

**JOHN PIERCE CENTRE  
AUGUST NEWSLETTER**

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Monday to Friday

**9:30am - 4:00pm**

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**Katrina Mynard**

**Melissa Smith**

**Mariana Voggenreiter**

**Executive Manager**

**Rachel Miers**

**Chairperson JPC Board**

**Theresa Mills**

**Board Members**

**Thomas Beddoe**

**Kathleen Carroll**

**David Heilbron**

**Sonya Tissera-Isaacs**

**Brian Tooth**

**Margaret Urquhart**

**Br Shane Wood (minutes)**

**Next Newsletter Deadline**

**December 2016**

## **From The Chaplain's Desk**

**Fr John Hill CSSR**

As I write this, I am reading Bernadette Wallis' book *The Silent Book*. As many of you know, the book is about her deaf parents and their language, Australian-Irish Sign. Her book comes at the right time for us. In August we have Ephpheta Sunday, when we celebrate the language, culture and history of the Deaf community. Bernadette writes beautifully about these three things in her book.

By telling the story of her parents, Don Wallis and Kath Walsh, we learn a lot about the history of the Catholic Deaf community. Bernadette tells us about Don and Kath's schooling at Waratah and St. Gabriel's. At both schools, pupils developed strong bonds with each other than endured right through life, learned Irish Sign Language, and then helped develop Australian-Irish Sign Language. We also learn about the growth of the Catholic Deaf community in Victoria, as we read about Don's involvement with the Catholic Deaf Club before he was married, and his later involvement when he, Kath and their daughters attend various events in St. Francis' Church Hall in the city.

Through Bernadette's book we also learn something about Deaf culture. She describes how deaf people live primarily in a visual world. She describes how sign language works, how it uses handshapes and visual space in making signs. She writes about the role of CODAs in the family, and how she and her sisters answered the phone on behalf of their parents. She describes how she got so involved when her father was buying a tractor. Instead of just interpreting for Don and the tractor salesman, she was telling her father what she thought and also putting her own questions to the salesman. After the sale was completed, he went back to his office and told his secretary, "I have just sold a tractor to a ten year old girl!"

Through much of Don and Kath's story, we learn about the isolation and lack of access to information that many deaf people experience. Don learns about his mother's death via a phone call which Bernadette answers. She then signs the sad news to her father. While there is a lot to like about life on the farm, Kath feels the isolation. She and Don miss the social life they had in Melbourne with other deaf, so visits from old Waratah and St. Gabriel's friends are always welcome. Like other

CODA's, Bernadette realises the world of the Deaf is not a silent one. While her parents and the adult visitors stay up into the early hours, she is in bed listening to the laughter, the banging on the table, and the deaf noise that echoes through the house. These visits, with their telling and retelling of old stories maintain the sense of belonging and community, so important for deaf people.

Bernadette's book is also about language. She writes about the beginnings of Irish-Australian Sign, how it was really her first language, and she laments how it is dying out. Over the years at JPC I can see for myself how we now have fewer people using Australian—Irish sign than when I began there in 2000. I can't imagine what it would be like if English, my first language, died out. I'm sure I'd feel completely lost. On the first anniversary of Kath's death, Bernadette and her two sisters meet for a picnic, and spend the time not talking but signing to one another in Australian-Irish Sign which describes as "their first and treasured language".

**Bernadette's book comes at good time for us as we celebrate Ephpheta Sunday. Let's hope that the gradual disappearing of Australian-Irish Sign can make us realise the importance of preserving Deaf heritage — language, culture and history. If we forget the past, we forget who we are.**

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### **From the Executive Manager's Desk**

**Rachel Miers**

Hello, Recently JPC staff drove to Galong, in New South Wales for a work retreat, with Ephpheta Centre from Sydney. It was lovely to join the retreat together. This retreat was a good time to reflect on our work and how we can work to the best of our abilities in providing our services to the community.

