance in this area.

The centre inspires confidence and is already proving to be a most valuable addition, complimenting our other programs by supporting the welfare of children and families.

I would like to see **bestchance** have to close its doors because children, young people, and their families no longer require assistance. Unfortunately, I can't see that situation ever presenting itself.

In previous years we were but 'an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff', purely focussing on crisis management. Nowadays, with a changed philosophy of early intervention, we are able to provide 'a fence at the top of the cliff' and thereby prevent dysfunctional activities from occurring.

The services **bestchance** offer continue to evolve to meet the specific needs of the day, just as it met many of the needs of the day when Robert Campbell Edwards founded his home for destitute boys back in 1895.

## CHAPTER TEN

### Personal Profiles

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#### AROUND THE GROUNDS

Over the years buildings and internal roads have been named after people who have shared greatly in the development of the Burwood Boys' Home, the Child and Family Care Network and bestchance. Let me provide a brief pen-picture of a number of them:

#### **Campbell Edwards Cottage, Campbell Edwards Lodge (GVFC) and Campbell Edwards Drive**

The first detached cottage at Burwood was named to honour the founder and was finished in 1953. Campbell Edwards Lodge (now known as Power House) was the name given to the Mooroopna family group home, which for several years was operated jointly by Goulburn Valley Family Care and Brayton House (Salvation Army) as an independent living unit for homeless young people. Campbell Edwards Drive was the name given to the internal road at Burwood, and that same name has been given to the ring road on our Glen Waverley property.

#### **Margaret McAlister Cottage**

This was the second cottage to be built on the internal road at Burwood, named for a very gracious lady who served on the Committee of Management from as early as 1932, right up until the time of her death in 1965. She taught religious education at the Home and at the Surrey Hills Church of Christ and endeared herself to many of the boys because she made each one feel very special to her. Despite many jokes and pranks pulled on her, she continued to provide love and affection to the boys.



*Margaret McAlister Cottage*

Indeed, she left an indelible impression on many of them. She remembered the birthdays of every boy she taught and gave him a gift to treasure, and even after they left Burwood she made sure that each birthday was recognised. Christmas, too, was a time for her gifts to arrive. Miss McAlister maintained correspondence with 'her boys' and encouraged them as they faced the new world opening up before them.

A fitting tribute in the words of one of our 'Old Boys': 'I thank God for Miss Margaret McAlister. She was more like a mother to me than my own mother. Without her support, I don't know where I'd be today.'

#### **Frank Cheshire Cottage and Frank W. Cheshire Education Centre**

The Frank Cheshire Cottage was the third cottage erected beside the internal road at Burwood, and being at the upper end of that road, had a glorious view of the whole property. The Frank W. Cheshire Education Centre, Glen Waverley, was officially declared open by the man himself in 1987.



His name was well known and highly respected due to the publishing house and bookselling outlets which he set up in Melbourne. Yet to us that was almost immaterial



due to the contributions he made to the Burwood Boys' Home. He was very committed to the boys during their time on campus and even after they had left Burwood.

A family man himself, he was ever mindful of what the boys were missing in being away from their homes. This motivated him to cut into his very busy life to serve on the Committee from 1945 to 1984.

Frank was very interested in the educational background of our children and headed up a sub-Committee, which saw the establishment of the Frank W. Cheshire Education Centre to give our children a chance to catch up on skills that they lacked. He was justifiably proud of how this work developed, and it was only fitting that when the new centre was opened at Glen Waverley, it should be named in honour of him.

### **Kemp Lodge**

The Youth Hostel on the Burwood campus was named in honour of Dr. William Alfred Kemp, OBE, LRCP, LRCS, JP, and SM, who was known to all, affectionately, as 'Doc'. The name Kemp Lodge now belongs to a building in the southwest corner of the Glen Waverley site, which has over the years housed such community services as the Monash Volunteer Resource Centre, Adult Literacy and Women for Sobriety. Dr Kemp served on the Committee from 1929 until his death in August 1970. He had occupied the position of Vice President for many of those years and was appointed as a Life Governor in 1933.



He was a high profile ambassador for the Burwood Boys' Home, never missing an opportunity to highlight the quality of care afforded to the boys at Burwood.

'Doc' served as an unofficial Honorary Medical Officer for many of the years that he was with us and guided the Home through two epidemics and the many hazards of raising children.

The good doctor was also elected as the representative of the Burwood Boys' Home on the Children's Welfare Association of Victoria for almost all the years that he was on the Committee. In 1962, he was awarded the Order of the British Empire for his service to the community and young people, acknowledging his work for the City of Box Hill, where he had served twenty years.

### **Allan G. Searle Administration Centre**

In 1974, a new centre was constructed near the front entrance of the Burwood property to separate the administration area from the accommodation arm. This fine structure also enabled the staff to be housed in more spacious surroundings and, I believe, ensured greater efficiency.



In keeping with the custom of naming buildings after people who had made significant contributions to the history of the organisation, it was decided to give it the name of a gentleman who served the Burwood Boys from 1935 until his sudden death, late in 1970. Allan had been a very active and high powered executive insurance man, whose personal controls seemed to be only two – flat-out or full-stop.

When Allan was first elected to the Committee it was during the 'on again, off again' amalgamation proposals with Minton Boys' Home – a rather turbulent time to join. After he became Minute Secretary his name did not appear very frequently for he spent much of his time behind the scenes encouraging and providing support to the superintendents.

His work with young lads was not confined to Burwood, for Allan was a Rover Scout Leader at South Yarra Church of Christ. A number of these young men gave voluntary service at Burwood also.

### **Hector Davis Drive**

This name was given to the short road which parallels Ferntree Gully Road, at the front of the administration block at the Glen Waverley campus, to honour the first 'Old Boy' who had come back to serve the Home where he had spent quite some time as a resident. He has a unique place in the history of the Burwood Boys' Home, for as well as being one of the boys who has made a signal success of his life; he has also rendered great service to the organisation since that time. He served as a member of the Committee of Management from 1961 to 1985 and was President from 1974 to 1984.



Hector was admitted to Burwood in 1934 at the age of nine years and left for employment in 1939. He came from a large Catholic family of thirteen children where there was not enough of anything for each child to receive a good share. During his time in care, he didn't hesitate to declare that he wasn't the ideal lad. It seemed that if there was any skylarking or mischief around, he would have been one of those who were involved. However, the Burwood staff never gave up on him, something for which he continues to give thanks.

He returned to CFCN to take an active part in the Centenary celebrations, and on a number of occasions delivered motivational addresses to participants in our training programmes. His life story never failed to make a deep impression upon his hearers in these sessions.

He was acknowledged by the Queen and the Australian Government with the Medal of the Order of Australia for his contributions to local government and community affairs in 1987.

### **A.E. Bottomley Quiet Room**

This businessman and Committee member gave his name to the Quiet Room, so called because this was where homework and extra tuition took place.



*A.E. Bottomley Quiet Room*

This room was later used as the first television room when Mr. Bottomley presented the Home with a large television set so that the boys could watch the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956. I guess that, until each cottage obtained a TV set, they would all have been keen to have their homework completed very quickly, as the rule was 'No TV until all school work and house tasks are finished'.

This room was used for all Committee meetings and for most of the Annual General Meetings.

### **Cafe Quantrelle**

Glen Robert Quantrelle, OAM, joined the Committee of Management of the Burwood Boys' Home in September 1967 and served until his death on May 4, 2001.

As a member of the Churches of Christ, an active Rotarian and a former manager of Olympic Tyres (Beaurepaire Tyre Service), he made many contacts which he didn't hesitate to use if they could prove of benefit to the Burwood Boys' Home.



During quite lengthy periods between CEOs, Glen gave honorary service as acting CEO and worked long hours despite retiring from his vocation due to health concerns. He was a repository of much information about activities at Burwood that had never been recorded, and periodically used to surprise me by stating some obscure item which had not been written in the minutes of meetings.

In the Australia Day Honours List of 2001, Glen was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his community service, but it was never presented to him as he passed away in hospital only a few hours after the presentation at Government House.

Glen's contribution will be seen and felt well into the twenty-first century. He was a great loss to CFCN. The community dining area, where so many hospitality students have practised and will continue to practise their skills, and where guests dine, now bears the name Cafe Quantrelle.

## **SOME OTHER PERSONALITIES**

### **George L. Murray, AICA, FAIS**

George was an accountant, highly esteemed by the members of his profession and others within the Melbourne business community. Twice he was elected to the position of President of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries of Australia.



His name first appeared as a Committee member in 1932, and in 1937 he became Treasurer. He became President in 1943 and relinquished this position in March 1955, when he sought six months leave of absence so that he and his wife could have a leisurely voyage to England by ship, but while on the forward journey he died very suddenly.

George Murray had served on the Committee of Management at Burwood during the stormy days of the attempted amalgamation with Minton Boys' Home at Frankston. He was also part of the successful wartime temporary accommodation with the Gordon Institute Boys' Home, and later played an important part during the attempts to make Burwood's situation more financially solid in the post-war period.

### **Daniel S. Abraham**

It would seem that Daniel S. Abraham was appointed as Honorary Solicitor and very shortly thereafter, in 1933, was elected to the Committee, both positions being held until his untimely death in July 1942. His wife, Floris, became a Committee member too, and together they involved a number of their friends in providing assistance of a practical nature.

Daniel Abraham became heavily involved in the attempts to amalgamate Burwood and the Minton Boys' Homes during the 1930s. He gave more time to Burwood Boys' Home activities than would have been envisaged or could have been paid for. When he became President of the Committee of Management I think the only way his wife could get to see him at all was to become a committee member too!

