



What a joy it was to open the Winsome for "business as usual" in the second week of December last year, after having been closed for 11 months in 2022!

It was a slow start, with only 15 to 20 of our regular patrons returning for lunch. Gradually those numbers have increased, and we are now welcoming up to 55 people for lunch daily.

Volunteers are thoroughly enjoying serving lunches to the tables, where our patrons have been invited to sit, and be waited on. This great initiative was a positive discovery during COVID.

For 33 years, we thought the only way to serve meals was to have people queue, but now the queue has disappeared for ever!! Our patrons are enjoying this service, and the atmosphere at the Winsome is one of joy and laughter!!

It was wonderful to see all our volunteers return after the flood, and



it was good to connect with each other again. It was also good to see our patrons coming back, and to renew old friendships!

A number of the outreach services have also returned to the Winsome, and we continue to provide holistic support for our people.

Since we opened, the Lismore community has generously donated clothes, toiletries, bed linen, and blankets and sleeping bags. We have daily requests for these items, and it has been very pleasing to see the donations come in! At the Winsome, we continue to enjoy the goodwill of our wonderful community'.

One of the ongoing challenges for our organisation is the plight of rough sleepers in Lismore. Many accommodation places, where we were able to assist people into housing, have been destroyed by the flood. We are continuing to explore options to better provide assistance to these vulnerable people.

As always, I would like to thank our many volunteers, our patrons, our Winsome 500 supporters, our residents and our service providers. You all help to create the Caring and Vital community that is the Winsome.

Mieke Bell

For 33 years, we thought the only way to serve meals was to have people queue, but now the queue has disappeared for ever!! Our patrons are enjoying this service, and the atmosphere at the Winsome is one of joy and laughter!!

July 2023

The Lismore Soup Kitchen

11 Bridge St
North Lismore 2480

PO Box 6045
South Lismore 2480

Website
www.winsome.org.au

[facebook.com/
lismorewinsome](https://facebook.com/lismorewinsome)

Donations:
winsome.org.au/donate

Ph 66224055

Good Pantry Phone
0422981363



Steve—holding a future light shade for the music room (or preparing to sing “my canary has circles under his eyes” - one or the other)

From our Friends.....

Reflections from Jane, a patron.

I would just like to state how much assistance I have received from the Soup Kitchen. I have been able to see the GP, who visits every week. If I want clothing, it is always available. A warm drink, or a simple chat is here too. The volunteers are second to none, and make the facility function, and give it such a homely touch.

From Colin, a patron.

The homeless, the troubled, the socially impaired. And the single aged, can often be treated rather harshly by society. Not so at the Winsome, where the marginalized experience absolute acceptance from a team of volunteers showing a wonderful and caring welcome for all. Isolation and loneliness is a lurking threat for some, after Lismore's devastating floods that left so many houses wrecked! What a comfort the Winsome offers, with the teams support easing folks mental health issues, by generously supporting the bodies basic need for nutritious food. Many people experiencing a personal life crisis, find some relief from the embracing inclusion at the Winsome. They gain a

little dignity because of the caring shown them by the team at the Winsome. To people who are supporting the work at the Winsome, I offer my appreciation and gratitude, as I am one of those who feel the love at the Winsome.

From Bronny, a volunteer.

The Winsome.

A short time prior to the flood, I entered an amazingly fulfilling chapter in my life, - Volunteer work at the Wonderful Winsome.

For me, giving and needing go hand in hand. In giving, I feel needed. By giving time, I feel validated. I am no different to any other person, don't we all need to be needed!

There is something amazing that comes over me when I step into the Winsome Kitchen or café. Its like being warmly and wholly embraced, by everyone - volunteers, day managers, residents, and our patrons. I love them all!

The volunteers are second to none, and make the facility function, and give it such a homely touch.—Jane



3 spontaneous volunteers—with amazing voices—who helped during the big cleanup operation last year, came and visited to see how we were going a few weeks ago—and even shared another song with us.



thankful to our “tradey teams” who have re-created the winsome to be better than ever, and much more resilient and repairable when another flood comes.
The new ‘bar’ under construction

To people who are supporting the work at the Winsome, I offer my appreciation and gratitude, as I am one of those who feel the love at the Winsome.—Colin



Winsome Kitchen and Cafe 2023

This time last year the Cafe at the Winsome didn't have a floor to walk on and all the bar storage area and benchtops were gone. The Cafe is now a well functioning space with the original layout back wall well utilised to give us a great working space.



We have a new Wega, Pegaso Coffee Machine. Our new coffee supplier is Zentveld in Newrybar, their Broken Head Blend and it has been well received by everyone.

