



NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 2023



*For unto you is born this day
in the city of David a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord.*

LUKE 2:11

JOHN PIERCE CENTRE
Spirit of the Deaf Community



www.jpc.org.au



admin@jpc.org.au



[JohnPierceCentre](https://www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre)



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Office Hours

MON - WED

9.30am to 3.30pm

THURS - FRI

By Appointment Only

Staff

Fr Wayne Edwards

Katrina Mynard

Teresa Paulet

Diane Backholer

Sr Janette Murphy rsj

Salomon Gerber

Executive Manager

Sophie Duncan

Chairperson JPC Board

Trevor Hughes

Board Members

Dean Sinclair

Br Shane Wood (Minutes)

Sonya Tissera-Isaacs

Evelyne Albrecht

Lucille Bennetto

Roshan Abraham

Next Newsletter Deadline

MARCH 2024

JPC would like to thank the community members for allowing us to use their photos in this publication and we acknowledge the free images in this newsletter from coolvector; macrovector; chandlervid85; jcomp; rawpixel.com; kjpargeter; pikisuperstar; DCStudio; s.salvador; brgfx; lucecitavectors and all Freepik images.

Message from the Manager



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, hoping you all are embracing the warmer (though rather rainy) weather in Melbourne. Throughout this year, JPC has been a part of some extraordinary moments, revealing the compassionate and supportive nature that resides in our community. It has been a very busy year for the Staff at JPC with staff retiring and Salomon joining us. We have held many information sessions for our community, and we do hope that this has helped in some small way. Our staff are always here to help, even over the festive season if needed.

As the year draws to a close, there have been numerous end of year and Christmas celebrations for our Community Groups. I hope that you have been able to attend some of the events and joined us in revelling in the festive spirit. We eagerly anticipate the joy of seeing your smiling faces and commemorating the spirit of the season together. Let's reflect on the positive moments of 2023 while keeping in mind those in our community who may have faced challenges. My heartfelt best wishes to each and every one of you! Thank you for contributing to the magic that made my 2023 truly special and embracing me here at JPC.

Sophie Duncan

Want to give back to the Community?

The John Pierce Centre is overseen by a committed Board of Representatives and Subcommittees who support the overarching operations of the JPC. We are seeking expressions of interest from Deaf individuals to join our Board of Directors or one of our Board Subcommittees: Finance Subcommittee or Management Subcommittee.

You do not require past Board committee experience, just a keen interest in supporting the work of the JPC.

Help shape the future of JPC and learn some new skills.

JPC is also seeking expressions of interest from Deaf or hearing individuals as a Minute Taker for meetings of the Board Sub Committees. Experience in taking meeting minutes is preferable.

Feel free to ask any questions or request further information:

JPC Executive Manager
manager@jpc.org.au



To My Dear Friends at JPC including their extended Families and Friends,

Christmas Season Reflection 2023

There is much to be thankful for as we approach Christmas and the end of another year. This year we have returned to normality after the pressure from the difficulties associated with the Co-vid pandemic of the past few years. What the past few years has demonstrated to me is the strength of our community and staff, a display of resilience during a difficult time. Thank God for 2023. The community has had its challenges, the sickness and / or passing of members, family and friends is always a sad time. Staff changes, those leaving through illness and / or retirement. As we prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ at Christmas let us reflect on the blessings we have received and any sad times we have experienced. It seems to me that in the world at this time we all need the peace and kindness and love that the birth of the baby Jesus – Son of God – and our saviour brings. May we be kind and loving to each other. To the members and staff of John Pierce Centre, family and friends and the wider Deaf Community may you all have a restful and happy and safe holiday time. With every blessing and prayer and good wish be yours, and to your nearest and dearest, this Christmas and that it will be one of hope, peace, joy and love.



Yours in Christ.

Fr. Wayne Edwards

With my Prayers and Love

Yours in Christ

Fr Wayne Edwards



Do you know a Deaf business owner?

