



**HELLO FROM MIEKE**

Another year has been and gone, and at the Winsome we continue doing what we love best, offering hope and support to our friends who struggle daily just to exist.

As I write this morning, there is a deep frost in the paddock outside my window, and I know that there are rough sleepers stepping out of their tents, and into this cold and frost. Thank God they can go to breakfast at the Red Dove, which has been a strong partnership between the Winsome and the Uniting Church for over twenty years! My thanks as always to the small group of committed volunteers who ensure breakfast is on the table 4 mornings a week.

The Winsome continues to be an amazing “hub”, providing holistic care and support to our city’s disadvantaged people.

Big thanks to all our service providers, who visit the Winsome weekly, providing legal, financial counselling, medical, nursing, and pastoral support.

And as always, a huge thanks to our wonderful, committed and cheerful volunteers, who truly make the Winsome a very special place.

The Lismore Soup Kitchen will be celebrating 30 years of service to the Lismore community, in February 2020.

We are planning a coffee and cake night with our patron, Tim Costello, as the guest speaker, and will send out more details closer to the date.

Thankyou, for your continued support of the Winsome! We couldn’t do this without you!

*- Mieke Bell  
President LSK*

**Winsome Women**

After listening to the experiences of women coming to the Winsome last year I noticed there was quite a number who needed to be heard.

I brought this to the attention of my good friend Valerie Murphy and we formed a support group that meets fortnightly on Mondays, where I believe good things are happening in the lives of the women who come.

Women who are isolated, single mothers, homeless women, women battling to make ends meet - we all need to offload - and this group has been a safe place for this to happen.

It's a safe environment where a burden shared is a burden halved. Some people don't have a person to trust and share their grief and pain.

We also share stories of encouragement and victories. We pray together and we seem to be growing together.

It's more than just meeting on Mondays; there's a richness in this group that keeps us together as we meet at other times over a coffee, at church or wherever else we meet.

*Margaret Lord*

July 2019

The Lismore Soup Kitchen

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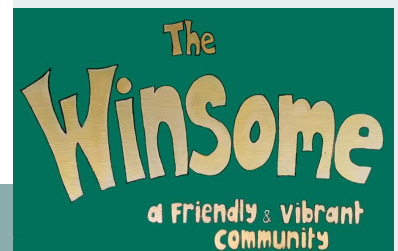
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**Paul Murphy**

*Winsome Centre Manager*

The Winsome is not just about providing hot lunches to 70 odd homeless and disadvantaged people daily and accommodating 18 formerly homeless men, it is about caring, of which these two aspects form part.

Winsome volunteers care for many day patrons over a broad spectrum of needs.

A recent example is providing Court testimony on behalf of a day patron to get the Guardianship Board to lift restrictions on his finances, meaning the fellow is now in control of his own financial destiny. The case was run by Legal Aid who are continuing to follow him up with paperwork for housing and our volunteer will assist him to obtain an NDIS package. What a great cooperative result.

In another instance, the Winsome Chaplain took time out to sit with a resident in Court to keep him calm and maintain his confidence whilst answering question.

A number of guitars have been donated to the Winsome and this same energetic Winsome Chaplain engages with any day patrons and residents twice weekly with jam sessions. The piano often provides accompaniment. The hidden talent is sometimes quite amazing.

Winsome volunteers transport patrons to hospital, dental and specialist appointments as required.