The kitchen this time last year was boarded up waiting for the old water tank to be removed. This has been a great improvement to the space and has helped with creating a more productive and easier to clean kitchen. It has been so good to have the volunteers back, making the meals, sandwiches and coffee.



We opened the Cafe area on the 19th December, 2022 and we could only provide sandwiches for lunch. On the 23rd December, we started cooking main meals in the kitchen. Our patron numbers started in the 20's and slowly increased as more and more people became aware that we were open again. We fed close to 100 people on Christmas Day and our numbers daily at present range from 50 to 80. By the end of June we had served just over 8000 meals. Most of all our volunteers returned and new volunteers are still joining us and enjoying the new improved spaces.

In March this year I took part in a research assignment by a student from the University of Wollongong, exploring strategies to support the nutritional health status and wellbeing of individuals living with disadvantages who rely on support services. I was interviewed and attended a Zoom meeting hearing other organisations talking about the obstacles in providing nutritious food to our patrons. I was able to make some changes that could bring more nutritional value to our meals. Our Cooks have knowledge and skills in different areas around this and I encouraged them to share this information with each other. We are so fortunate that we have a group of Cooks that are willing to learn and create the best meal they can for our patrons.

Sharon Dwyer Kitchen Manager



Tim Bennett
Good Pantry Manager

The Good Pantry

In July last year, the Lismore Soup Kitchen took over the management of the previous emergency FoodHub that had been operating in Wyrallah Rd, post flood. We were able to keep this space operating with additional financial support of the Lismore Roman Catholic Diocese, who are continuing project partners in this venture.

Today the Good Pantry serves the Lismore community with low cost groceries, and has a membership of approximately 1800, representing approx. 3-4000 people.

We had already committed to operate this facility, when we were offered grant support by the NSW Government with two grants, one from the Department of Communities and Justice (\$125,000) and another from the Premier's Department (\$40,000).



Pictured left to right onsite at the Wyrallah Rd Pantry in September 2022: Ian Phillips (LSK), Mieke Bell (LSK), Stephanie Cooke MP (previous Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience), Karen Willott (previous FoodHub Manager), Cassie Bush (Foodbank NSW), and Steve Smith (LSK)

We are working towards opening an extension of the Good Pantry in Goonellabah in coming weeks, and Tim Bennett says: *"As people struggle to make ends meet we are keen to help serve the growing need."*

There are a great team of volunteers who help staff the Wyrallah Road Good Pantry, which is open Monday to Friday, 10am—3pm.

Another asset the Winsome and Good Pantry have purchased is a mobile Barbecue trailer that we have nicknamed 'Vincent'. Vincent has a barista machine on one side and 4 plates / 16 burners on the other, and is set up to be mobile with both onboard water and generator too.

Please let us know if you have an interest in being part of any of our volunteer teams at the Winsome.



The Good Pantry site at 51 Wyrallah Road

"As people struggle to make ends meet we are keen to help serve the growing need."



Mobile Cool Room purchased with part of the Premier's Grant the Pantry Received



<- Our Barbecue Trailer; **"Vincent"**



Winsome by name - Winsome by nature

This past Financial Year has been split into two roughly even halves in the life of the Winsome.

The first half, July-December 2022 was dominated by the substantial repairs to the Winsome building itself and our flood recovery projects in the community in partnership with Resilient Lismore with financial support from the Catholic Diocese. The second half, January-June 2023 saw the Winsome welcoming our community back to share company, lunch meals daily, with Barista coffee & tea flowing, and outreach services returning to provide holistic care & support.



Our flood recovery required an almost entire demolition and re-build of the ground floor. The Café bar and the Kitchen have both been entirely remodelled, with old sodden floorboards removed and replaced with Compressed Fibre Cement Structural Flooring, then over-layed with Tiles. The old wooden bar was stripped out & replaced with a custom-designed cement-rendered brick bar, created by our Lead Tradie, Brad Lawson. His flair and finesse on the tools is evident to all who walk in & adore the old world charm and ambience achieved by the exposed polished bricks & original tiles from 1925 that are seeing the light of day after being concealed for decades. Many arty elements have added aesthetic value to the Café - from Brad's herringbone brickwork, stylish Merbau skirting & trims, and the careful restoration of a fireplace and hearth that were crumbling apart and previously hidden by layers of plasterboard, timber and cladding.

