

FRIENDS OF ABLE

SPRING 2020



Joe Monteleone, Able Australia Client

DEAFBLIND AWARENESS WEEK

This year, many events have been celebrated differently, and Deafblind Awareness Week was no exception. It was celebrated virtually in collaboration with Deafblind Information Australia, Deafblind Australia and Senses Australia. This event is paramount to the deafblind community as it is the perfect opportunity to create awareness and celebrate the deafblind community in Australia and around the world.

This year's empowering theme was "Identity and Connection = Deafblind Proud". Each day, a video was shared, showcasing the achievements of individuals

in the deafblind community. Able Australia's own Alisha Hill shared her sense of belonging story by attending deafblind workshops. Joe Monteleone shared his inspirational story of completing the Kokoda Track, which was a dream turned into reality (shown in the image above). Please go to Able Australia's Youtube channel to learn more about their stories: <https://bit.ly/3OGTLYm>

While this year's celebration was novel and special, we can't wait for next year's Yarn Bombing movement to celebrate Deafblind Awareness Week!

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TOGETHER WE ARE ABLE



COLLABORATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

At Able, we have seen that crises bring out the best in us, enabling us to band together with organisations, donors and supporters in new and effective ways.

The support we have received has ranged from providing food, producing and supplying much needed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as tele-practice.

Our main priority during this pandemic has been to provide our community with a substantial supply of PPE. Thanks to a number of collaborations, we have been successful at achieving this.

We partnered with Swinburne University and the University of Queensland to collaboratively print 1,100 3D frames which helped to form protective face shields. These protective face shields are being used with clients that require them for communication purposes.

Several communities came together for our drive to sew protective gowns, which was a roaring success. Signarama generously donated their printing services while the City of Boroondara

and Fabric Deluxe kindly promoted the call for seamstresses within their communities. This initiative resulted in over 400 beautifully sewn protective gowns which have been distributed to Able Australia's staff.

To learn more about our collaboration with Swinburne University, visit:
<https://bit.ly/3a9DRsR>

To learn more about our collaboration with Monash University, visit:
<https://bit.ly/2CdwMeh>

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



As COVID-19 continues to spread, the future has never felt so unpredictable. These are challenging times for us all, and we hope you are continuing to stay safe and taking good care of your health.

We at Able Australia are continuing to do everything we can to keep our clients and staff safe. I am also very proud to say we have taken a leadership role,

doing what we can to bring members of the disability sector together so that we can support the disability community more broadly in a unified way.

In this edition of Friends of Able, we share with you some innovative programs that have been developed as a result of all the COVID-19 restrictions. Like many others, we have turned to technology to stay connected. The team have really taken to 'thinking outside the square' to develop engaging activities which our clients and staff have enthusiastically embraced.

Turning to sadder news, the Able Australia community mourn the passing of Eddie Keir - one of our founding members. Many of you may remember Eddie given he was so actively involved with our organisation for over 45 years. Eddie's

warmth and inexhaustible spirit will be missed. Our deepest sympathies to Eddie's family. The passing of Eddie has made me pause to reflect. Able Australia is so lucky. A great many people like Eddie have given so much of themselves to help build up the organisation we have today. It has come in the form of voluntary work and generous donations, year in and year out.

I want to pay thanks to you for all you have given us. With your support, we are creating better days, every day for our clients.



VALE EDDIE KEIR OAM



We are saddened to report that Eddie Keir, one of the founding members of Able Australia, passed away on 16 July 2020 after a prolonged illness. Eddie retired from the Able Board in October 2012. He had been directly involved with the organisation, in one capacity or another since its inception in 1967.

Eddie Keir was internationally recognised for his work with the deafblind community, receiving the Ann Sullivan International Medal for work with Deafblind Persons and an Order of Australia Medal for Services to the deafblind.

Eddie was an extraordinary man who touched the lives of many within his field, and we extend our deepest sympathies to his family.



Wayne, Able Australia client

A GIFT THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME

Meet Wayne. He is 34 years old and lives in one of Able Australia's homes in Bonbeach, Victoria. Wayne lives with two other residents and Able Support.

Wayne has been a client of Able for many years and has flourished while living at Bonbeach. He has many hobbies including playing computer games and creating artwork with pottery, paper mache and paint. Wayne particularly loves

creating art using cat motifs, which he has proudly on display around his bedroom.

“It feels like my home. I smile a lot here” Wayne says.





Louise Wotherspoon, Able Australia Team Leader

Louise is the Team Leader at the Bonbeach home. "Every day is different for the staff and clients at Bonbeach" Louise says. "Wayne loves this place.

We need more houses like this because everybody should have their own space and gain independence. These houses are important because they feel like a home, and the staff and clients treat each other like family."