I am continually reminded by people of John Pierce Centre as a welcoming place with a smile. Please do take a moment to say hello to a friend and ask how they are going. By asking them will show them that you care about them. We have a couple of community activities happening here – Pankina, Deaf Men's Group, Ladies Outing, Signee Tots, CODA activities and Deaf Art and if you do know of a friend, invite them along to one of the community activities just for an hour, two

or more. They will keep coming back. Pope Francis quoted “The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, and forgiven”.

JPC staff is very excited to share the news with you all that JPC will be hosting a Deaf Catholic Conference next year in the heart of Melbourne. I would love for everyone to save the dates 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> August in their diary for next year to attend. Everyone is welcome to attend. More information will be announced in the next newsletter.

In August this year, however, we celebrate Ephpheta Sunday on 21st August, so please do join us for that special day in our community calendar!

Brrr... something to keep you warm: The recipe Pear and Choc chip self-saucing pudding (page 5) sounds yummy and I’m more tempted to cook this dessert. Perhaps anyone can cook for me? If you have any recipes to share, we will print in the next newsletter.

**Stay warm and keep well, *Rachel***

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**As per Raffle from Xmas 2015, here are the winners:**

1. Robert McDonald
2. Angela Turner
3. Valerie Saulle
4. Joy Maloney
5. Sharon Kilby
6. John Davies
7. Chrissy Lee
8. Christine Elder
9. Julie Patterson
10. Chris Haigh
11. Raylene Thornton
12. Mark Hageman
13. Maree Hynes

**Sr Bernadette Wallis has written a book : “The Silent Book: A Deaf Family and the Disappearing Australian-Irish Sign Language”**

**She celebrated one of her book launch events with us at JPC on Sunday 17th July.**

**We are very proud to support this wonderful book and we wish Bernadette all the success in the world! Here are a few words from Bernadette about her book.....**

*“The book is written for a general audience - both the Deaf community and the broader hearing community. the book, besides taking the reader into a greater understanding of a Deaf way of life through the story of a Deaf family, my family, I wanted to give people an understanding of the history of the Australian-Irish Sign Language and how it came into Australia - and why it ceased being used. wanted to record that there was such a language and how precious it was to those who used it as their first language - and recognising that it is fast disappearing as a language. also wanted people to have a greater insight into the global perspective of the Deaf community and the Catholic history in relation to Deaf education and the complex issues involved.also document something of the history of the early Deaf community especially in Victoria and how it impacted on the leaders in the community and my family - their deep faith and contribution to the world.*

*The cover page is interesting: the background you can see two hand-signs - a 'D' and a 'K' for Don and Kathleen (my parents). can also see a dragonfly, a Wonga pigeon and part of a white waratah flower. are symbols in the book that are from Aboriginal Dreamtime stories. cousin's husband designed the cover.*

*I thank so many people for supporting me in the research, including Stan Batson RIP, Brian Johnston (Sydney), the Dominican Sisters and the Christian Brothers. Robert Adam wrote the Foreword in the book, which was most appreciated. I have loved writing the book and am so glad I have had the opportunity to do it”*

***Kathleen’s Forever Prayer (from the book)***

*God*

*You are a forever God.*

*Where I am*

*Wherever you are*

*However my circumstances  
Whatever I am doing  
Or whatever I am not doing  
You are there  
You are part of me—of all  
You are my life—you are life  
All that I am  
And all that surrounds me  
You are joy of beauty  
You are beauty of landscape and moonscape  
You are fullness of sea and sky  
Ever reaching, ever arching.  
My eyes look for you forever  
I plead with you forever  
For all who suffer forever  
For all disrupted and crushed—  
For the children  
For the poor  
For justice for all  
And compassion for all  
In the world forever.  
Yes,  
You are a forever God.  
**AMEN***

***Bernadette T. Wallis***

**All proceeds from the book sales go to the John Wallis Foundation who help people experiencing hardship and disadvantage.**

**\$30 each (pick up from JPC) OR you can order and receive by post for \$40.**

**Go online: <http://www.johnwallisfoundation.org.au/news-of-activities>**

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## Directors Award:

Sr Frances began teaching children with a hearing impairment at Waratah in 1947. Through the years she has continued to offer her teachings and support at Waratah, Portsea, Wantirna South, Bathurst Island, Brisbane and Melbourne.