We often have people asking whether we know any Deaf plumbers or landscapers, builders or graphic designers...Wouldn't it be great if there was a place where Deaf business owners can advertise their businesses so that others can find them?

Well JPC want to support the economic growth of Deaf owned businesses or those connected to the Deaf community. Whether you're Deaf or a CODA, an interpreter with a side business. Our newsletter goes to hundreds of people so let us advertise your business.

If you know of a Deaf business owner, let us know who they are!!

If you're interested please contact admin@jpc.org.au



Christmas Rally

Once again the John Pierce Centre had a lovely Christmas Rally event! Our most popular event of the year in our centre. There was a lovely Mass for the advent season. As well as a delicious roast lunch and dessert. Followed by the most popular raffle with several lucky winners!

Thank you to everyone that attended. We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did.

Enjoy your Christmas with friends and family.



Farewell from Gail Finn



On my last working day at JPC on the 17th September 2023, at our regular third Sunday Mass, it was a very special day for me to say goodbye. Certainly, I had mixed emotions of sadness and gratitude. I am getting used to saying "I am retired", after 23 years of working as an Administration Assistant and a Liturgy Co-ordinator at the John Pierce Centre. I am very privileged and so blessed for the opportunity to work at JPC. I was able to communicate easily with staff and the deaf community there. Unlike my first job as a full-time typist in the public service where I became bored and depressed with a routine job because I felt like a robot typing all day long (38 hours a week). It was also hard to interact with my hearing co-workers.

As well as working at JPC for 23 years, I was also involved since 1972 as a volunteer in various jobs: Committee member for Catholic Association for Deaf People; teaching deaf children to prepare for their sacraments; assisting our former chaplains, Fr. Peter Robinson, Fr. Greg Reynolds, Fr. Greg Bourke and Fr. John Hill. As well as the current chaplain Fr. Wayne Edwards.

We are very fortunate to have this Centre as there is no other place like the John Pierce Centre. We can attend JPC's various services: Church gatherings (Masses), other social gatherings like Pankina Deaf Group, Ladies Get Together, Men's Group, Deaf Art and Signee Tots Playgroup. In this way, we feel free to communicate in our own Deaf world. It is lovely to participate in our big events like Ephpheta Sunday in August and the Christmas Rally in December.

Wishing you all a blessed and joyous Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

JENNIFER BLAIR:

Jennifer was a past student of St Mary's, Portsea, and in regular contact with JPC. When Jules Hayes and I (Janette Murphy) were involved in offering support to Deaf in the country dioceses around Victoria, Jennifer was a regular that we could catch up with whenever we visited the Cobden area in the Ballarat Diocese. Jennifer was always pleased to see us and share her news. Often, we would meet with other Deaf in the area for Mass, either at Warrnambool or Koroit, and Jennifer was always happy to help the priest with setting up for Mass. She was very proud of her involvement in her parish as an altar server.

Jennifer was a machinist at the Fletcher Jones factory in Warrnambool from the age of 19, working for many years, which she enjoyed until her retirement. Jennifer was a lovely person who was always keen to be involved in anything that was happening. This included community activities, including the Warrnambool Ladies Pipe Band in which she was a Tenor Drummer.

Sadly, Jennifer passed away in January this year, at the age of 81. As her cousin Trevor told me over the phone: "Jennifer was a loved part of our family and is sadly missed". The same goes for the JPC community also.

To the right I have included an old article of Jennifer's time as a drummer in her local community band.

Pipe Band Drummer Has Never Heard A Note

I wonder how many people who watched our Warrnambool Ladies' Pipe Band play at a baby show and fete at South Warrnambool on Saturday realised that one of the tenor drummers has never heard a note of music in her life.

The drummer, pictured alongside, is 23-year-old Jennifer Blair of Peterborough, who has been deaf and dumb since birth.

