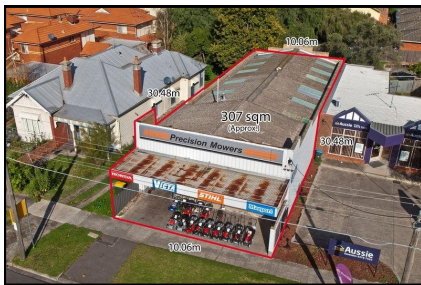




A New Home in the Moonee Valley



977 Mt Alexander Rd, Essendon

The Caroline Chisholm Society has a new home in the Moonee Valley from which it will support vulnerable women and families during and after their pregnancy. The Society bought 977 Mt Alexander Road, Essendon on November 2. It plans to grow and continue to support pregnancy, children and families in the local area.

The Society will be involved in a campaign to fund the works needed with a target of \$350,000. It already has commitments of \$120,000 in donations for this major project.

The Society sold 41 Park Street before auction on Saturday September 8. After being home to the Society for about 40 years, the much loved property was no longer suitable for our operations.

In this Issue ...

- A new home for CCS.
- An interview with Staff Member, Carolyn Black.
- Spotlight on Volunteer, Michael Lynch.

Want to Volunteer?

Contact Glenda Rumble on 03 9361 7000, or go to our website. Details over page.

It had increasing maintenance costs and presented a range of challenges for provision of pregnancy and family support services.

The social workers are still supporting pregnant women at Park Street, we're still taking donations of quality pre-loved baby and maternity goods for distribution to needy families, and volunteers from the area are still helping us to help families. Our operations at 1 Darebin Place, Caroline Springs also continue and we await news on our leased premises at 16 Broomfield Street, Shepparton, which is up for private sale.

41 Park Street, Moonee Ponds



The 2011-2012 Annual Report is now available. Download it from our website, email us or call for copy to be posted.

From the CEO



Friends,

Since I wrote in winter, there has been excitement in the air.

Operationally, the news is great! Gabriella Hendricks, our new Manager, Pregnancy and Family Services has started; we have an address for our new home in the Moonee Valley; and our fundraising efforts have paid dividends.

In service delivery, we are achieving our targets and hope to focus on group work and housing issues in the new year.

For finances, our new and pre-loved goods program including our bonnet and shawl stall has brought in about \$7000 so far this year. We have received significant support from community groups, including Essendon Rotary, Loyola College, and the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund. Our fundraising cocktail party was a fun night out.

In the spirit of Caroline Chisholm,

Helen Cooney
Chief Executive Officer

An interview with staff member, Carolyn Black



Carolyn Black

When did you join the Caroline Chisholm Society?

In January this year. *So, you're new to the Society.*

What was the first thing you noticed about it?

I liked Caroline Chisholm's logo. It is modern and embraces the idea of mother and baby being together. The friendliness and warmth of the staff made me feel welcome. **What was your previous role?** I was a family support worker shared across several primary schools. The job was advertised as Community Development Worker but my role was funded under the Commonwealth Chaplaincy Program. I was sometimes called 'The Chaplain'! It was confusing for lots of people. They would ask me where my congregation was and I had to say, "I'm actually not a minister, I'm a welfare worker". The schools system and the community services system didn't really understand each other.

What's your role at the Society?

A family support worker. I do home visits to our families and help with a whole range of things. I'm there to help the family with homelessness, the effects of drugs and alcohol, parenting and mental health. **At the society our clients have children aged from the first time they learn of their pregnancy to school age. This is different to the schools, where your clients had to have a school aged child. Where their any differences?** Actually, the biggest difference is that I work within a team. The Caroline Chisholm Society has respect and a reputation within the sector and I don't have to explain my role. When I was at a school I had little support. For example, the Society puts aside a budget for helping clients. Our clients have access to material aid and food. And, while we check their status, they don't have to provide bills and other evidence. **So the clients don't differ?** Remarkably, they're very much in the same situations. I treat the family as a whole so at the schools I had many clients with children under five. Likewise, here I have clients with school

aged children or teenagers.

What is the most rewarding thing about your role?

The clients I support. I feel privileged to work with them. You can't help but respect and admire those that are prepared to share their life story. I think opening up to a stranger is hard, especially if they've been sexually abused or been judged by others. The best compliment I ever received from a client was "I like you, you're normal". I was also told that I'm not coming from a book. I like the idea that I'm genuine.

What moment is your favourite memory of the organisation?

One day I needed to discuss issues faced by one of my clients needs but my supervisor was caught up. I received several offers for help and support to help the family and people were prepared to drop what they were doing to help.

I love that everyone is so warm and welcoming. Everyone is up for a chat and a bit of a laugh. There is genuine care for one another. I never feel judged here. I really love that; it's unique.

Interviewed by Helen Cooney.

Spotlight on ...

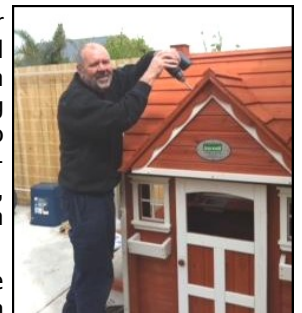
Michael Lynch has helped the Society with handyman tasks for over four years.

He responds enthusiastically to requests for repairs and has helped us with installation of equipment at the new Caroline Chisholm site.

Most importantly, the Society can trust Michael to help our clients with repairs to their furniture or installation of equipment in their homes. These are sometimes necessary repairs to the home, after being neglected by landlords, or sometimes it's to help make our clients' lives a little more fun. Recently Michael helped Audrey's client by building a cubby house in which her children can play.

Michael is also our safety checker and he helps Gwen ensure that all donated prams meet Australian Safety Standards before being given to the clients. Michael also helped us with our signage during the recent sale of Park Street, Moonee Ponds. We very much appreciate Michael.

He supports pregnancy in the best way he knows how - with gentle strength of character.



Michael at work.

Contact us ...

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