Frances 'retired' in 1998, but continued to be actively engaged in pastoral outreach with hearing-impaired ex-students and their families in QLD, NSW and VIC, with persons she has known since she began teaching at schools for the deaf as well as other deaf people who sought her help.

Frances has been a presence at JPC ever since she returned to Melbourne. She attends most 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Masses at Prahran and on occasions drives a deaf man who is in a care facility and who otherwise would not be able to attend. Frances also attends the monthly signed Mass at St Francis. She has been actively involved for many years in the annual appeal for JPC. You may be sure to see Sr Frances at other events and liturgies connected to JPC. Sr Frances has continued to talk at her Camberwell Parish during JPC Ephpheta Direct Appeal as recently as last November.

In 2007, Sr Frances celebrated her diamond jubilee. The celebration here was held in the adjacent building when we worked from there. It was attended by many ex-students and their families, along with friends. It was a great tribute to Sr Frances and demonstrated the esteem in which she is held. On 28<sup>th</sup> December 1996 Frances was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for services to the Deaf Community in the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory Deafness Association requested this public recognition of Frances' work with the Tiwi people of Bathurst Island.

'Sister Frances Caine, a Dominican Sister, ex-principal of St Mary's School for the Deaf, Portsea Victoria, has worked on Bathurst Island for the last six years at Murrnunputiyanu Catholic School, Nguuu, as co-ordinator of the Hearing Programme. She is a 'Wonder'! Without her there would be no hearing program, no audiological testing, no associated fitting of hearing aids, no ear wash programs, no training Tiwi workers for this job; no advocate for Tiwi people; demanding and obtaining access to Ears, Nose and Throat surgery; no

follow up of surgical procedures nor monitoring of antibiotic use; no co-ordinating of visits of professional groups from Darwin, Northern Territory Hearing Australian Hearing and Rural Health, Menzies School of Health Research, Aboriginal Hearing programs'.

Frances was awarded an AM in 2004 for her work with hearing impaired children.

Sister Frances Mary CAINE, Bracken Ridge, Qld. For service to children with impaired hearing, particularly through the Aboriginal Hearing Health Programme in the Northern Territory and to education and training.

In 2016, the Directors of John Pierce Centre wish to present Sr Frances with the JPC Award for her dedication to Catholic Deaf Communities.

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### **Community Member Profile:**

#### **Kevin Moore**

I am 75 years old on 9<sup>th</sup> April. I am very happy at Holy Family Hostel with residents. I always write on white boards with my texta pens to nurses, staff, volunteers and residents at Nazareth House at Camberwell.

**Favourite colour?** Blue

**AFL team?** Essendon

**Favourite holiday place?** Fraser Island, Queensland

**Favourite meal?** Delicious meals look like 5 star at Nazareth House.

**Coffee or Tea?** Hot chocolate

**Favourite TV show?** The Bold and the Beautiful, Home Away, News 24, AFL Live and Cricket matches.

Photo shown: **Opening of John Pierce Centre at Ripponlea, Victoria on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1979.** Left: Fr. Michael Wilson, Kevin Moore, Sr. Catherine Pierce SSJ (sister of Fr. John Pierce) with Archbishop Frank Little in background who gave his special blessing of the centre.

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## **Signee Tots**

Signee Tots is for any families who are related to deaf people and who have kids in the family around 0-5years. It is also suitable for anyone who uses Auslan or would like to use sign language with their children.

We have a safe, comfortable, open space for kids to play, sign, talk and for carers to sit, drink tea and relax!

We hold our gatherings ONCE A MONTH—here are the remaining dates for the year:

9<sup>th</sup> August

6<sup>th</sup> September

20<sup>th</sup> September

4<sup>th</sup> October

8<sup>th</sup> November

6<sup>th</sup> December

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## **JPC Deaf Art**

JPC Deaf Art group has some exciting classes for each Friday.

It's going to be fun and very hands on! Do come along and learn a new art, work on your own project and chat with friends.

You will be surprised what you can do!