In 1937, he drafted new by-laws which reflected the many changes which had occurred over the intervening years and brought them into line with the Hospitals and Charities Act of 1928.

The high regard in which the Abrahams were held by the Burwood Committee was demonstrated when they presented the couple with a grandfather clock in appreciation

of the time and expertise utilised on our behalf in general, but in the handling of the amalgamation proposal in particular.

### **Miss Lois Savage, Ph C**

Miss Savage founded the Women's Auxiliary in the 1940s and this became a vibrant group, with its many and varied programmes raising a large amount of money for the Home. When you recall that those activities began during wartime and in blackout conditions, the achievements were amazing. Miss Savage was one who believed that actions speak louder than words.



When I joined the Committee in 1970, I was introduced to a rather elderly lady who had been appointed to the Committee of Management in April 1942. She was a pharmacist who was very faithful in her attendance and greatly supportive of the work.

I remember that she became very vociferous when the admission of girls was discussed. She spoke out very strongly for an initial limited admission and was a very keen proponent of the admission of families, expressing the idea that the break-up and removal of children from their own home was such a traumatic event that we should not be adding to it by further separation of siblings to different Homes. She expressed the thoughts and feelings of the majority of the Committee and saw the admission of some very young girls to be housed in the same cottages as their brothers.

She tendered her resignation in August 1979. Lois Savage could be well pleased with the great contribution she made to the lives of hundreds of boys and girls who passed through the Home during the time of her association.

### **John R. Moore, FCA**

John Moore joined the Committee of Management in February 1965 and became Treasurer in 1977, remaining in that position until he became employed as manager and then a little later Director of Finance when the organisation was restructured. He ceased service at CFCN on September 30, 1991.



John arranged for the issuing of newsletters with a donation slip attached. Telemarketing was developed and led to a great increase in the number and amount of donations. A fundraising division was then established to relieve the office staff of some of the workload such as telephoning and issuing receipts. He canvassed as many of the appropriate Trusts as he could, seeking money for programmes and capital works so that when he retired we had a fairly solid base of donors and friends to whom we could go when we had any special needs.

John was associated with the Burwood Boys' Home for several years before joining the Committee for he used to teach and coach the lads to play tennis. When the tennis court was completed, there was a grand opening with Davis Cup player and later Australian coach, Harry Hopman, as the special dignitary invited to perform the special ceremony.

### **Jock Roper, OAM (aka Father Christmas)**

John James Frederick 'Jock' Roper was one whose association with the Burwood Boys' Home began when he was a very young man, for he was a Rover Scout under Allan Searle at South Yarra Church of Christ where the Searle brothers set a fine example of commitment and service.



It was in these formative years that Jock recalled assisting at Burwood on bath nights. Summer or winter, the large concrete bath was put into use with cold water for all the boys from the youngest to the oldest. Jock recalled that on numerous occasions more water washed over him than over the boys. However, that didn't dampen his spirits and he became a member of the Committee of Management from 1966 and 1988.

Jock was ever the practical person and made great use of his knowledge of painting and building trades for the benefit of the Home. For several years he served as the convenor of the Building and Grounds sub-Committee, responsible for the overall maintenance on the property.

He was known to the boys, and he was not known to the boys. He was known to them as the big man who always seemed to be there looking at the outsides and the insides of their cottages and other buildings; but he was unknown to them when he donned his red suit. He was Father Christmas for hundreds of children at Burwood who never knew just how he was going to arrive at their Christmas party. He came in a police car with the siren blaring, on a fire engine with bells clanging, driving a small tractor, on a motorcycle and on the last occasion he came by helicopter. Each year had to be by a different form of conveyance to keep the children guessing and to add to the excitement of the day.

Jock managed to fit all this into his own busy schedule, for he was also a bell ringer at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne for more than sixty years. He was the only bell ringer to be acknowledged by the Queen for his community service when he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the June 1993 Honours List.

### **Don Little**

An impeccably dressed gentleman with a ruddy complexion from indulging his passion for lawn bowls set off by neatly groomed silvery-grey hair and moustache, given to an easy smile and friendly greeting, but one who could concentrate and debate firmly when serious business was being discussed.



This was my early perception and memory of Don Little, who joined the Committee of Management in 1945 and served until November 1983. During much of that time he served as a member of the Finance sub-Committee and stood in as Acting Treasurer when the incumbent was ill. He served also as the Minute Secretary for more than twenty years. To add further to his valuable contribution, he drafted a new set of by-laws in the late 1950s.

As previously mentioned, Don was a very keen lawn bowler and he was the one who, I believe, encouraged the local bowling club to make the Home the beneficiary of its charity day, thus gaining for us many interested supporters and a very valuable source of funding.

### **Colin George Tutchell, JP, FAIM**

The original 'Mr T' to many young people, Colin Tutchell was the last Superintendent and Director of Burwood Boys' Home and Burwood Children's Homes, and the first Director of Child and Family Care Network, serving from late 1968 until 1990, when early retirement took place.



Colin was one of the English child migrants who came from Britain to escape wartime danger. After leaving the Lady Northcote Home at Bacchus Marsh, Colin joined the



Victorian Police before becoming Superintendent/Director of Andrew Kerr Children's Home at Mornington. Successful leadership there for several years provided excellent references for him to be invited to undertake a similar responsibility at Burwood.

During his lengthy service he was responsible for many progressive changes to programmes of care. Children's welfare authorities utilised his foresight and skills in planning improvements in care and conditions throughout institutions in Victoria. This meant we had to share his time and energies with the State Government and welfare bodies for quite a number of years. With the bureaucrats keen to phase out institutional care, an altered organisation had to be set up on the new campus at Glen Waverley, maintaining something of the dream of Robert Campbell Edwards, but without full-time residential care.

It was during Colin's time of leadership that the special school was set up and the Goulburn Valley Family Care was initiated, two programmes which have developed magnificently.

### **Mrs. Elizabeth Skidmore**

Betty Skidmore was known to two generations of boys and girls as Auntie Betty or Auntie Bet. She took up the appointment as Assistant Cottage Mother in 1965, along with her husband, George. At that time cottage parents were on duty twenty-four hours a day for five days a week, and in Betty's case at least, had to act as cook and general domestic when sickness led to temporary staff shortages.



She recalled being able to recognise the sounds of each child's voice and therefore able to chastise the children verbally without leaving the kitchen. This intrigued the young children who attributed amazing powers to her. They believed that she could see around corners or possessed x-ray vision which enabled her to see through walls. She never did answer them when they asked, 'Can you see around corners?' or 'How do you manage to see through the walls?'

Betty had become Matron by the time I became associated with the Burwood Boys' Home in 1970, and in her new position gave more generously of her time than she could have ever been paid for, and brought to her task that same caring nature that had characterised her time in the cottages. When residential care at the Home was being phased out, Betty had the most important task of transferring all our children to other suitable placements. All were accounted for, and to the best of my knowledge, the moves were all highly successful.

When we moved to our Glen Waverley site welfare work assumed a greater place in the programme and Betty became our Welfare Officer. There seemed to be a steady flow through her office, but on numerous occasions they were not welfare recipients but 'Old Boys' who looked Betty up to introduce a wife and children to 'Auntie Betty'. She often received letters from many of 'her boys' and maintained contact with them.

### **Les Searle and Nancy Chambers (nee Searle)**

In 1938, Les Searle, Allan's brother, was nominated for a vacancy on the Committee of Management. Even before the next Annual Meeting, he had been appointed as Convenor of the Welfare Committee.



This Committee rendered very fine service in looking after the interest of those boys who had reached the age when they must start out in life on their own account. The placing

of these boys in suitable positions which offer them a decent future called for a good deal of personal supervision. Many of these boys would doubtless have had reason to thank Les for his personal interest.

Following his death in the late 1960s, Mrs. Nancy Chambers was elected to the Committee of Management, and like her father and uncle before her, made an excellent contribution, particularly when the development of Goulburn Valley Family Care required suitable furniture and furnishings for the family group houses at Mooroopna and Lemnos. In 1998, Nancy's death closed the invaluable Searle connection with our organisation.

### **James R. Billings**

As a very enthusiastic and intensely idealistic young man, Jim Billings came to Burwood in 1979 as the Education Officer of Burwood Children's Homes and Head Teacher of Special School No. 1743. He supervised seven children there as well as other children in residence, who were scattered among thirteen schools in the district.



Jim's most commonly used word seemed to be 'empowerment'. He believed firmly that until the child could make reasoned decisions about his life and actions, and be prepared to accept that he may have been wrong, he could make only limited progress.

In order to get his message across to Committee members and community leaders, Jim spent much of his own time in writing numerous information papers and reports which indicated his educational philosophy and practical solutions to the situations, which were faced by the Home.

He was most concerned about the future of some of our non-academic young people and wanted to institute a less book-orientated programme to help prepare some of our young people for the big, wide world. We were attempting to help children to re-learn to read and write, to make things and do things, in a non-threatening environment. They would learn that they were capable, intelligent and successful and would be able to relate much better to their peers and the adults around them.

With the awareness of the need to work with families as well as young people, came the awareness of a more encompassing title as Jim became the Director of Welfare/Education.

The Federal and State Governments' funding of training programmes for unemployed, depressed, dejected and bored young people meant that we had assistance in developing a number of special projects. Jim was rapt as the need developed for counsellors and trainers. This also enhanced our status with the local council who extended their support. They recognised the ability and vision of Jim by inviting him to head up an association of district welfare agencies, thus adding to his physical and mental workload.

Under Jim's leadership the whole area of Welfare/Education developed on a very solid basis to take us into the new century.