Alpha, an Able Support Worker who provides support to Wayne and his co-residents at Bonbeach, agrees. **"We need houses like this to help our clients like Wayne become more independent and have access to the community without anyone telling them what to do."** he says.



Alpha Turay, Able Australia Support Worker

With support, Wayne and his housemates learn the skills to cook and contribute to the running of their house, taking pride and ownership of their home.

The Bonbeach home was bought in 1997 using the proceeds of a generous gift left to Able Australia in the Will of Julia and Beryl Simmons.

While more than 20 years has passed, Julia and Beryl's legacy lives on. We are incredibly grateful to the Simmons sisters, as well as all those who continue to support Able Australia.

Our aim is to build more homes for those with disability in our community because we believe that everyone can live an independent life with the right supports.

You can make a **lasting impact** on the lives of people living with a disability **now and forever** by leaving a gift in your Will to Able Australia.

For more information, please contact fundraising@ableaustralia.org.au, or call 1300 220 602.

STATE CONNECT



VICTORIA

Ready, Steady, Zoom!

After spending months in lockdown without the normality and routine of everyday life, our clients were treated to a special Zoom Bake off session.

The first Zoom baking session encouraged clients to get involved in baking some mouth-watering scones. Clients worked as a team to decide on what kind of scone they were going to bake as well as assisting to prepare and measure the ingredients, helping with stirring and timing the baking process.

Cooking was the chosen activity because it is tactile, uses things commonly found in the home and results in a delicious treat that can be enjoyed together at the end.

Each home added their touch to the scones from sweet to savoury, adding colour and other embellishments.

These sessions offered a creative outlet for clients which they all enjoyed immensely.



Debbie, Able Australia client



ACT

Client Support

The Able team in the ACT have undertaken a substantial amount of work with allied health professionals to ensure clients are well supported

during the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. We are proud to advise that Able staff continue to do a great job in keeping clients happy and in high spirits.

Some clients have taken this

time to participate in arts and craft activities. Able client Tempe, has crafted tote bags while client, Leanne also had lots of fun creating diamond art for her sister.



QUEENSLAND

Connecting creatively

The Able Team in South East Queensland used Stage 3 restrictions as an opportunity to engage with senior clients in a creative and innovative way.

The team developed several initiatives that encouraged

client engagement. To encourage isolated seniors to call Able, tea and biscuits were delivered as a friendly reminder that support was only “a call away”. ‘Quarantea’ was an opportunity to enjoy a cup of tea and biscuit while connecting with Able staff.

Another initiative was sending ‘Tic Tacs’, inviting clients to call Able for a game of Tic Tac Toe, or just to have a chat.

These initiatives have been imperative for clients who live alone and don’t have family with which they connect.



TASMANIA

Tele-support

While COVID may have closed state borders, tele-health has opened them up. Able Australia undertook a trial project with Monash University to help train Australia’s up and coming allied health workforce. As part of the trial, allied health professional students were given the opportunity to assess Able clients in Tasmania via tele-health under closely supervised conditions

An interdisciplinary team including the Monash School

of Primary and Allied Health Care, consumer expert mentors, community-based health professionals and allied health professional students came together as a part of this project.

Initially, the project was designed to offer a combination of digital and face-to-face learning for people with disability. However, the escalation of the pandemic has led to the rapid transformation of a full-time tele-practice fieldwork placement with our clients and the Able team. This

project has been designed to help people with disability, their families, health professional students and disability support providers to engage with low-cost, mainstream technologies for digital connection, online communication and delivery of participation-focused supports.

The project was very successful and further collaborations are being explored.



Able Australia appreciates all the support received from the many friends of the organisation. Thanks to this support, we are able to deliver otherwise unfunded programs and activities, ensuring we continue to provide high-quality support. These programs enable people to reach their full potential and live the life they choose.

Yes, I would like to enable people to live the life they choose

☐

I would like to make a one-off gift of \$_____

By:

☐

Cheque (made out to Able Australia)

OR

☐

Credit card

<Appeal Code>

Card number

Expiry

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yy

Name on card _____

Signature _____

My details:

<Donor ID>

Name _____

Address _____ Suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Email _____ Mobile _____

☐

I would like to receive further information about leaving a gift in my Will to Able Australia

☐

Please send me my receipt via email

To make a donation, simply complete and return this form to Able Australia Services, Locked Bag 5, Surrey Hills VIC 3127

Alternatively, you can visit www.ableaustralia.org.au or call us on **1300 220 602** to donate

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. For a copy of Able Australia's Privacy Policy, please visit www.ableaustralia.org.au/privacy-policy

Thank you for your support

We truly hope that you are keeping safe during this difficult time, and are so appreciative of your support which helps us to provide better days, everyday for our clients.

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