### **Upcoming Friday Dates:**

**5th August**—Scrapbooking—Rachel

**12th August**—Card Making—Dawn May

**19th August**—Work on your own project

**26th August**—Macramé—Gina

**2nd September**—Macramé—Gina

**9th September**—Card Making—Dawn May

**16th September**—Museum of Modern Art—Heidelberg

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We are looking for a group of people to help on a small project. We are making small felt toys for kids to give to loved ones who are in hospital. This project is in conjunction with Cabrini Health and we are happy to support them!

Please let JPC know if you are interested and we will discuss further.

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### **RECIPE: Pear and Choc-Chip Self Saucing Pudding**

#### **Ingredients**

1½ cup self-raising flour, sifted  
¾ cup brown sugar  
25 g butter melted  
¾ cup milk  
½ cup choc bits  
410g pear slices drained & chopped

#### **Method**

##### **Step 1**

Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Combine flour, sugar, butter, milk, choc chips and pear in a bowl. Stir until smooth. Spread into a 10-cup capacity ovenproof dish.

##### **Step 2**

Make sauce Combine sugar, boiling water and butter in a heatproof jug. Stir to combine. Pour sauce, over the back of a large metal spoon, over batter.

##### **Step 3**

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until top is just set. Stand for 5 minutes.

***Mmmmmm!***

**Sauce :**

**2/3 cup brown sugar,**

**2 cups boiling water,**  
**50 g butter chopped.**

### **Ladies Day Out**

Ladies Day Out is still one of the most popular programs in JPC. It is lovely to see all the ladies' smiling and enjoying this program.

### **Brunetti in Carlton:**

In May, we went to Brunetti in Carlton. Seeing all the beautiful and gorgeous cakes was wow and off course yummy.

### **Marilyn Monroe's Museum:**

On Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June, we had a great day in Bendigo at Marilyn Monroe's Museum. We all enjoyed and learnt more about Marilyn Monroe. For example: Marilyn Monroe real name is Norma Jeane Mortenson. Also after seeing all the beautiful dresses that Marilyn's wore was absolutely stunning and gorgeous. I still cannot believe that she was a tiny woman.

### **Easey's in Collingwood:**

The recent In July 2016, we went to Easey's in Collingwood, dining in the training was fascinating and interesting experiences.

The dates for the next events are :

- \* Wed 17th August—Peninsula Spa day
- \* Wed 21st September
- \* Wed 19th October
- \* Wed 16th November

*If you would like us to email you about the upcoming events, please send your email address to the girls below:*

### **Deaf Men's Group**

Deaf Men's Group is run on a Monday, each fortnight from 10am to 2pm. Most of the men come to the JPC Hall and play cards, talk, share news.

**Come and join the men's group when ever you like — It's an open house!**

Coffee/ Tea are provided, but please BYO Lunch.

**Pankina**

**Malcolm Stevenson**

Pankina group had a wonderful celebration in July with over 50 people attending the Christmas in July lunch!

Of course, we invite you all, old friends and new, to join our fortnightly gatherings and play bingo, crazy whist and 777s...We hope you can come along sometime! In our committee news: we have new committee members Robbie Elward and Virginia Park, and we have a new secretary Janet McDonald. We thank Cheryl Clark for all her work as our previous secretary.

We look forward to our next day adventure which is a bus trip to Marysville on Mon 29th August. If you would like go, please contact JPC now as seats on the bus are limited.

**Upcoming Dates:**

Mondays and some Tuesdays due to Public Holiday

1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August 2016

12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016

10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016

7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016

5<sup>th</sup> December 2016

<b>For more info about our community activities - please contact:</b>
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**Katrina or Mariana**

**E: [k.mynard@jpc.org.au](mailto:k.mynard@jpc.org.au)**

**E: [mariana@jpc.org.au](mailto:mariana@jpc.org.au)**

## **Rest in Peace**

Glenn Brian Turner— 6th April 2016

Allan Stephens (Uncle of Moreen Griffiths) — 11th April 2016

Julie Anne Porter (wife of Trevor, Mother of Vanessa and Matthew)—1st June 2016

Anthony Phillips—14th June 2016

Brian Ralph—14th June 2016

Berna Hutchins—17th June 2016

Mark Hageman— (Son of John)—29th July 2016

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**For more info about donations (including bequests & newsletter subscriptions), please contact:**