In 1992, Jim returned to the classroom of a private school, but he was still able to make a valuable contribution to young people on our property through connections with Berengarra School.

### **Harry E. Garrett**

Harry, a very successful builder, served on the Committee of Management for twenty-seven years, but the practical service that he gave covered



many more years than that, for he and his wife had been part of the No. 4 Group of Masonic Masters which adopted the Burwood Boys' Home as their special charitable beneficiary. The energy that they put into the organising of dances, film nights, outings and other fundraising activities led to Harry being invited to take up a position on the Committee, to ensure a very close relationship between the two organisations.

He was soon added to the Buildings and Grounds sub-Committee, and shortly thereafter became its convenor. This was a time of much construction and renovation of buildings. He knew what was needed, how to achieve it and who would provide it at the best price. He served Burwood extremely well.

### **Fred R. Veitch**

Fred Veitch came to the Burwood Boys' Home as a young man who gave his time to take a group of older boys for sessions of physical culture. He was very keen on physical fitness and encouraged the boys in all physical activities. As he was a very enthusiastic Richmond supporter, it was not unheard of that a number of the boys would go to watch the Tigers play at the Richmond Football Ground and after the match make their way down to the players' rooms to meet with their heroes. The boys loved Fred (especially for this privilege). He was invited to join the Committee of Management in 1948 and served with distinction until 1984, the period during which many great changes were effected.



Fred was a quiet achiever who placed the welfare of the children as number one, the interests of the staff as number two, and the Committee as number three. He was a man who weighed up every proposition which came across the presidential table and promoted full discussions before committing the matter to a vote. In a time when finances were stretched to the limits, he was the right man, in the right place, at the right time. When he retired from business, it was as the Manager of State Savings Bank of Victoria's Number one branch in Swanston Street, Melbourne.

### **Alf J. Wignell, JP**

Alf Wignell came to us from the Melbourne Orphanage at Brighton where he had been since leaving service with the Deaf and Dumb Institute. It was amazing to read of his outstanding work during a period of only ten years as Superintendent/Secretary and then as a Committee member after his resignation. Not only did he encourage and support the boys in care, he raised the self-esteem of those who were part of his team.



*He was appointed to take charge of the Home in a most difficult period in our history and much of the credit for the present spirit, organisation and reputation of this home is due to his capacity, zeal, understanding and strong personality.*

*He proved an outstanding administrator with a great gift of insight into the mind of a boy, as well as a spontaneous friendliness that found a ready response in both children and adults.*

*We hereby set on record our appreciation of his work and are happy to inform this meeting that his wide knowledge of child welfare gathered over a long experience in this work will still be available to us.*

*Annual Report 1950*

One of his greatest contributions was to spearhead the move which saw an 's' added to the Burwood Boys' Home to signify the end of dormitory accommodation and the planning of cottages or homes.

Following his resignation from the Committee of Management in 1950, Alf Wignall was appointed to the position of Superintendent of the Northcote Homes at Bacchus Marsh, where he influenced Colin George Tutchell who was to become Superintendent of the Burwood Boys' Home.

### **Selwyn S. Harris, BA JP**

Following in the footsteps of Alf Wignall was truly a hard act to follow, but the change of vocation by Rev. Selwyn Harris was made because he felt that God had called him to this work.

*In addition to the many attributes of character and personality which he possesses, he brings as his special qualifications for this new sphere of service, a business experience, a university training, a period in the ministry, a term of service as chaplain in the Air Force and a knowledge and experience of various aspects of young people's work.*

*By his ready adaptation to the job, and the ability he displays in the conduct of his duties, he has already gained the full confidence of the Committee.*

*Our governors and subscribers may feel assured that he will make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the Burwood Boys' Home and at the same time inspire the enthusiasm and devotion of those who so loyally and effectively work with him in the daily administration of his affairs and the modelling of the lives of boys entrusted to its care.*

*Annual Report 1950*

What an insightful statement and a marvellous summation in anticipation.

Selwyn Harris suffered with poor health in the later months of his service, but refused to relinquish the work that he loved so much. After his death in July 1959, his widow continued his programme for a few months until the appointment of a successor. To perpetuate his name and memory, the swimming pool bore his name until costs of repairs forced its closure and filling in.

### **Ed Snell**

In the late 1940s, Ed Snell came into care at the Burwood Boys' Home to be with his brother who had come to us from the Gordon Boys' Home.

I met Ed at CFCN where, in his retirement, he had provided his services as a volunteer in the Frank Cheshire Education Centre.

I was intrigued to sit and listen to him as he recalled something of his experiences at the Home. He was able to recall clearly names of boys who had been there with him over the time that he was in care. In remembering incidents and experiences he never minimised the fairly spartan conditions and discipline enforced.

Items which were disposed of by just one or two bland sentences in the minutes or in the Admission Register suddenly came alive as Ed injected background and personal experiences. One memory that he recalled was of joining all the boys and staff to line up on both sides of Warrigal Road in front of the Home. This was for a big funeral procession. He couldn't remember when the funeral was, but by estimating the date, we both believe that it must have been that of Robert Campbell Edwards, the founder of the Home.

## Kevin Richardson

Kevin Richardson's recollections of time spent in the Burwood Boys' Home and Hawthorn Hostel:

*In recalling my time at Burwood Boys' Home from the age of eight in 1943, overwhelmingly, my memories are of a well-organised, homely and caring institution.*

*I came to Burwood Boys' Home as a street urchin. I escaped several times before settling into the life of the Home. This demonstrates, I think, the very tolerant attitude of the Boys' Home administration, which certainly afforded plenty of time for me to see the error of my ways.*

*The supervisor at the time was Alf Wignell, a big man if I recall, certainly one with a powerful personality and considerable personal authority. My recollection is that I regarded him with some awe, great respect and some fear; although – beyond poking his forefinger into our chests to get his point across at times – I can't recall him ever resorting to corporal punishment.*

*...we all took our turn working in the kitchen; cleaning up and helping in the preparation of food. We were all well fed, although the food was probably rather basic and in portions smaller than I would have liked at times. I say that because I remember how everybody behaved when there was a glut of food as a result of some generous donor or business with left over food...in retrospect I'm sure we had a more than adequate amount of food each day.*

*Activities at the Home were varied; although in the manner of the times, largely physical – we had a good football and cricket oval... we had a large hall in which we could play indoor games and a sizable library which got a fair amount of use.*

*There was plenty of work to be done around the place, including milking of several cows, a vegetable garden and some chooks. Rubbish was collected and dumped (by us) at a tip site in the top corner of the property and there were always jobs such as cleaning out grease traps, kitchen duties and general cleaning.*

*The Home tried hard to prepare us for life in the real world, which meant among other things that employment training was high on the agenda. Since this usually translated in some form of trade, tradespeople were invited to conduct classes in carpentry, motor mechanics and plumbing.*

*But most of all, the Home concentrated on ensuring that its boys were well schooled in traditional values, which was done by example, by inviting people to share positive experiences, by regular religious instruction as well as weekly observance at the nearby Warrigal Road Methodist Church, and by organising classes and clubs to foster wholesome behaviour. People at the Methodist Church played their part in opening young eyes; the generous way in which they invited us into their homes and families, despite what must have been less than acceptable behaviour at times, had a truly positive impact.*

*If the Wignell period was one of set patterns and rules, my experience of Selwyn Harris was of 'adult' treatment, discussion and debate, and a step toward taking personal responsibility for one's own actions and decisions. Of course, by this time I was moving into the older 'leadership' group among the boys, but I believe younger children were also treated in a more consultative way in which they had at least a little more latitude than before.*



*The Harris approach was to make Home living less formal and more like 'normal' home life, with opportunity for diverse interests and plenty of discussion and debate. The discipline was still there, but seldom applied without full explanation.*

*I am not in the least critical of the Home administration as it was in my earlier years at Burwood, but without hesitation, I would say that the Selwyn Harris period of supervision at Burwood was the most significant influence on my life, and no doubt on others at the Home during his time there.*

*While I was not at the home when cottages were in vogue, I believe they were under consideration in my time. I was extremely fortunate that my teen years coincided with the decision to establish a hostel for Burwood Boys in New Street, Hawthorn. This gave me an invaluable bridge between life in an institution, albeit an enlightened one, and the real world outside.*

*As I went through my apprenticeship as a motor mechanic, it was for me a fabulous experience to be able to live in a relatively normal family environment and virtually to control my own destiny free from all, but the usual family restrictions. To arrive home after work, go to the refrigerator and pour a glass of milk was for me a symbolic gesture. I thought that now I was just like everyone else.*

*It is therefore hardly surprising that I look on my Burwood Boys' Home association – after a decidedly shaky start – as an extremely positive, rewarding and life-enhancing experience*

## APPENDIX ONE

### We Failed!

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1. 'A very troublesome and uncontrollable boy' – six words which would have been hard to write because it was a final admission of inability to change the character of one of the boys. This 14-year-old lad had absconded several times from the Home. He was arrested when he had broken into the Surrey Hill's Railway Station for the money in the cash drawer. He was brought up before the Children's Court in 1914 and then, because of his incorrigibility, the Burwood Boys' Home Committee felt that they could do no more. They decided to place him on the training ship, John Murray, which was moored off Dock Pier at Williamstown.

James was put on the John Murray on May 13, deserted on May 24, but was arrested by the police at Heywood. He claimed to have travelled the 200 miles under a railway truck.

Less than a month later he threatened to 'belt up' one of the boys unless he went with him on another 'break out'. From this same boy he demanded 'money with menace', and received a half crown coin (2/6 or 25 cents), and from another boy he took a shilling (10 cents).