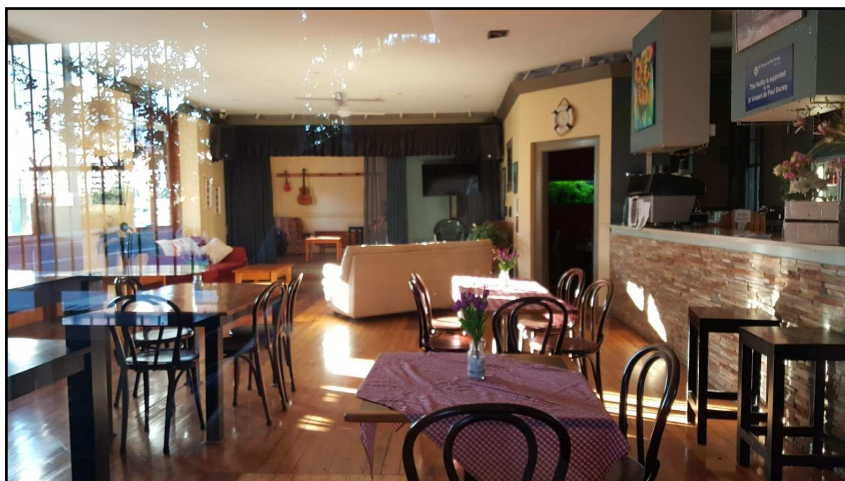
Finally, to quote a recent volunteer email to another where she said “what huge advances in care for Fran (not her true name) You have already made such a difference in her life. As did our Kitchen Manager by identifying Fran’s needs and getting this ball rolling. So good to see such a success, and a real difference made for someone, by people from the Winsome team. Thank you.” (M. - volunteer)

Winsome volunteers specialise in caring.

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*“You have already made such a difference in her life”*

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The old Winsome ‘bar’, now café, (the pub with no beer) with our new music room on the stage in the background. On Christmas Day we fed 120 people, and this space was filled with music, joy, and great people enjoying wonderful food.



Christmas Music at The Winsome



### ***Kitchen and Café Update***

Hello Newsletter Readers,

The Kitchen and the Cafe is still going strong. We have 7 baristas who help to keep the cafe open 7 days a week and over 60 volunteers keeping the kitchen open with wholesome food. The kitchen is a happy place to be and this is due to the staff wanting to be there and keeping the kitchen in good condition. Donations come in from various places and this helps our budget and our cooks to decide the menu. A big Thank you to Aldi, the Lismore Organic Market, Caddies Coffee and Tea, Brookfarm, La Vida and FoodWorks (Leycester St).

Our aim is to feed people no matter what the circumstances they find themselves in and not only have we been able to do this but we are also helping our volunteer staff gain experience and awareness of the issues that the people in our community are going through. We have been able to help mature age students complete their placement hours with us when a lot of other organisations have not been able to. We have helped young volunteers gain

experience which has helped them in their job applications and interviews. We remain very flexible and supportive with our volunteer staff and promote an enjoyable experience in the kitchen and cafe.



Our equipment is being serviced and repaired when needed. A big Thank you to Lismore City Plumbing, Matt from Direct Service and Repairs and Horn's Gas Service, Lismore.

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*“We have 7 baristas who help to keep the cafe open 7 days a week and over 60 volunteers keeping the kitchen open with wholesome food.”*

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The cafe now has a music room which is being used and appreciated by a lot of our patrons and staff. This came about because of one volunteer's vision of an area we used for storage. This volunteer was able to see talents and abilities in some of the residents and other volunteers and now a music room has come to life for us all to enjoy.

Please visit us for a coffee and check out the impromptu music entertainment.

- Sharon Dwyer  
Kitchen and Cafe Manager





**How Do I get There.**

I remember asking that question in the difficult and painful times in my life. To believe and see that there was a future for me despite the past decisions I had made in my life.

For the women attending the Winsome Women Outside Group. I rejoice as I observe hope and a sense of gratitude grow within them and myself. We are no longer alone we have companions supporting us on the journey.

To have been in jail or have family members or friends in jail still carries a social stigma. This feeling of isolation and despair can emotionally cripple us as

we are reluctant to share our fears or concerns about loved ones with others. To find a safe haven where you are accepted loved and affirmed by each other through song, laughter and the sharing of our sad and happy times.

Becoming one in the spirit enables us to get there. When we belong to a community that loves and accepts us we have a sense of belonging. By song, laughter and the sharing of our glad and sad times, a new cycle of hope and healing begins for all of us. We all want to get there and to know and feel that we belong to a community makes a difference.

Come and join us. Valerie Murphy.

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*Thank you for your generous support which is so vital to our ongoing operation.*

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The kitchen door and kitchen window. Just imagine the line of people, and conversations that occur in this space, with our wonderful volunteers meeting people at the front of the queue. A good space indeed.