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**Gail Finn**

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**Email: [g.finn@jpc.org.au](mailto:g.finn@jpc.org.au)**

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## **Calendar for Signed Masses**

**First Sunday Mass** every month at John Pierce Centre (start in March 2016)

**Second Sunday Interpreted Mass** at St. Francis Church, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. **Third**

**Sunday Mass** every month at John Pierce Centre

(1st Sunday Mass) Sunday 7th August Auslan only	Prahran, JPC 11.00am
(3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday Mass) Sunday 21st August interpreter provided	Prahran, JPC 11.00am
(First Sunday Mass) Sunday 4th September Auslan only	Prahran, JPC 11.00am
(3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday Mass) SUN 18th September interpreter provided	Prahran, JPC 11.00am
(First Sunday Mass) Sunday 2nd October Auslan only	Prahran, JPC 11:00am
(3rd Sunday Mass) Sunday 16th October interpreter provided	Prahran, JPC 11:00am
(NO First Sunday Mass) for November	

(3rd Sunday Mass)Sun 20th November interpreter provided	Prahran, JPC 11.00am
(Christmas Rally Mass)Sun 11th December Auslan only	Prahran, JPC 11.00am

On Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th November, we will be running our annual Ephpheta Appeal. As you know we do rely on donations to keep our centre running so this activity is very important.

We would love you to come with us to visit some parishes around Melbourne and talk to the communities about JPC and about the wonderful Deaf community.

If you are able to assist, please contact Christine Elder on 03 9525 1158 or email [admin@jpc.org.au](mailto:admin@jpc.org.au)

Thank you!

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**Stan Batson - 31.01.32 – 11.03.2016**

**Stan was a respected leader in the Deaf community. He is survived by his wife Myra and children Carmel, Anne, Andrew and David.**

**We thank the family for sharing their memories of this great man....**

***Eric Stanley Batson or Stan as most of us know him was born on the 31st of January 1932. Not long after he was born his parents soon discovered that he was born Deaf and so began an amazing life.***

As a 3 year old he was sent to St. Gabriel's school for Deaf children in Sydney.

Obviously this was a difficult decision for his mum and dad but they wanted him to get every opportunity.

When he recalled this time in his life it was with sadness, as he missed his parents and brother terribly and they missed him. So with war impending Pop decided to move him back.

At the age of eight in 1940, dad was moved to Victorian school for deaf children in St Kilda Rd. His early memories were recorded as he mentioned that ..... "I was really scared when passing the big gates under the trees in the driveway to enter the school. A huge grey stone building was waiting to welcome me and reminded me of what I had seen in scary films at the pictures, there seemed to be a lot of ghosts there."

When he left school dad started work in the family transport business. Most of the time, he worked in the spare parts area of the business, later becoming a driver doing office work. Dad felt quite fortunate and believed he learnt a lot at work. The other bosses could finger spell and sign a little bit.

In the early 50's after working with Trans Otway for a few years, he packed himself up and got on a boat heading abroad for his 1<sup>st</sup> overseas adventure. He attended the world council of deaf peoples conference and was in London for the Queens coronation.

*(When he met Myra...)* On their first date they went and attended a show and then returned to Mums home where Dad was invited in for a cup of tea. Once inside, he and mum started talking. They spoke for hours. They spoke for so long that Nan Daley noted she had to fill the coal box in the heater 3 times during that first night.

It was then mum realized that he wasn't all that bad.

Soon after, dad had to return home to Australia but he had already made up his mind and he wanted to marry this girl. So on September 24<sup>th</sup> 1955 they were married in St. Mary's, Geelong. This September would have been their 61<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary.

Dad loved a laugh and when he started laughing he couldn't stop. Whether he was watching one of his old favorites or more recently Mr. Bean! Once he started he couldn't stop and we would laugh along with him. He had a wonderful sense of humor and his ability to make mum and us kids laugh and smile was endless.