She is attractive and vivacious and is intensely interested in everything that is happening.

To see that the next time our attractively turned out ladies pipe band parades, there will be a special hand for this young girl who refuses to let her handicap interfere with her enjoyment of life.

Not forgetting, of course, the girls who have helped to make Jennifer's silent world a little brighter.

Jennifer has been a machinist at the Fletcher Jones factory for the past four years. She lives at the FJ hostel in Flaxman street, where she shares a room with the band's drum major, Jan Winchester.

Jennifer does most of her own personal shopping, with occasional assistance and guidance from Jan and others at the hostel.

A short time ago, Jan thought that with her quick intelligence and excellent ability at music, Jennifer would be able to master the tenor drum.

The tenor drums are the show pieces of the band. The drum sticks, which the girls describe as "diah mops," are twisted and flourished like clubs.

Jennifer was taught the movements by the band's assistant secretary and former president, Miss Lola Jones, and picks up the beat of the music through sound waves.

For the past two months Jennifer has been a fully fledged member of the band and has taken part in all official engagements.

Jennifer was educated at the school for deaf and dumb in St. Kilda road, Melbourne, and later at "Delange" Portsea.



She has her own sign language for communicating with her friends, and also lip reads.

As well as band functions, Jennifer joins the girls in their social activities.

She attends local dances, sometimes alone if the other girls are busy elsewhere, and always manages to have a good time.

Jennifer enters "show girls" and similar contests and a short time ago won the "Miss Sherbrooke" title.

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JPC Exercise Group

JPC are running a gentle exercise program for senior Deaf community members to focus on building strength and balance as they age.

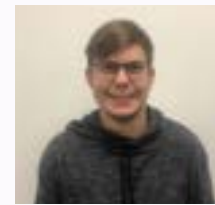
When: Thursday mornings 10am-12pm
Entry fee is \$5 per session

Sessions will be run by Fitness Instructor Khan Ramadan.
 There will be an interpreter: Christine Rabotog
 Please wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
 Morning tea will be provided



John Pierce Centre
 Spirit of the Deaf Community

Dates next Year:	
15 February	18 April
22 February	25 April
29 February	2 May
7 March	9 May
14 March	16 May
21 March	23 May
28 March	30 May
	6 June



Welcome to Salomon Gerber

Salomon has recently joined the JPC staff as the new Operations Assistant. He grew up in Switzerland and joined his wife Danni Wright in Australia in 2020. He has worked part-time as the Operations Assistant at JPC since August 2023. He is enjoying this new opportunity, working with staff and meeting the lovely people in the Deaf Community. Salomon is Deaf and knows many sign languages. When he's not at JPC, he enjoys working in theatre, looking at old cars and walking in nature.

Christmas Closure Dates:

JPC will be closed from Monday 18th December and will re-open on Monday 22nd January.

Staff will be on leave during this time but if you have urgent need of support please contact the Manager—Sophie Duncan 0416 207 913 (SMS or voice)

We are still available to support your needs and refer you to appropriate services if you need anything urgently.



We remember always, those that have been a part of our lives, as their spirits are weaved through the story that is our Deaf community.

Rest in Peace

Elaine Leiner – 10th August 2023

John McRae – 14th August 2023

Eugenie (Genie) Mynard – 29th August 2023
 (mother to Katrina Mynard and wife of Ken)

Shirley Ann Morrison – 31st August 2023

Peter Tant – 14th October

Paul Buttigieg – 12th November 2023 (father of Sarah Hoppen)

Office Hours-

MON - Wed: 9:30am-3:30pm

Thurs-Fri: by appointment only

Please make contact via email at admin@jpc.org.au

Your contribution:

Help us to support Deaf people and their families throughout VIC by making a tax deductible donation today.



www.givenow.com.au/jpcdonations

Leave a bequest

By leaving a gift to John Pierce Centre in your Will, you will have a lasting impact, supporting our Centre for years to come. It is a powerful reflection of the values and principles you treasure. It enables you to create a legacy of love and care for those in need.