To get to the pier it was necessary to climb along the mooring rope. The lad from whom he had taken the half crown, managed to clamber to the pier along the wire rope but James, although a much stronger boy, fell into the water and drowned.

When the body was recovered, the Coroner recorded a verdict of death by drowning, drawing attention to the fact that jaws were clenched – in them were a half crown and a shilling!

Records showed that three boys in all, were placed on the John Murray training ship, but many more were known to have absconded on several occasions.

2. Christmas Day 1942, was an extremely sad day for Phillip N., whose health had been deteriorating over some time, passed away that day. Contact was made by the Burwood Boys' Home to Mr. Le Pine of Messrs Le Pine and Son. They took charge of all arrangements for the burial of Philip at Springvale Cemetery at no cost to the Home. The thanks of the Committee of Management were expressed to Mr. Le Pine for his great kindness and sympathy in this matter.
3. Early in 1959, the Superintendent reported a serious incident to Donald C. He, in the company of other boys, was proceeding to school by a 'prohibited route' and was playing in the vicinity of a bulldozer. Somehow, one of the boys succeeded in starting the machine when it unfortunately became out of control. Donald was run over and seriously hurt, leading to him being taken by ambulance to hospital. It is recorded that, at the next Committee meeting, a period of silence was observed as he died very soon after admission.

## APPENDIX TWO

# United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child

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Proclaimed by General Assembly Resolution 1386 (XIV) November 20, 1959.

1. The child shall enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration. Every child, without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family.
2. The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for this purpose, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.
3. The child shall be entitled from his birth to a name and a nationality.
4. The child shall enjoy the benefits of social security. He shall be entitled to grow and develop in health; to this end, special care and protection shall be provided both to him and to his mother, including adequate pre-natal and post-natal care. The child shall have the right to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services.
5. The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.
6. The child, for the full and harmonious development of his personality, needs love and understanding. He shall, wherever possible, grow up in the care and under the responsibility of his parents, and, in any case, in the atmosphere of affection and of moral and material security; a child of tender years shall not, save in exceptional circumstances, be separated from his mother. Society and the public authorities shall have the duty to extend particular care to children without a family and to those without adequate means of support. Payment of State and other assistance towards the maintenance of children of large families is desirable.
7. The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture and enable him, on the basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society. The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents. The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purposes as education; society and the public authorities, shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right.
8. The child shall in all circumstances be among the first to receive protection and relief.

9. The child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be subject of traffic, in any form. The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appropriate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment which would prejudice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or moral development.
10. The child shall be protected from practices which may foster racial, religious and any other form of discrimination. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

## APPENDIX THREE

### The Minton Boys' Home (Menzies)

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The Church of England set up the Ragged School Mission as a voluntary agency which picked up waifs from city streets and fed and clothed them, housing them on board the former prison ship, H.M.S. Nelson (which had been a training ship for wayward boys).

It has been interesting to note similarities in the beginnings of each of the two organisations – Burwood Boys' Home and the Ragged School Missions successors 'The Ragged Boys' Home.'

Mr. William Richard Adolphus Minton (1895–1959) had been a trainee student for the Baptist Church Ministry and as a lad had prayed that he might emulate Dr. Barnardo. 'My heart went out to the hundreds of homeless boys who used to "doss" in old tanks and boilers on the river bank. I used to go out nightly and pick them up out of the old scrum', he reported to a *Herald* journalist on August 28, 1924. He went on to add, 'I have been offered a position of paid superintendent of the new home at Frankston but my work has always been voluntary, and shall remain so til the end. With me, it is a labour of love.' (William Minton had a very successful paperhanging, sign writing and decorating business in Richmond, and true to his word, he resigned when the Charities Board took over control of such charities and required that all staff be paid.)

For eleven years, his wife was Matron of the Home after lengthy service in England, where she had worked for Dr. Barnardo, and also served at the Crippled Children's Homes, in a noteworthy career.

Mr. Minton claimed to have founded 'The Ragged Boys' Home' in 1904 and became its superintendent for an extensive period, (in all, he worked for forty years of continuous service for boys) but as mentioned previously, I think that the rescue of 'waifs and strays' may have been in operation in an 'ad hoc' manner since the 1860s. Indeed the Menzies Boys' Homes stated that the Ragged School Mission was established in Melbourne in 1868.

That Minton's efforts had proved successful could be vouched for by the fact that since 1912, at least until the late thirties, the institution was fully occupied by these neglected children.

On looking through newspaper cuttings, we find that Lady Denman on November 21, 1911, laid the foundation stone for a new brick building at 10 Latrobe Street, Melbourne. The land had been purchased for £1,600 and the building was estimated to cost a further £3,000. This building was to be home to the organisation until the move to Mr. Minton's seaside home in Frankston (Olivers Hill, over-looking the township and beach).



Mr. James Menzies MLA, father of Sir Robert Menzies, who for several years served as Prime Minister of Australia, opened the new site in 1918, with its adjoining property added in 1922 and that area opened by Her Excellency, the Countess of Stradbroke. This property became known as 'The Home on the Hill' where 'Willing Workers Work Wonders'.

When Mr. Minton retired to nearby Frankston in 1924, the name was changed to 'The Minton Boys' Home'. In 1943, the name was changed to the Menzies Boys' Home in appreciation of the service of James Menzies as President from 1926. In 1963, a further change was made when it became the 'Menzies Homes for Children'.

Today, it has a number of community homes and continues its work in the district and encourages children and young people, when they are discharged into the community, to still regard the organisation as their adoptive family should they need any support or advice. They have formed a very strong network of former residents in the Menzies Homes Association, who not only gain from the social functions of this group but also provide support for the children currently in care and/or under management.

It is a very caring organisation.



# *Success - and Onwards*



**Celebrating 120 Years**





## Success – and Onwards

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*“You sow today, and tomorrow you reap the harvest.”  
Robert Campbell Edwards, Founder, Burwood Boys’ Home*

This new chapter records the period following that covered in Ken Masterton’s original history first published in 2007, and canvasses the organisation’s<sup>1</sup> history in the period from the late 1990s to the present and beyond. In 2016 the organisation celebrated its 120th year.

The early part of the 21st century was a period of rapid change and growth, but Child and Family Care Network Inc. (CFCN) strongly held a clear goal: to continue meeting the needs of children and families who required their support. Difficult economic times brought on by the recession in the early 1990s heightened the need for broad based support and at every life stage; from newborn and toddlers through to school age, to youth and beyond. Pre-employment services, emergency assistance and programs for young people thrived. Generosity abounded, and new and expanded programs flourished.

### **A time of transition**

With the closure of the organisation’s residential care program, some children returned to their own families, with CFCN services assisting where needed. It was evident however, that some children, including State Wards, could not at that time, be appropriately returned to their own families. Accordingly, the organisation under its new name CFCN, formed an association with a foster care group able to access care for these children.

This service, Inner East Foster Care [IEFC] became a supported program of CFCN, and continued until after CFCN had relocated to Glen Waverley. The IEFC program was then transferred to St John’s Homes for Children to avoid service duplication as St John’s already managed an established foster care service across Melbourne’s inner east.

### **THE NETWORK CONCEPT**

Traditionally, the organisation kept in touch with families of children using their residential care services, with a view to supporting children when they returned to their family of origin, or when moving to foster families. CFCN often worked in partnership with other agencies, continuing to support and fill in the gaps by providing emergency housing, material aid and other support. From this grew the concept of working as part of a ‘network’ of agencies to help families.

Having made the transition in 1986 from residential care to networked support and outreach services, the scope of the organisation’s assistance to the community expanded widely in the early part of the new century.

Robert Campbell Edwards’ original philosophy was embodied in the newly named Child and Family Care Network’s philosophy that ‘no truly destitute boy is to be refused admission or to be turned away’. While each program was important and met identified needs, committing to this philosophy sometimes meant that service delivery could not be economically maintained at the high level expected.

1. In 2006, Child and Family Care Network (CFCN) changed its operating name to bestchance Child and Family Care Network Inc. The organisation has been referred to as CFCN and bestchance.



## Pre-school and Early Years

By the turn of the century, research was showing that providing intervention and support to high need children and families at the earliest possible point was the most effective strategy. Early intervention would provide a more sustainable success rate, with sensible economic advantages. Researchers estimated that some intensive early childhood programs generated benefits of as much as \$8 to \$14 for every \$1 in cost advantages.

For CFCN, there was a gradual shift from providing many programs for youth and older children, to programs that intervened before issues became more entrenched. Becoming a Kindergarten Cluster manager in 2003, opening the Children’s Centre in 2006, and expanding training services all contributed to this goal, while the excellent special work of the Cheshire School continued.

Flexible support for each family became a priority along with providing specialised child care and support for families of very young babies and children. In this way, a more effective, targeted and sustainable service model was developed.

To this day, Robert Campbell Edwards’ philosophy continues to be honoured in the organisation’s support of families through the lens of early intervention. The organisation aims to provide services that are practical, reliable and responsive to the life issues experienced by families and their children, with an emphasis on early childhood.

## A NEW WORKING NAME

In 2006, CFCN adopted the simpler working name of ‘**bestchance Child, Family, Care**’ usually referred to as ‘**bestchance**’, to better reflect the organisation’s focus on early childhood services. Early intervention, where appropriate, aims to give children and young families the best chance for the future and echoes Robert Campbell Edwards’ philosophy, “Sow today, and tomorrow you reap the harvest.” The organisation’s incorporated legal name has remained ‘Child and Family Care Network Inc’.

## Who’s Minding the Children?

At the national level, CFCN was at the forefront of raising awareness about the importance of children and early childhood development with initiatives such as the 1998 “Who’s Minding the Children?” taskforce. Under the auspices of CFCN, nine prominent Australians sat as members of the taskforce, with its patron the Hon Alastair Nicholson AP RFD, Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia.