Dad loved sport all his life. As a young man he would represent Victoria in the annual Australian championships for the deaf in both cricket and football.

Locally, he played footy with Geelong Amateurs and cricket with St. Mary's and later on Marshall.

Over the years, I've heard many stories of dad's exploits on the field. One of his mates from back then once told me a story of Dad having on one occasion at a ruck contest, collect the ball at pace, charge off and take a couple of bounces and kick a remarkable goal from quite a way out. Unfortunately, dad never heard the umpire's whistle which he had blown not long after he first picked up the ball! But these little setbacks never deterred him and only made him more determined.

One constant road trip that we could always rely on was each month on a Sunday we would all be bundled into the car and would head off to aunty Rene's and Uncle Les's in McKillop St, pick up dad's cousin Joe, and go off to mass at Jolimont in Melbourne and later on to John Pierce center in Ripponlea. At the time, particularly us boys, could think of a million other things we would rather do on a Sunday but this was pretty much one of the few things that was a non-negotiable. We attended mass and with Fr Rob and later Fr Greg and afterwards all the deaf would gather and socialize and us boys would mix with deaf and hearing kids from that time. Now looking back we learnt a lot about our Dad. He was a big wheel amongst these deaf people.

A while back I was in a café about to order some lunch and in the line in front of me was an elderly Deaf couple trying to order so I stepped up and helped them out with their order and afterwards they thanked me and asked me how I knew how to sign. I explained that my mother father was deaf and they then asked who they were. I said Stan and Myra Batson. They both nodded to each other and said "Big Catholic Boss" my dad was a Big Wheel!!

***By Andrew Batson***

When Dad finished his working life, he threw himself into the deaf community. He got involved in education and earned himself a degree from Latrobe University. He was in his 60's and his thirst for knowledge never waned.

Dad was a respected leader in the Victorian Deaf Community, and particularly in Geelong.

Dad was a tireless advocate for access and inclusion for Deaf and hard of hearing people. He sat on a number of national and state Boards and committees, including the Australian Communication Exchange, Deafness Foundation, Deafness Forum and the Geelong Deaf Social Club. He was also involved in the John Pierce Centre and the Victorian Deaf Catholic community.

VicDeaf awarded Dad “Life Governorship of the Society” in recognition of his services to the community.

Dad was really a fantastic husband and parent to us all, Maurie and Tami embraced as one of his own, Shanon, Bridge, Caity and now Justin all having special bonds. He would talk in glorious terms of their academic and sporting achievements, Meg and Will no less. He was so proud. He was a loving man and a truly “Great man”.

***By David Batson***

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### **Berna Hutchins – 27.06.53 – 17.06.16**

***Berna was a very much loved and respected leader in the Deaf Community. Berna will be remembered for her love of teaching Auslan and telling stories.***

***She is survived by her partner Silvia and children Carly, Priscilla and Craig, and we sincerely thank them for sharing Berna’s story with us...***

Berna was born in Mooroopna, a small town on the outskirts of Shepparton, where her family lived, in country Victoria. She was the second youngest child of nine brothers and four sisters.

At the age of three, following the advice of the priest and doctor, Berna's mother Bernadette and father Harry made the painful decision to send Berna to a St Mary’s Delgany in Portsea which was a Catholic boarding school for deaf children, who were cared for by Dominican sisters. She arrived at the school in 1957 and left in 1970.

Berna spent most of her life away from her family, missing out on growing up with

them. parents and siblings loved her dearly and cherished every moment they were together, but Berna felt the pain of the separation throughout her whole life, as did her family, particularly her mother.

St Mary's Delgany became a home for Berna where she would form another family. She and other girls formed a true sister bond that has lasted to date.

Berna wrote the poem "My childhood" that contributed to her completing her Bachelor of Education L.O.T.E. (Auslan) degree at La Trobe University. It expresses wasted years of teaching sounds to a profoundly deaf person at the expense of little education given. See poem attached.

A new world opened to Berna when she embraced and learnt sign language, after leaving St Mary's Portsea in her late teens.