For more information, please contact our office on 03 9525 1158 or email admin@jpc.org.au

Thank you.

Memorial Mass

A lovely Memorial Mass was held at JPC on Sunday 19th November to remember all those that we have lost in the last 12 months. We also had three plaques placed on the memorial stone in the garden.

Remembering Maureen and Margaret Brown, Chris Haigh and Raylee Thornton.



Thank you Party

An opportunity to thank all of those who support the John Pierce Centre. Support comes in many forms, whether that be financial, volunteering or donating, and we are truly grateful to all those that give so that we may continue our work to support the Deaf community.

Each year we hold a thank you party to acknowledge our supporters and share in the good work that we are able to achieve together!



The John Pierce Centre support the spiritual wellbeing of Deaf and hard of hearing people all around Victoria. Donating to our work can be done simply and easily by using this QR code. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible!



Community Activities Update!

Community groups are now on break for the Christmas and summer holidays. We will see you all back again in February 2024!

Signee Tots

Thank you to all of the Signee Tots families for their attendance and support this year with our playgroup. A special thanks to Kym and Ash who joined the Signee Tots playgroup and took on the volunteer role of managing the group. It has been a challenging year again as many families are busy with other commitments, and it can be quite a distance to travel for many attending the group. Thank you to everyone for coming and making it a joyful space to play.

The JPC team hope that you all have a restful and joyful Christmas and New Year and we look forward to seeing you all again in 2024!

Please email for more information: signeetots@jpc.org.au



The dates for next year's Signee Tots sessions are:

February 4th—at the John Pierce Centre

March 3rd—Outing to a park

April 7th—at the John Pierce Centre

May 5th—at JPC

June 2nd—at JPC

July 7th—at JPC

August 4th—at JPC

September 1st—at JPC

October 6th—Outing to a park

November 3rd—at JPC

December 1st—at JPC

Deaf Men's Group

The Men's group has had a few gatherings in 2023 and are planning for a great year in 2024. If you are interested in attending the men's group please contact

admin@jpc.org.au



Here are some photos of the recent information session and pizza lunch with the men's group.



First Session for 2024 will be
Wednesday 21st February at JPC

Thank you to our Volunteers

A very big thank you to the wonderful volunteers that are involved in one or more of these community groups. They always attend with an eagerness to help out and always roll up their sleeves to take on the task.. A very special thank you to Mark Backholer, Mandy Gay and Kathy Smitt. Thank you from all of the staff at JPC.

Remember!! For information on any community activities, please contact Katrina:

Deaf Arts & Crafts

What a very busy and successful year with the **Deaf Arts and Craft Group**! The artwork was absolutely stunning and I'm so proud of this group. **First session back in 2024 will be**

Friday 9th February!

(runs every Friday through the term)

If you would like to join this group please contact
Diane at JPC



Ladies Get Together

Co-ordinated by Diane Backholer

A fabulous year of gathering at JPC and going on outings around Melbourne and beyond! What an enjoyable year for all of the Ladies.

First event for 2024 will be

Wednesday 7th February!

(runs every second Wednesday through the term)



Pankina

It's been a fabulous year again for Pankina with Bingo days and cards days. Numbers are always big and all are welcome to attend.

First event for 2024 will be

Monday 29th January!

A catch up and chat session

...then...

Monday 12th February

Monday 26th February

Monday 25th March

Monday 8th April



SMS: 0400 660 601 / E: k.mynard@jpc.org.au

JPC Third Sunday Mass

JPC continues to provide onsite and livestreamed mass on Facebook. We encourage you to come to mass on the third Sunday of each month when you can or if you can't you can watch it online at: www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre



Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral

Deaf Interpreters will be at St Patrick's Cathedral for the 11am Mass on the Sunday 24th December.