October saw us reach our first major milestone, the completion of the main Café space, marked by a special re-opening event with our patron, Rev. Tim Costello. Extensive works followed in the kitchen, including removal of asbestos cladding & a large copper boiler, steel frame & concrete slab, plus partition framing and a "Dumb Waiter". This allowed for us to completely flatten and replace the kitchen floor and create a more open and spacious environment with greater air flow & natural light. A new, quieter & more efficient stainless steel Rangehood & exhaust ducting generously provided & installed by Faircloth & Reynolds was the icing on the cake for what is now a 5-star commercial kitchen. All this work culminated in the 'engine room' of the Soup Kitchen cranking back into operation during the week leading up to Christmas, just in time to feed 100 people on Christmas Day!



This work would not have been possible without the dedication, ingenuity, camaraderie and hard yakka of our beloved **Winsome Crew** which comprised as many as 20 members over the course of 12 months. The core group being Brad Lawson, Brendan Hall, Ben Russell, Adam Gruzaz, Matt Giles, Leigh Pryse, Tim Steele, Matt Allworth, Luke Weber, Paul W, Mike Lawrence, Steve Boyd - and Winsome volunteers Mick & Lindsay, who went above & beyond in giving valuable time & enormous effort on many occasions. So many kitchen volunteers & other friends of the Winsome came out of the woodwork & cheerfully became willing workers on regular occasions. To all of you, we say a huge thankyou for your contribution!

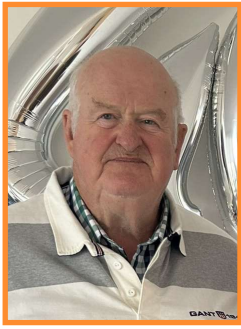
We also give a massive shout-out to our specialist Tradies who have spent many long hours bringing the almost 100-year old beauty back to glory ... Electrician Dave Cowan, Andy & team at Lismore City Plumbing, Horns Gas Service, Gas Plumber Zac Fleming, Steve Bower & team, Joel Jensen & team, Todd Campbell & Lachie from Douse Fire Protection, Renderer Reece Smith, Tony Montgomery from Alstonville Tiles & Stuart Johnson, Cameras.

Substantial & invaluable support has also been provided by businesses & suppliers : Faircloth & Reynolds, Nigel & the team at JH Williams Building Supplies, Lyn & Craig at Lismore Paint Centre, Fletcher Patterson at Dingo Demolitions, Coates Hire, Kennards Hire, GJames Glass, DSJK Joinery & Matthews Metal Fabrications.

The Winsome has now completed over 100 flood recovery projects in the community with more to come!

Steve Smith. Project Manager

'Repair to Return' - Flood Recovery Project



The Winsome has always had an interest in providing both food and accommodation, and the mega flood of approximately 17 months ago caused problems for many people of Lismore on both fronts. Providing food for the community became an important issue, especially in the days immediately after the flood, but also as the economic pressures began to bite. The opportunity to partner with the Lismore Catholic Diocese in reopening and funding "The Good Pantry" in Wyrallah Road was a step in that direction. The re-opening of the Winsome to provide meals again just prior to Christmas gave the Winsome Community the opportunity to provide lunchtime meals again to our regular guests.

The second basic need of a secure place to live in has been a challenge, and again we have been able to partner with other organisations to begin to meet this need. Some members of the original Winsome Tradie Team that worked so amazingly restoring the Winsome, have remained committed to the task of getting people back into their homes under the leadership of Steve Smith. The task has evolved over the months with the Winsome joining with the Catholic Diocese of Lismore, Resilient Lismore (Elly Bird's Team) and Joel Jensen, a local builder to partner in getting people back into their homes through the "Two Rooms Project" that was developed by Resilient Lismore. This involved volunteer "handy people" working to put sheeting on the walls of two rooms in people's homes, in order to give them shelter. As we worked as a group, we developed the "Repair to Return project" to conduct essential repairs to bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom to make the places more livable. Other necessary security items such as door locks, windows and repairing stairs are also taken care of. All of this is completed for approximately \$30,000 per house and seems to be a much better solution than expensive pods for people to live in.

Resilient Lismore are tasked with scoping each request, and there have been 600 or so requests for assistance, where consideration is given to the situation of the occupants, with priority given to elderly, people with disabilities, and young children and other factors.

The issue of the future of houses in the low areas has been considered, but while people wait for answers, this is the most economic answer to this problem.

The Winsome community is committed to this important task and will look forward to the day when the government recognizes the value of this team and helps with the funding.

Ridley Bell
Treasurer, Lismore Soup Kitchen



...the music continues

both ad hoc with gatherings like the one pictured, and organized. It is so good to have Peter Lehner and choir meeting back in the space.