She was married at 19 and had three children Carly, Priscilla and Craig. She became a single mother at a very young age, working and raising her children on her own. Berna's parents and some family members support her along the way.

In her early thirties Berna and Silvia met and they became life long partners. They started their first trip overseas going to Europe, Brazil and Argentina, Silvia's country of birth. This eye opener trip triggered her insatiable love for travelling. travels took her to Indonesia, Thailand, Europe, UK, Canada, USA, Central and South America. Her deafness did not hold her back as she navigated her way around these countries, with lots of adventures along the way. Her life long dreams to visit Machu Picchu and go on a cruise, both she achieved.

Berna was thrilled at the birth of her two grandchildren in 2001. Lucas, son of Carly and Dakota, daughter of Craig gave her endless happiness and fun. They adored their nana.

In her early working life, she had different administrative jobs never allowing her deafness to hold her back. In her 40s she eagerly took the opportunity to study under the program Language other than English (L.O.T.E.). She completed her Bachelors and became an Associate Lecturer at the Institute of Deaf Studies at La Trobe University, a job that often took her outside Melbourne and Australia.

In 2006 Berna was diagnosed with breast cancer. She returned to work after

completing her treatments. In 2009 the cancer spread to her bones. Periodically she would return to work until she retired in 2011.

Berna had a passion for the history of her family, and the history of St Mary's Portsea. She spent countless hours researching and collecting information, with the intention of putting together a book...

...A dream her children now hope to fulfil in the future.

Berna as part of a large family loved spending time with them, in particular her partner, children and grandchildren.

Berna had many different interests such as her Art classes at JPC, in which she created a mosaic of Audrey Hepburn, amongst other things. She also loved her regular catch up with friends at cafés, walking groups, card playing groups and the Portsea girls reunions. She loved building things, and doing renovations around the house. Berna was well known an amazing story teller, with many people always wanting to hear more. Her legacy lives on in the world wide web

Her early life experience shaped Berna into a strong and resilient character. She was highly intelligent and very skilled in many ways. She was proud of being deaf and passionate about AUSLAN. She was inspirational and interesting to every person who crossed her path. She always had a smile on her face, and had a way of making the people around her smile. She will be missed beyond words but she will NEVER be forgotten.

***The family has also kindly shared a beautiful poem written by Berna....this poem will be appreciated by many of our community members. Please enjoy reading this on the next page.***

## **"My Childhood" by Berna Hutchins**

Keep saying

Look at my face

Watch my lip

Look at the mirror

Read my lip

Learn to speak

Learn some words

every days

going on and on

for years

You must wear hearing aids

You must listen

You can talk

Can you hear the music

Can you hear the beats

Can you feel the beats

You can sing

You can say prayers

you can dance

You can play sports

You are marvellous

You are brilliant

I am proud of you

You are just like,

one of hearing people

Your voice sound good

You can play orchestra

Can you feel any vibration

You must learn some words  
without lip-reading me  
Just try to listen to what I say  
with your hearing aid on  
You are so brilliant  
You can lip-read  
Don't make any noise  
You must not shout when you are talking  
Have manners and be polite  
when you are talking  
You are really good  
A bright child  
You can talk very well

**YES,**  
**you made me feel good**  
**BUT**

Waste my time  
Waste your time  
Teaching me how to speak  
Try to impress you  
trying to speak properly  
in most of my early years  
I am not bitter  
Just angry  
Just disappointed  
Missing out on some good educations  
through my early years

You did try your best to help us  
to speak  
But not use any sign language  
or any gesture at all  
not allowed.  
Look at me  
I am profound Deaf  
Am I perfect?  
Yes, I am!  
Maybe I am not!  
but couldn't talk full words  
yet I am still trying to.  
I cannot talk very well.  
Just talk only short words.  
All words, I want to talk  
to hearing people.  
But write notes  
so often  
One-way talk to me  
Always interrupt you and me  
Without say "Excuse me"  
Big grateful thank to a Deaf friend who  
introduced me  
into real Deaf world  
Open my eyes  
I am one of them.  
Too embarrassed when they talked to me  
in Auslan  
I couldn't use Auslan

But I adopted Auslan so quickly  
Everything, every words, any words  
I can talk in AUSLAN.