The aim of the taskforce was to “promote and educate communities as to healthy social and emotional development of children and their families,”<sup>2</sup> with several child-focused projects coming out of the taskforce.



The Hon. Alastair Nicholson AO RFD QC

2. CFCN Annual report 1997-1998

## Widening the lens: Programs in the new century

The late 1990s and the early part of the new century saw CFCN offer a broad range of services. These have been summarised below.

### VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The organisation offered, and continues to offer, a wide range of nationally accredited vocational courses for those students aged 18 and above.

Training provided today evolved broadly from training and pre-employment programs such as the PALYA Youth Development Program. This program supported young people who had withdrawn from formal education. Pre-employment skills were the main focus of early training programs. Many participants were referred into these programs from CFCN's Foundation for Homeless Youth [FHY].

Successive training programs focused on supporting parents of young families to gain employment. Childcare was available through the organisation, thus helping parents with young children to study and gain entry into the workforce. Over time, these courses have included courses in hospitality, retail, home and community care, social and community services, as well as community education in first aid, Information Technology and other specialist areas.

The organisation became an Accredited Training Provider in 1992, with close to 100 students enrolled in three training programs.

Close links with local businesses and large companies continued to be a key feature of training programs. This ensured that work pathways developed, with a view to students becoming employed following training. Holistic care, supportive classes and the capacity to refer students to appropriate networks continues to distinguish **bestchance** training programs.

By 2015/2016, there were 671 students enrolled in 207 fully accredited courses.



### WELFARE AND COUNSELLING

The organisation provides emergency relief and crisis intervention and direct support, through distributing material aid, information, referral to other service providers, advocacy and counselling.

Precursors to these programs included the Family Crisis Accommodation Scheme (piloted in 1989) and the CFCN Network Counselling and Consulting Services Centre (1995). Partnerships with organisations such as the Eastern Emergency Relief Network, formed in 1997/98, helped facilitate the distribution of emergency aid.

Welfare and counselling services are now offered through the Parent and Community Support (PACS) program, which assists individuals and families experiencing unexpected difficulty or crisis. During the years 2015 to 2016, 105 people accessed the PACS program, including emergency relief, food vouchers, in-home volunteer support and a supported playgroup.

## CHILDREN

The organisation provided a range of programs focusing on young people with special needs, many of which have continued to the current time. These include:

### The Warooga Early Intervention program

An intervention program for children aged 0-6 years with developmental disabilities. The program came under the umbrella of CFCN in 1999/2000. This has evolved into the Early Childhood Intervention program. In 2015/16, 158 children and their families accessed ECI services from the program, with 13% of those families also using other **bestchance** services.

### Frank W Cheshire Education Centre (Cheshire School)

From the earliest days at Burwood and in line with Robert Campbell Edwards' philosophy, all children received education in the Home's school. In 1952 The Burwood Boys' Home school was transferred to the State Education Department, and became Wattle Park Primary School.

However a number of Burwood children still needed individual educational support, and so a small special school program was established on-site at Burwood to meet these needs.

This special education program continued for many years until in 1986, with residential care at Burwood ending, the program ceased.

Following the move to Glen Waverley and through new network connections, it became clear that an independent individualised educational support program for primary aged children was still needed.

In 1987 the Frank W Cheshire Education Centre was established to meet these needs. The Cheshire School provides an intervention program for children aged 5-12 years with social and emotional behavioural difficulties.

The program uses specific individualised strategies and techniques aimed at returning students to mainstream education.

The program continues to pioneer innovative strategies for young children experiencing difficulties in mainstream school settings.



Frank W Cheshire

### Childcare

A range of childcare services is available, including full day care, occasional care, respite care, family day care and preschool programs for families with children aged 0-5 years. These services have grown considerably over the years.

By 2015/16, the organisation operated two long day care centres, two on-site occasional care centres and family day care service across nine Local Government areas.

## Early Years Management [formerly Kindergarten Cluster Program]

This program provides management and support of staff and program delivery for pre-schools, and works with parent committees to provide professional development and access to specialist services.

The program was formalised in 2003.

In 2016, **bestchance** has 58 kindergartens under its management across Melbourne’s eastern and south eastern suburbs.



## YOUTH

*“I ran away, 5 weeks on the streets, then I got a house through my mate’s mum, she knew a worker who helped me sort things, I finished my VCE, I’m an apprentice cabinetmaker now, I can earn good money when I’m qualified.”* Bo.

### Foundation for Homeless Youth (FHY)

The Foundation for Homeless Youth was a CFCN co-operative program between community, government, TAFE and other service providers including Rotary, to establish managed home environments for homeless youth.

Starting in 1995 with one home, the Foundation went on to build 20 homes by 2009, housing 388 young people. Accommodation and support was provided to homeless youths, provided they continued to undertake their education.

In 2009, the program was transferred to St Vincent De Paul, in line with that organisation’s greater focus on Youth Welfare.

### PALYA youth development program

PALYA equipped young people 14-16 years with the skills they needed to gain employment. It took young people at risk of leaving school, and offered them training in pre-employment skills. Established in 1987, this pre-vocational program evolved into training programs in hospitality, mechanics and carpentry. It was the precursor to more formalised youth training programs, which later paved the way for adult training programs.

## VOLUNTEERS

*“To provide, albeit in a small way, caring support, laughter and perhaps a little life-line encapsulates what volunteering means to me.”* Mary, long-time CFCN volunteer

As an independent, non-denominational and not-for-profit organisation, **bestchance** has always relied on the help of volunteers. From its inception, volunteers have played a pivotal role in supporting families. During periods of economic downturn, such as in the early 1990s, volunteers were crucial in keeping programs operating.

As Ken Masterton recorded in chapter 5 of his original history, ‘A Tea Merchant’s Vision and Beyond’, many service groups and clubs have supported the organisation both financially and as volunteers.



The volunteering ethos has stemmed from the organisation’s founder, Robert Campbell Edwards. Through his influence, members of the Churches of Christ made a major voluntary contribution to the development of Burwood Boys’ Home. This, together with the ongoing voluntary work by members of other churches and service organisations, has contributed to this ethos.

Over the years volunteers have been matched with tasks in keeping with their skills and interests, paving the way for the organisation’s current formalised volunteer program.

*“In 2015 volunteers contributed over 13,035 hours to bestchance programs and have played a significant role in extending services to children and the community.”* Vicki Teese, Volunteer Manager

Currently, volunteers help across the organisation by assisting with new parents, child care in kindergartens, playgroups and Cheshire School. Other volunteers assist with gardening and maintenance, fundraising and emergency relief.

Throughout the life of the organization, all Committee of Management and Board Members, and sub-committee members have served in an honorary capacity.



Volunteers play a vital role in many aspects of the organization.

The programs listed below rely on volunteers to operate effectively.

### **Helping Hand program**

Volunteers help families who need support with babies and pre-school children in their homes, and with occasional care. The Helping Hand program was established in 1997/98 in response to the needs of a family with quads, and has grown to offer support to many families over the years.



## Wishing Tree

The Wishing Tree Appeal distributes hampers and gifts to families in need, particularly at Christmas. Established in the mid-1990s, the program is still running, with some 200-300 hampers distributed each year.

## Childcare

Volunteers play an important role in the support of childcare services. They are often an ‘extra pair of hands’ at CFCN kindergartens or long day care centres, as well as providing support to early intervention programs.



## Integrated program

The organisation has always been keen to respond to the many needs presented by users of their services, but as noted at the start of this chapter, the Board became increasingly aware of sustainability concerns when it came to funding and material resources. New research had highlighted the importance of intervening as early as possible when helping high need families.

To this end, programs gradually transferred to supporting families with younger children. This paved the way for later programs that delivered an integrated network model of service. It was envisaged that clients using the organisation’s services would only need to tell their story once – and would then be referred to relevant services within or outside of CFCN.

In line with this focus on early intervention, youth programs at CFCN continued, but were gradually transferred to organisations with a greater youth focus. For example, in 2009, the Foundation for Homeless Youth was referred to St Vincent de Paul Society.

At about the same time, CFCN’s training programs began to focus less on pre-employment for youth, and more on training for family friendly jobs to support parents. Programs provided certificated, TAFE-accredited training for young mothers, new migrants, or others faced with caring for a family on a limited income. Courses included childcare, Information Technology, aged care and integration aide courses.

Programs helped vulnerable families as early as possible and intervened with emergency relief, day to day assistance and counseling.

## FUNDING SHIFTS

Funds to support the many programs of the organisation relied heavily on investments from the 1986 sale of the Burwood property, as well as donations and support from individuals, philanthropic groups and service organisations. The Committee of Management acknowledged that this was not sustainable in the long term and other strategies needed to be put into place.

Factors outside the organisation’s control, such as the ceasing of funding for the residential home care of children, and the 1990’s recession meant government funding was reduced. The recession also led to an upsurge in the use of the organisation’s crisis accommodation and funds, further straining resources.

The period 2007/2008 saw the **bestchance** Committee of Management establishing a loans management strategy to reduce the balance of borrowing for the completion of a newly planned Children’s Centre. From 2008-2009, the impact of the Global Economic Crisis put additional pressure on the organisation as the value of its investments declined, but operating costs continued to rise.

The organisation had to weather factors such as those above and adapt accordingly, balancing growth with sound financial management. In recent years, the Kindergarten Cluster Management program, and fee for service for training and childcare programs, have provided a more sustained income stream enabling the organisation to continue helping those most in need. No truly needy child has been declined help by the organisation due to an inability to pay for services.