Interpreters will continue to be provided on the first Sunday of each, beginning on 7 January 2024. We hope you are able to watch online or on Channel 31 (channel 44).

Thank you to the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne for their continued support of the Deaf community and JPC.

Calendar For Masses:

Sunday 24th December JPC Christmas Eve, online	3pm online only: watch at www.facebook.com/johnpiercecentre
Sunday 24th December St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne	11am St Patrick's or watch on Channel 31 (channel 44 on your tv)
Sunday 7th January 2024 St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne	11am St Patrick's or on Channel 31 (44)
Sunday 21st January JPC, Prahran. Welcome back Mass 2024	11am at JPC in Prahran or watch www.facebook.com/johnpiercecentre
Sunday 4th February St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne	11am at St Patrick's or on Channel 31 (44)
Wednesday 14th February JPC, Prahran. Ash Wednesday	11am at JPC in Prahran or watch online
Sunday 18th February JPC, Prahran	11am at JPC in Prahran or watch online
Sunday 3rd March St Patrick's Cathedral	11am at St Patrick's East Melbourne or watch on Channel 31
Sunday 17th March JPC, Prahran	11am at JPC or watch online

Christmas Eve Mass aired on Facebook on Sunday 24th December

JPC Christmas Eve Mass will be pre-recorded and posted on Facebook. There will be NO onsite Mass provided

Please watch at
www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre



I'm sure you've all seen and heard about the "Elf on the Shelf". A fun and joyful game for children to play. Perhaps you want to get in on the fun! Well here's a twist on the Elf game! How about this year, instead of crazy tricks of disaster from the Elf, why not treat those that we know with some joy. Maybe today you could leave a packet of chocolates on a friends door step with an Elf. Tomorrow you could clean somebody's desk and leave an Elf behind. No need to put your name, just leave the elf or a small note to say that you are lucky to have them as a friend/colleague. If we all did this, even just a few times through the Christmas season, we could spread a lot of joy. That's what Christmas is all about!

Paul Buttigieg

Paul was one of the many parents who worked within the Deaf community to ensure their Deaf children had a religious education and could be involved in the wider community. Paul was involved during the time Fr Peter Robbo was Chaplain and was President of the Catholic Association for Deaf and Hearing Impaired People of Australia (Victoria) in 1982 and 1983. He followed Bryan A'Hearn in this role, then handed over to Stan Batson, and then Charles Wallis, and Bruno Broglio. (You can see this on the Honour Board in the JPC foyer.)

Paul passed away on 12 November, aged 76. We offer our sympathies to his wife, Mary, and their children and grandchildren.

Eugenie Mynard

Eugenie (Genie) Mynard was another important parent who supported the great work of the John Pierce Centre. Wife of Ken Mynard and mother of Maree (dec.) and Katrina (staff member at JPC) as well as Melinda, Brett, Nicholas and Joshua.

Genie regularly brought Maree and Katrina to JPC events and Mass and volunteered her time in support of the centre whilst raising her family. An incredible woman, wife and mother.

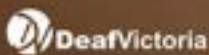
Genie passed away on 29th August 2023 and will be greatly missed.

Lord God, as we near the miracle of Christmas, guide us to be kind and generous to those in need, to be patient and forgiving to those around us and to prepare our hearts for the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Deaf? Caring for your children, siblings or parents?
Join our program in January 2024!

Supporting Deaf carers in Victoria



This project is supported by the Victorian Government.

JPC would like to thank the following organisations for their support through grants and sponsorships...



Ephpheta Foundation Grant

Gorman Foundation Grant



Please note that the price of the hard copy newsletter is increased from 2024 to **\$15 per year for 3 newsletters.** This is due to increased costs in creating and printing the newsletter. We appreciate your understanding.

Happy Christmas

Office Closed:

JPC will be closed to the public and community over Christmas. If you have any urgent queries, please contact Sophie Duncan 0416 207 913

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