

# CONNECTIONS

We're proud to share the stories that supporters like you have helped us achieve.

The Samaritans Foundation is the social welfare arm of the Anglican Church in the Hunter, Manning & Central Coast.

WINTER 2014



## THIS YEAR, SAMARITANS TURNS 30!

From humble beginnings, with a few dedicated volunteers in Newcastle we have grown to support thousands of people a year in **5 regions** of NSW with **600 staff** and **400 volunteers**.

## INSIDE

- Young dad overcomes homelessness
- New Samaritans service at Wyong
- CEO's message
- Empowering locals with a disability



Samaritans now extends not just to families in crisis and people with disability, but works with children, those who are homeless or facing mental health challenges and provides foster care, gambling counselling and many other community programs.

## TURNING LIVES AROUND

Homeless and with a baby son, Mitch had nowhere to go. Turned away from refuges that couldn't accept a man with a child, he couch surfed with friends for nearly a year.

"Someone would offer to help and they'd ask you to leave after a month because of the baby crying. It was really hard."

Mitch was in and out of home from a young age and after his pregnant girlfriend had their son, things took a turn for the worst.

"We broke up and she wrecked the house so we were kicked out."

Mitch says linking up with Samaritans was one of the greatest moves he made.

"With what I've achieved in the last 6 months through Samaritans, I almost don't know myself. I'm in medium-term accommodation with Samaritans, my goal is to get private rental accommodation and to get day care for my son so I can go back to work.

"I want to give my son a future and show him that you can be proud of your past and what it can teach you. I made mistakes, but I'm a better man now. I've turned my life around."



A new man: Mitch with his son, Blake

## SAMARITANS NEWEST EMERGENCY RELIEF CENTRE OPENS

Samaritans launched its latest partnership in May alongside the Parish of Wyong.

The St James' Ministry Centre houses, among other services, the newest Samaritans Emergency Relief centre and expects to see hundreds of locals in need in the coming months.

Samaritans' Sue Williams oversees all Samaritans Emergency Relief Centres and said, "For many people in need, their first port of call to find help is to approach an emergency relief centre. For those who can't put food on the table or heat their house in winter, services like these are crucial."

"Last financial year Samaritans offered emergency relief assistance to more than 2700 individuals & families on the Central Coast.

"This is the fourth Central Coast emergency relief service for Samaritans, and it just shows the need for support, care and assistance is only growing," she said.

Church Rector, the Rev'd Dan Connor said it's an exciting time for his congregation.

"The opening of the St James' Ministry Centre is the culmination of months of hard work by a group of committed parishioners.

"The vision for this project grew from the realisation that we needed to do more as Christians to support the vulnerable and needy members of our community. We are proud to partner with Samaritans to achieve this goal," he said.

Samaritans Emergency Relief Centre Wyong is located 65 Howarth Street, Wyong and will be open on Wednesdays, 10am to 1.30pm.



Cutting the official ribbon with volunteers Jan (left) and Vera (right).



# A WORD FROM CEC .....

This newsletter goes to print just days after the release of the Federal Government's annual budget. This budget is the toughest we have seen in the history of Samaritans, when examined from the perspective of people on low incomes.

From July 1 this year, tough new measures will begin to be introduced. Working families on minimum wage will have reduced family benefits and pay more for visits to the doctor or chemist.

The benefits of all pensioners will no longer be indexed against average earnings and will therefore increasingly fall behind.

Unemployed young people will be given no income for the first 6 months, followed by 6 months of compulsory work for the dole followed by 6 months of no income again until they reach the age of 30 or, of course, find a job.

Young people under 25 will receive a reduced

benefit called a youth allowance. Young people under 35 who have disability will be reassessed for work potential and may be transferred from the disability support pension to the lesser rate of unemployment benefit.

I am particularly concerned about the situation of young people who have no paid work and no other income for several months. I have always believed that the best form of welfare is paid work, but thrusting young people into depression-style poverty is not the best way to achieve this.

Many or most of the young people in this situation will seek assistance from Samaritans but our capacity to respond will be limited, especially as our government funding for Emergency Relief and Financial Counselling is under threat.

We will immediately begin to plan how we might best respond to this unexpected challenge. It is really important that we maintain our commitment

to disadvantaged young people, especially those who have no family to turn to. We will very much value your support in the months ahead.

Yours sincerely,



**Cec Shevels, Chief Executive**



# EMPOWERING LOCALS WITH A DISABILITY .....

Earlier this year, Alison (pictured) received a funding package as part of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Alison and her family chose Samaritans to be their provider for this and we are making progress alongside Alison in leaps and bounds.

Alison's mum has told our staff that we have "helped to lift her daughter's spirits." Alison is now embracing new opportunities and has made decisions on how she would like to receive support, which includes attending an event of her choosing each weekend. A pleasure to be able to walk beside you in your journey, Alison!



# A LASTING GIFT .....

Did you know - a crucial Samaritans support service for grandparents raising their grandchildren was founded on a bequest!

Leaving a gift to Samaritans in your Will can ensure our important work can continue in your local community.

If you'd like to know more please contact Samaritans on 1300 656 336 or mail@samaritans.org.au.



*A grandfather playing with his grandson at a Samaritans Kinship Carer Support Group.*

# ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS AVAILABLE .....

We are selling the Newcastle/Hunter/Central Coast Entertainment Books. Full of hundreds of bargains for well-known restaurants, eateries and shops, don't miss out on your copy! A donation from every sale goes to Samaritans. Contact our Central Office to order on 1300 656 336.



**OUT NOW!**

# ONE YEAR ON AT WICKHAM STUDENT ACCOMMODATION .....

We cannot achieve the successes that we do without the support of generous donors, like you. Learn more about this Student Accommodation program at [www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au). We recognise the significant contribution of our major sponsors this year:



Want to keep up to date with Samaritans news and events?

Join our email list!  
[www.samaritans.org.au](http://www.samaritans.org.au)

 [www.facebook.com/SamaritansFoundation](http://www.facebook.com/SamaritansFoundation)

 [www.twitter.com/SamaritansNews](http://www.twitter.com/SamaritansNews)

Samaritans Foundation – Diocese of Newcastle  
36 Warabrook Boulevard, Warabrook NSW 2304  
PO Box 366, Hunter Region Mail Centre NSW 2310  
P: 02 4960 7100 F: 02 4960 7160  
E: [mail@samaritans.org.au](mailto:mail@samaritans.org.au)

Samaritans recognises and values the right to privacy. In accordance with Australian Privacy Laws, Samaritans has taken all reasonable steps to protect the privacy of our clients, our associations and our staff. If you do not wish to receive future issues of the Samaritans newsletter, please contact Samaritans Communications Department on 1300 656 336.

# What is \$25 to you?

Think of what it's worth to her

## Support Samaritans Winter Appeal.

**Just \$25 can make a difference.**

Please give what you can at [www.samaritans.org.au/donate](http://www.samaritans.org.au/donate) phone 1300 656 336 or post to PO Box 366, HRMC NSW 2310

Mr  Mrs  Ms  Other | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to donate:  \$25  \$50  \$70  Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my:  Cheque  Money Order  MasterCard  Visa

Card No.

Credit Card deduction:  Once Only  Monthly  Quarterly

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Donation of \$2 or more are tax deductible. A receipt for your generous donation will be mailed to you.

Cheques should be made payable to: **Samaritans Foundation**. Thank you.

I have previously donated to Samaritans.

Please contact me with information on how to make a Bequest.