## **Government funding and other income**

By 2008/09, 49% of the organisation’s funds came from government grants. Client fees and charges contributed 38%. By 2014/15, government funding had grown to 62 % and client fees declined slightly to 34%.

Over the course of the organisation’s life, considerable financial support such as money and material aid came from benefactors, bequests, philanthropic organisations, trusts, private companies, and community service organisations and their members as well as from many individuals. This continues to comprise a significant income stream, with over 3% of income raised from supporter donations and philanthropic trusts in 2014/15. Lists of donors are available in the organisation’s annual reports.

# Key programs

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## **EARLY YEARS MANAGEMENT**

### **What is it?**

The Early Years Management program provides best practice management and support of staff and program delivery for community kindergartens, working with parent committees to provide professional development and access to specialist resources.

The program, partly funded by State Government and Kindergarten committees, takes on many responsibilities that would normally be shouldered by volunteer parent committees. This helps them to efficiently meet the increasingly specialised and demanding role of ensuring that kindergarten programs attain national quality standards and regulations. Support from Local Government has played a central role in ensuring programs are sustainable.

### **Meeting a need – how the Kindergarten Cluster program started**

In the early 2000’s, when working with clients with young children, it became evident that many of the kindergartens attended by these children were struggling to meet the needs of vulnerable families. In many areas where **bestchance** (then CFCN) clients attended, kindergarten teachers were also often dealing with under resourced management committees.

This left little time to meet all the demands of high need families and the local community, as well as their own professional development, and the day to day running of the kindergarten.

The initial driver for the organisation taking on the management of kindergartens was to provide a way of identifying and supporting high need families at this critical early stage.

### The first Kindergarten

Rusden Childcare and Kindergarten became a program of CFCN in 2003, marking the beginning of the Kindergarten Cluster Management program. The program was formalised in 2003/04, when CFCN, in partnership with the State Government, became a Kindergarten Cluster Manager.



Initially, the Cluster program and its best practice concept were not cost effective for the organisation. At the time it was quite a brave move to adopt the Cluster idea – both economically and ideologically, as one of Melbourne’s major providers of childcare services, ABC Learning, had at that time recently closed due to financial viability reasons. The CFCN [by then **bestchance**] Committee of Management saw long term advantages for families, and was willing to persevere.

The Kindergarten Cluster Program is now well established and recognised for its excellent practice. Importantly, it is meeting its goals of early identification of, and integrated support for families in need, as well as providing management and resource support for kindergarten teachers and their committees. However, the financial challenges remain.

### The program today-Early Years Management

Management and economic efficiency improved as more kindergartens were included in the Kindergarten Cluster Program. By early 2016, the organisation was managing 58 kindergartens in ten local government areas.

Through the Cluster, bestchance support services and programs have become available to a wider range of people, including many people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## CHESHIRE SCHOOL

*“In Cheshire, I learnt to read, write and control my anger. Cheshire is a place where people can be happy and learn.”* Cheshire School graduate

### What is it?

The Cheshire School, named in honour of publisher and long serving President of the organisation Frank Cheshire, has evolved from the early days of the Burwood Boys’ Home, when special educational support was provided for young people who struggled academically. Frank worked to ensure that after the end of residential care, vulnerable young learners would continue to be supported by the organisation.

The program has been provided in one form or another over the 120 years of the organisation, and remains as strong and as responsive as ever to the needs of young people.

The original Burwood Boys' Home school, where all children in the Home were once educated is now Wattle Park Primary School. Following the handover of this school to the State, a new smaller school for children with special needs was opened at the Home.



Learning together at Cheshire

This special school continued for both boys and girls after the organisation became Burwood Children's Home and up to the cessation of residential care.

The Cheshire School at Glen Waverley was initially housed in a converted house, then redeveloped and extended in 1998 to include an arts/crafts room, library, computer room, extra therapy play areas and a multi-purpose room.

With generous support from organisations such as Holmesglen TAFE, the Brockhoff Foundation and the Rotary Club of Mount Waverley, additional classrooms were added to meet demand in subsequent years. In the early days of the program, it was one of the few innovative services of its kind, attracting referrals from as far away as Hoppers Crossing, Ivanhoe and Frankston.

### **The Cheshire program today**

The Cheshire School provides a specialised 12 to 24 month intervention program to support students from prep through to grade four, who are unable to continue their education in a mainstream school due to significant social, emotional and/or behavioural problems.

The curriculum is the same as at mainstream schools, but delivered in a small classroom environment. The program identifies and caters for each child's individual learning needs and draws on a supportive team with a view to the child transitioning back to mainstream school.

The Campbell Edwards Trust donated funds in 2014 to support the development and delivery of a Cheshire Professional Development Program for mainstream school staff and their communities for students with additional social, emotional and behavioural challenges.

*“His year at Cheshire came as a much needed respite from a very unhappy school life and gave him time to regroup, and gain some confidence and self-esteem.”* Former Cheshire School parent.

### **How does Cheshire do it?**

Cheshire School's methods of developing better behaviour, confidence and resilience is based on establishing rules from the start, an individual behaviour management plan agreed upon by teacher, principal, family and student, and an individual learning plan.

Key methodology includes positive reinforcement using praise, visible rewards, extra playtime or preferred activities, and a reward system working towards a fortnightly excursion.



A close relationship is nurtured as students, teachers and the child's parents work in partnership, strengthened by a targeted minimum 80 per cent attendance rate.

Existing services stay in place, such as external psychological support and other specialist services while carefully monitoring student intake, taking into account a balance of behaviour needs.

Between the years 2014/2015, the Cheshire School enrolled 23 students.

In April 2015 Chief Executive Officer, Kevin Feeney, undertook a study tour of North America to look at best practice in kindergarten services as well as programs similar to Cheshire School.



L-R: bestchance CEO Kevin Feeney with James Cairns Project Director Global Children's Initiative at Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child

## THE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

*"Our dream is to build a unique centre that will enrich the early years of childhood and parenthood."* CFCN Annual report, 2002-2003

At the turn of the new century, discussions began about the possibility of CFCN developing a total service model through the development of a Children's Centre providing early intervention services in particular. This was in response to the fragmentation of child and family support services. It was envisioned that the Centre would offer a single entry point to a range of child care and early year's education services.

In 2003, CFCN's Client Services Manager, Pauline Ogden visited the United States and Great Britain to study early intervention programs. Australian and overseas research confirmed that early intervention for appropriate children increases the quality of life through their early years, but also significantly influences their physical, behavioural and social development later in life.

In 2002/03, CFCN commissioned The Royal Children's Hospital Centre for Community Child Health to conduct a study of CFCN services and assist the organisation in planning the new Children's Centre.

It was planned that the Centre would provide on-site child care, including early intervention childcare [Warooga] and parent support.

### Building the Children's Centre

Planning and design of the Centre started in 2003 with construction beginning in 2004. Stage 1 of the Centre was built by Holmesglen TAFE college building students, with each Trade using the project for teaching and assessment. A proportion of the building materials was donated which assisted the budget. The balance of Stage 1 cost was met by the organisation.

John Thomson, OAM and COM President, an engineer by profession, voluntarily undertook the complex task of Project Manager, tirelessly working to coordinate the various trade 'packages', linking with Holmesglen staff and managing budgets.



Past President, Hector Davis OAM, JP donated funds to enable a meeting room facility to be included in the project. This room has since been named in his honour.

Stage 1 was completed in 2004, Stage 2 in 2005 and Stage 3 in 2006. These later stages received significant State Government funding through the Department of Human Services, which required procurement of them through tendering and a conventional building contract.

Some funding for the later stages was provided through various community contributions, including by Freemasons for the children's library [Waverley Lodge] shade sails [Y2K'ers Group], playground equipment [Grand Lodge Board of Benevolence and Taskforce], in addition to general funding contributions by Old Scotch Collegians' and other Lodges.

The opening of the Children's Centre wasn't without its challenges, with staff working hard to maintain current programs in the lead up to the building and settling in period. The subsequent growth in systems and processes also posed challenges which were in turn overcome.

Financially, the \$3.5 million procurement cost to CFCN of the new facility stretched their financial resources. Along with a continuing downward trend in community donations and access to funds from charitable trusts and service groups, CFCN turned its attention once again to planning for financial sustainability while continuing to grow programs and resources.

Growth brought further issues: the problem of finding appropriately qualified staff, and a renewed review of processes and systems to cope with increased activity levels. Accordingly, a Strategic Service Plan was developed to increase resources, brand awareness in the community and to recognise and better manage risk.

In 2006 the Children's Centre was officially opened by the Premier of Victoria, The Hon. Steven Bracks, and the new working name of the organisation, 'bestchance', was adopted.



At the front entrance of the Children's Centre

## **The Children's Centre today**

The Centre now houses:

Long-day childcare, which includes six rooms for 0-5 year-olds,

Occasional care including a Kindergarten, and

The Early Intervention Centre (formerly Warooga) for children 0-6 years with developmental delays or disabilities, including for those on the autism spectrum.

The Children's Centre program provides allied health professional services including speech pathology, occupational therapy, dance and movement therapy and early childhood education. There is also family counseling available for families accessing the program.

## FAMILY DAY CARE

The strong program focus on supporting families is also reflected in the growing Family Day Care program. Family Day Care is provided in each family day care educator's own home.

Family Day Care is administered by **bestchance** across six local government areas in Melbourne's east and south east. The program commenced in June 2014 with 11 educators and 75 families. By early 2016, the program had grown to 84 educators and 746 families.

Every educator has a minimum of a Certificate III in Children's Services and is supported by regular home visits by a **bestchance** support coordinator. Ongoing professional development and networking opportunities are also provided to **bestchance** educators.