Our revamped stage, now music room. Thanks to several of our residents for their amazing effort in creating this valued space.





*entrance to Red Dove for breakfast*

### ***Breakfast at the Red Dove / Uniting Church***

Bruce is the breakfast coordinator, and he tells us that there are no arguments about how the eggs are cooked—as people get to cook them, themselves :-)

Monday -Thursday mornings from 6am to 7.30am a free hot breakfast is available to anyone who needs. Usually a couple of volunteers are there to open up and supervise. Bruce says that breakfast has probably been running there for about 15 years. Currently about half a dozen people who attend are regulars, but there are also often new faces. Sometimes there have been 20 or more people come for breakfast. One morning, about 4 dozen eggs were cooked—a record.

The menu is great, with eggs, chips, onions, cereal, toast, tea and coffee. Sometimes there are sausages, sometimes tomatoes (in season), and occasionally bacon. Bruce reckons sausages fill people up better than bacon. The food is sourced locally.

Thanks so much to Bruce, the volunteers, and the Uniting Church for caring.

*“there are no arguments about how the eggs are cooked”*

### ***Winsome Cricket***

Yeh people, there was a fun day that happened in the winsome cricket. The winsome cricket mob had a game against East’s Cricket club on 15th June which will now become a yearly event.

We had a bar-b-cue on the day and a fun day was had by all. By the way—the game ended as a draw with 125 score for each team.

Let’s get behind the next game.

Have a good day!

- Don (Power)

### **Music Time at the Winsome**



Thanks to Ian (chaplain) we have had many guitars donated to the Winsome. On Wednesdays and Fridays, these are available to anyone who wishes to play. A great time is had sharing music, singing, playing guitar, and developing music skills.

We try to work alongside each other enhancing their music, making for a great sound. Steve, who is a resident, always makes sure the guitars are ready to go. His music skills and knowledge are greatly appreciated, and he is always available to encourage new players. There is a screen we sometimes use to display lyrics and chords, so everyone can sing along if they wish.

Recently a ukulele player and percussionist have joined the group, bringing a new sound. Children also sometimes join in.

Guitars are also available on other days if requested, to people who wish to play.

I personally have really appreciated the opportunity to sing, play guitar, and develop my music skills.

Thankyou Winsome.

- Jill (volunteer)

[Jill’s angelic voice is also a beaut gift to these gatherings. Music truly is “Maths for the Soul”]

- Editor





The pole at the end of our garden, where we remember those who have passed away.

### ***From a Patron***

Reflections on my association with the Winsome Hotel.

The Winsome Hotel, as a soup kitchen first came to my attention in 2012 while studying at TAFE. During that time I met my partner who introduced me to her very colourful uncle who is a regular there. My new partner then introduced me to the world of children's entertaining. We became Mr Twister and Spottycirl. Doing balloons and face painting. Both Donna and I decided to attend the Christmas dinner that is provided each year for people without homes. We donated some time performing for the patrons. We soon became very well-known there, and I participated in volunteer work. (Food preparation in the kitchen) It was at this point that I began to realize how valuable this service is to the community. Indeed it has

become a community for otherwise isolated people. I was surprised to learn that as many as 80 meals per day are served, by a completely volunteer staff. Many struggling people are also assisted by donations of warm clothing and blankets. In time other services were added. The Winsome now provides, a doctor once a week, legal counselling, financial counselling, and a representative from Centrelink. Sometimes we get drop in services such as a hairdresser, and podiatrist. My favourite activity however is the Wednesday and Friday Musical jam sessions. A while ago several guitars were donated, and are put to great use by very musical people who may not own their own instruments. Regulars often come to just hang out, sometimes playing chess, or just socializing over a barista made coffee. The Winsome is a very inclusive community.

-Tony

### ***Ian Phillips*** *Chaplain*

At the end of our garden at the Winsome is an important space where we remember the people who have had a connection with the Winsome community, but have now passed away. Each person is important, and we try to help everyone know that. About 12 months ago, many of us stood in a circle in the green space in this photo and remembered those who'd passed away in the months before.

I am so thankful for Heather who also assists in the chaplaincy role.

- Pastor Ian Phillips

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