## TRAINING

*"I never thought I would be able to go back and study for a new career, so completing this qualification is a major accomplishment for me. Soon after completing my course, I was offered a job at a local residential facility and I couldn't be happier in my new career. Sonja, former **bestchance** student"*

In 2009/2010, the Federal Government provided a \$1.5 million Teaching and Learning Capital Fund Grant to build a new Training Centre. Generous philanthropic grants contributed to the cost of the fit-out whilst **bestchance** made up the shortfall. The Centre included aged care and children's services rooms, with specialised equipment enabling students to undertake simulated activities to enhance their learning. An 18-station computer room offered teleconferencing facilities and Information Technology training.

The new Training Centre was officially opened in March 2011 by the Hon Alan Griffin MP.

Today, students are offered nationally recognised qualifications as well as an individualised 'hands on' approach to learning within smaller class sizes. Work placement is a key component of all vocational courses, all of which are aimed at providing training that will enable students to gain employment and life skills. In 2014/15, **bestchance** had nearly 800 student enrolments.



The Hon. Shaun Leane MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Special Minister of State, with graduating student Aliya and Trainer, Debbie Hamilton

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

*“What I enjoy most about volunteering is doing a job I enjoy, keeping my skills up to date and working in an environment that feels just like a big family”.* Savitha, CFCN volunteer

Volunteering has been a vital part of service delivery since the early days of the Burwood Boys’ Home when volunteers took boys on outings, raised money for gifts, coached sporting teams, taught Sunday school lessons and assisted with homework and care.

Volunteers continue to make an immense contribution in all **bestchance** child and family programs. Currently, volunteers are involved in a number of individual programs and work in a variety of roles, including family support, fundraising and community relations, emergency relief, administration, maintenance and gardening, childcare, training and special education.

In 2016, there were 107 volunteers who contributed over 13,000 volunteer hours to **bestchance** programs and have played a significant role in extending services to children and the community.

In addition, considerable contributions of time have been made by Committee of Management/ Board members, members of the **bestchance** Heritage Committee and other committees.

In 2016, thirty percent of former **bestchance** childcare volunteers have taken up employment opportunities in sectors relating to their volunteer experience, and ten percent have taken up related courses of study.

### Bestchance today and tomorrow

*“Bestchance has grown from an organisation with strong links to welfare to one that we can always be proud of – strong; focused; resolved.”* Lodi Francesconi, 2010 (CFCN/bestchance CEO 1995-2011).

## MANAGING GROWTH

*“Bestchance has grown from some 100 staff to over 500 with revenues increasing from \$1 million to \$15 million.”* Des Dodds, President, **bestchance**, 2013/14 Annual Report

One of the key challenges for **bestchance** has been to manage change and growth while keeping a focus on helping children and families. By early 2016, the organisation employed over 550 staff, had 140 active volunteers and operated from 60 locations. Managing and consolidating infrastructure, service delivery, buildings and assets has been a key challenge for the organisation.



Volunteering at the Children’s Centre.

## REACHING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

A broad range of services are provided by **bestchance** to communities throughout Melbourne’s eastern suburbs and beyond. By 2011/12, two thirds of **bestchance** clients or their parents were born overseas. To best meet these children’s developmental needs, **bestchance** prides itself on providing quality services in culturally relevant ways. The organisation is fortunate that more than two thirds of their highly skilled staff were themselves born overseas.



Tutor and students

## THE WORK OF THE CAMPBELL EDWARDS TRUST

Through the Campbell Edwards Trust, **bestchance** has continued to receive needed support. Following their generous funding of Ken Masterton’s original history of the organisation, ‘*A Tea Merchant’s Vision and Beyond*’, the Trust’s funds helped support the work of the **bestchance** Heritage Committee. The Heritage Committee is led by former President of Burwood Boys’ and Children’s Homes, and a past resident of the Home, Mr Hector Davis OAM, JP.

In 2010 a refurbished foundation stone transferred from the original Burwood Boys’ Home site was unveiled by Robert Campbell Edwards’ great granddaughter and Trust Board member Eliza Bellmaine.

In 2014-16, the Trust played an instrumental role in preserving the organisation’s heritage through the funding of this new publication, ‘*From Burwood to bestchance*’, which incorporates Ken’s original book ‘*A Tea Merchant’s Vision and Beyond*’ first published in 2007.

The Heritage Committee continues to play an important role in the conservation and presentation of artifacts, photographs and publications, and remains a source of accurate historical information for a wide range of purposes.



## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

Relationships have been fostered between bestchance and various research and educational organisations. These include PhD and Master's placements as well as research collaborations.

In recent years **bestchance** has built relationships with the University of Melbourne, Monash University, the Australian Catholic University, Deakin University, Latrobe University School of Early Childhood Development and the Royal Children's Hospital Centre for Community Child Health.

### **Governance**

Governing an organisation that has expanded its programs almost continuously since its inception has not been without its challenges.

In particular, financial planning, and managing an ever-growing staff, along with the requisite infrastructure, have been key concerns.

Key highlights in changes to governance of the organisation are as follows:

- 2001 The Constitution was re-written and updated. Strategic planning on consolidation, establishing a counselling and consulting service across all programs, consolidating fundraising and extending the research/development component of the agency was undertaken by the organisation.
- 2007 The Committee of Management reviewed its priorities and developed four priority objectives: financial viability, strategic direction, identity and risk mitigation.
- 2012/13 The Committee of Management voted to change from offering operational support and being a Committee of Management, to providing oversight and strategic focus as a Board of Governance, requiring an amended Constitution.
- 2014 The Board finalised a new Strategic Plan, focusing on access to quality services, excellence and innovation, partnerships, organisational capacity and service expansion.

In 2016, 120 years after the founder, Robert Campbell Edwards established Burwood Boys' Home, his vision, values and mission continue through the provision of **bestchance's** range of child, family care and education community services, especially for those in need. In these changing times, the work of the Board and management of **bestchance** still strongly upholds these ideals.

### **A WORD FROM THE CEO**

Formerly Burwood Boys' Home, **bestchance** has evolved into an independent not-for-profit organisation which has been providing support to children and families since 1895. We are proud to be one of Victoria's most respected children's services organisations.

We remain true to our founder's mission statement that 'no truly destitute boy will be turned away'.

It's our vision to be recognised as a leading independent provider of holistic children's services in early childhood and associated life issues and to create a place where families can and want to come.



It's our mission to create and deliver in an extended family environment, services that are practical, reliable and responsive to the life issues experienced by families and their children, with an emphasis on early childhood.

As a leading voice in the early childhood and education sector, we continue to advocate for the best outcomes for all children now and into the future.

We are seeking to embed in our practice what is best from around the world. At the same time, we face significant local challenges to adequately fund for each child's learning and development. In keeping with this, our 2014-17 Strategic Plan works towards the goal of strengthening infrastructure to support the ongoing provision of quality services.



The Children's Centre provides long day child care for 0-5 year olds.

## Challenges

As an organisation, we face several challenges when it comes to managing growth and reaching our goals.

We are continuously working to maintain sustainable funding in an attempt to get the right balance between anticipating the needs of the child of the future, while responding to the child of the present.

The quick growth of the organisation means that we need to ensure that there is a range of skills, innovation, effective staff development and systems including clarity of roles, agreed processes and culture.

## Influencing policy

At the policy level, we aim to influence policy makers to hold a long-term vision for early education and advocate in areas outside of our own service delivery areas, such as housing.

We are tirelessly working to ensure that education in the early years has a valued place within government priorities and in society more broadly.

## Achievements

I believe that **bestchance** is a practice leader in the field. We work holistically with both the child and their family. The *sum* of **bestchance** integrated services is what makes the support we offer most effective. We pride ourselves on using a business approach for a social purpose.

We are defined by the clients who come to us, rather than our organisation defining the clients. Our strength lies in effectively responding to families from different cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds. We respect and work within each family's belief systems. Similarly, we effectively respond to children at different stages of development, helping them to reach their full potential.

Kevin Feeney, CEO, **bestchance**, Child, Family Care

2016



# *Appendicies*







# APPENDIX A

## Leadership of the Organisation

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### Presidents and Chairmen

1895-1937	R.C. Edwards
1937-1941	D.S. Abraham
1941-1943	F.T Saunders
1943-1955	G.L. Murray
1955-1957	A.G. Searle
1957-1970	F.W. Cheshire, O St J
1970-1977	F.R. Veitch
1977-1984	H.L. Davis, OAM
1984-2001	G.R. Quantrelle, OAM
2001-2006	J.R. Thompson, OAM
2006-2014	D. H. Dodds
2014-present	S. W. Ryan

### Secretaries, Superintendents or Chief Executive Officers

1895-1904	R.N. Hawkins
1904-unknown	A.E. Varcoe
Unknown-1923	A.H. Norquay
1923-1936	A.E. Knight
1942	R.A. Way
Interim	A.A. Hughes
1943-1950	A.J. Wignall
1950-1959	S.S. Harris
1959-1960	G. Hooper
1960-1968	W.H. Phillips
1968-1990	C.G. Tutchell
Interim [Honorary]	G.R. Quantrelle, OAM
1993-1994	N. Woodlock
Interim [Honorary]	G.R. Quantrelle, OAM
1996-2011	L. G. Francesconi
2011- present	K. Feeney





## APPENDIX B

### Life Governors

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Throughout the 120 Year history of the organisation Life Governors have been appointed by the Committee of Management [COM] in recognition of their significant voluntary contributions over an extended period. Many Life Governor appointees served voluntarily on the COM.

Life Governors are members of the organisation, with voting rights at AGM's, at Extraordinary Meetings and for the election of COM [or Board] members.

During the 1980's, when government support for residential home care of children diminished, the organisation was left asset/property rich, but income and cash poor.

Three options were proposed by the COM and put to an AGM:

1. To amalgamate with another more cash rich agency with a similar philosophy
2. To sell all the organisation's property and become a philanthropic trust, supporting other agencies with similar philosophies, or
3. To sell the valuable property at Burwood and purchase a new less costly property in a geographically appropriate area of service need. Invest the surplus funds to provide an income stream, allowing the organisation to continue as a service provider to children and families.

The third option was chosen unanimously at the AGM.

At this time a number of individuals and representatives of other organisations had been appointed as Life Governors in recognition of their financial support.

Being aware of the value of the organisation's property, the COM became concerned that the AGM's decisions could be overturned at a future date by another organisation or group of individuals, after making financial donations in order to become Life Governors in sufficient numbers to take control.

Accordingly, the COM confirmed that the selection criteria for Life Governors would be that Life Governors would only be appointed from appropriate volunteers and/or COM [or Board] members, who have provided an ongoing significant level of service to the organisation over a minimum of five years.

# Life Governors of the Organisation 1895 to 1975

## PAST APPOINTMENTS OF LIFE GOVERNORS

J. Arthur	J. H. Frederick	A. C. McDougal
A. E. Ashworth	R. C. Fowler	H. E. McCutcheon
N. W. Addison	L. H. Fayers	J. M. McCutcheon
A. N. Alley	J. E. Graham	A. J. McTaggart
W. D. R. Allardice	J. Grogan	B. P. McCloskey
A. E. Banks	A. K. Gayford	G. McCloskey
L. R. Barclay	H. E. Garrett	I. F. McLaren
D. Baxter	G. W. Gayford	A. C. Norden
R. Boak	J. H. Gilchrist	A. W. Nicholls
F. G. Boatfield	O. S. Green	J. K. O'Donnell
A. E. Bottomley	M. Goode	R. H. Overton
T. F. Buxton	A. G. A. Grant	C. R. Pawsey
A. D. Baldwin	R. D. Hanslow	F. G. Pocknall
B. Benjamin	A. J. Hargreaves	L. Power
R. W. Bovill	W. E. Hartley	F. N. Pollard
L. Briant	R. Heasley	H. C. Pratt
V. McKellar Bruce	Sir Edmund & Dame Mary	P. L. Prior
J. Brown	Herring	M. H. Pearson
J. S. Brockhoff	M. Harrison	H. N. Powers
J. H. Brandreth	A. J. Hocking	K. R. Pantlin
L. F. Bates	A. J. Heron	G. Quantrelle
F. W. Cheshire	B. D. A. Harvie	R. C. Ratcliffe
H. D. Carr	L. Hipworth	R. H. Richmond
D. Christensen	E. Hammond	R. S. Ryall
A. W. Cleland	M. Hoban	A. H. Reid
J. S. Coltman	A. N. Jones	R. S. Rohner
R. C. Cooper	N. G. Junor	R. M. Rassmussen
W. J. Cornell	E. Jeffs	J. Roper
A. Craigie	J. Jackson	R. G. Smith
H. W. Cant	Lady Gertrude Knox	E. Saunders
L. Cooper	J. Kiddell	A. C. Smith
C. B. Chadwick	H. J. Kreiger	L. Savage
H. L. Christie	E. Landman	R. E. Schurmann
J. Collins	D. Little	J. M. Shaw
C. L. Collins	W. Levack	R. F. Shirley
J. P. Creen	J. Leonard	C. B. Soward
Rev. J. Cox	J. R. Liney	H. V. Sykes
R. Campbell Edwards	D. H. Lee	W. J. Spear
W. H. S. Daddo	E. S. Loft	J. M. Scotford
T. Dawe	T. C. Manifold	D. P. Taylor
L. S. Douch	N. E. Marshall	W. T. Timewell
H. T. Drake	R. J. Mason	K. O. Thompson
R. W. Duncan	F. D. Matheson	E. W. Todd
E. Davis	H. Murfitt	F. R. Veitch
C. Donald	Moore's of Prahran	F. O. Viol
Lt. Col. E. Dossetter	K. B. Mathews	W. E. Ward
H. L. Davis	H. G. Munday	Mr & Mrs C. G. Warne
S. G. Dymond	Dame Merlyn Baillieu Myer	N. S. Wellard
C. P. Edwards	R. K. Munday	H. Williams
C. H. Ellwood	J. Maguire	A. B. R. E. Willison
S. M. Emmanuel	D. C. Moyes	T. C. Willoughby
G. Eberbach	G. A. Mottram	C. F. Williams
G. H. Foren	J. R. Moore	L. Ward
E. Found	T. Millar	J. V. White
J. Fisher	R. J. McArthur	B. Wilkins

## Life Governors of the Organisation 1976 to 2016

Angliss M.	Garrett T.	Middleton S.L.
Arthur J.	Glossop V.E.	Moore J.R.
Banks A.E.	Goldie R.M	Muir J.
Bartlett H.	Goulding G.W.	Newman N.M.
Benness A.	Graham J.E.	Parkin J.A.
Benson J.	Grant G. OAM	Ponter P.
Bratten W.H.	Hammond E.	Pratt H.C.
Brocklesby M.L.	Hick J.H.	Quantrelle D.
Brown A.A.	Hitchen K.J.	Quantrelle G.R.
Cain J.	Hoban M.	Richie E.B
Callis A.S.	Horskins R.M.	Roper J.J.F.
Campbell Edwards R.	Howe R.A.	Ross-Edwards P.
Campbell J. McA.	Hughes A.L.	Round A.E.
Chambers N.	Humphreys W.	Rowe A.
Chegwin A.E.	Irving K.B.	Sanderson B.S.
Clarke W.L.	Joseph A.	Schrank W.
Clausen G.C.	Kellock A.	Scotford J.M.
Cope K.F.	Kenneth F.	Speelmeyer J.
Cornwall K.	Kenney W.T.	Speelmeyer H.
Davis H. L. OAM	Lancashire E.E.	Stewart J.
Dawe R.T.	Little R.W.	Tantau C.D.B.
Dear H.A.	Lloyd A.H.	Thompson E.
Dodds D.H.	Loader H.C.	Thompson J. OAM
Dossetter Lt. Col E.	Lyons W.F.	Tutchell C.
Dowd H.	Martin W. T.R.	Tutchell F.
Dunn B.L.	Mason R.D.	Whitaker F.H.
Edwards F.G.	Masterton J.W.	Wigley R.
Edwards M.	Masterton K.G.	Wilkins J.
Evans C.R.A.	McCloskey Dr. BP	Wilkins L.B.
Frederick J.H.	McCloskey Dr. G.	Wilkins K.J.G.
Furphy R.	McConville J.E.	Wing Tang P.B



## CODA

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Prior to this book's publication in October 2016, the Federal Minister for Social Welfare promoted the need for government support of 'innovative early intervention strategies to break the cycle of welfare dependency'.<sup>1</sup>

For over 120 years, early intervention and the support of children and families has been practiced by **bestchance**, and now continues through its dedicated commitment to meeting the changing needs of young people and families, by making a crucial difference at an early stage in their lives.

1. The Hon. Christian Porter MP Minister for Social Welfare in the Parliament of Australia. 'Investing in people-improving lives', Media Release 20th September 2016.



*'From Burwood to bestchance'*  
was researched and compiled by  
Kay Edwards and Glenys Grant OAM

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KAY EDWARDS



Kay, a retired school principal has been associated with bestchance since the late 1970's. Her knowledge and understanding of the organisation has been enhanced through her husband Gary's 35 year membership of the Committee of Management.

Kay's knowledge of **bestchance's** Glen Waverley site goes back to its earlier development for Melbourne Orphanage[now OzChild], when her grandmother was President of that organisation.

In her professional role, Kay counselled parents and worked with students experiencing developmental delay and learning difficulties. Many of these students had been supported by the **bestchance** Early Intervention programs.

Others were assisted by the **bestchance** Cheshire School and Community and Family Support programs, or continued in her school's ongoing care. Accordingly she appreciates the valued support bestchance offers to children and families.

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GLENYS GRANT OAM



Glenys first became involved with Burwood Boys' Home in 1973 as a holiday host for children and then later with her husband Rob, continued holiday hosting and then fostered children continuously over a period of 38 years.

Glenys' interest in improving the children's conditions, care and education, lead to her being asked to join the Burwood Children's Home Board in 1977. Since 1985 she has held key positions such as Acting President, Vice President and Secretary. In 2017 Glenys will become **bestchance's** longest serving Board member.

Glenys has been involved with many national and local youth projects, including working with children in remote and rural areas in the Northern Territory and NSW and is also active in Rotary Youth Service.

In 2006 she received an Order of Australia for "Services to Medicine in her area of Expertise and Services to the Community".

## Distinctive Features of the Burwood Boys' Home



A home for boys between 10 and 15 years of age.  
Any really destitute boy admitted without question.  
Boys having relatives must be at least partly supported by them.

Parents who can and should support boys must do so as far as possible.

A boy's doubtful character no bar to his admittance.  
Destitute boys have at all times first consideration.  
Moral improvement is ever kept in view.

Good physical conditions and discipline an aid to right conduct.

Work on the soil a restorer of health and healthy aspirations.

The boy who understands working the land need never be out of employment.

The home aims at turning out boys for country life.  
Burwood boys become gardeners, orchardists, farmers, dairymen, miners.

The home teaches boys to serve their country as well as their God.

Service is the supreme offering which one can give another.