It's very exciting

Now I feel I am treated as an adult like you

Always belong to Deaf world...

**....Once you are born Deaf,are always Deaf  
Be PROUD to be Deaf.**

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## **Our JPC Staff retreat – Living with an Open Heart**

**In June, the JPC team and the Ephpheta Centre team (from Sydney) participated in a Retreat. A time to rejuvenate...and to learn how to live with an open heart.**

**What is a retreat?** Some people like to go an retreat as part of spiritual formation. It is a time set aside to change focus and to deliberately step outside of normal routine. The time can be spent on prayer, reflection, mediation and relaxation. There are no pressures and no insistent claims of our social, domestic and workaday responsibilities. It can also be a time to think and reflect.

**Why do JPC staff need the retreat?** A quiet time to allow all our sense to be open and to be ready to listen to God and to help us reboot our stores to ensure we do our best for the community we work with.

“My first thought was Where is Galong? I looked it up on google maps and it was middle of nowhere (No shops, no cafes or houses...nothing!). It was 6.5 hours away and it would mean 3 days away from my husband! That is going to be challenging for me. When I first arrived, it was absolutely amazing and so peaceful. The people were friendly and lovely. It was the first time that myself and the JPC staff got to know each other in depth. During the 3 days, we had the opportunity to explore our roles and purpose of JPC. I am so blessed and grateful that I got to know the Sydney Ephpheta team too. Thankyou to all of you for a wonderful experience!” **Mariana Voggenreiter**

“I loved the activities on the retreat. We learnt about having an open heart—and we know that is sometimes hard to do. I loved the balloon activity where we all worked together to keep the balloon in the air! It was hilarious! But we worked together to keep it alive! I also really enjoyed the evening walks and lying on the ground to gaze at the wonderful sight of billions of stars!” **Gail Finn**

“I had never been on a retreat before (well, yes a long time ago in school!), so I was a little bit unsure of what to expect. The first thing I felt was – comfortable. It was easy to talk to my team mates and to the Ephpheta team. We learned about how to be calm, and mindful and thankful...and about slowing down (and that is hard to do when you are a mum of 2 small boys!) We supported each other as we learnt about “having an open heart” and about putting this into practice at home and at work. The retreat reminded me, that even though we all lead different and

busy lives, we are better when we embrace and support each other”. **Melissa Smith**

“This Retreat made me realise how important for all of us to work together and share information, especially when we know how important it is to have regular contacts.Those regular contacts like Retreats, Conferences and workshops are so valuable” **Katrina Mynard**

“The retreat is such a beautiful divine place where there is absolute quiet, far from the traffic peak hour rush. No internet access, no television. We got to reflect on our work and share with Ephpheta Centre team. And at the same time, learning to become more mindful. I enjoyed the labyrinth as it took me on a journey to think about where I am while walking between the rocks placed on the ground. Some paths are short and long representing the short and long journeys I have been on. **Rachel Miers**

“I was very nervous about the retreat—as you know—I never sit still! But it was a great opportunity to reflect, and be thankful and to know that I am part of a wonderful community!” **Christine Elder**

<b>A TIME TO SHARE IN THE SPIRIT</b>
<b>OF XMAS &amp; TO GIVE THANKS!</b>
<b>WHERE:</b> JPC HALL, 25-35 HIGH ST, PRAHRAN
<b>WHEN:</b> SUNDAY 11TH DEC
<b>TIME:</b> 11.00AM
<b>PLEASE JOIN US AFTER FOR A CELEBRATION IN THE HALL</b>
<b>MORE DETAILS COMING SOON</b>

<b>WANT TO KEEP IN TOUCH - CONTACT US ON Web:</b> <a href="http://www.jpc.org.au">www.jpc.org.au</a>
<b>OR EMAIL:</b> <a href="mailto:admin@jpc.org.au">admin@jpc.org.au</a>
<b>OR FACEBOOK :</b> JohnPierceCentre

<b>Looking for volunteers!</b>
<i>We will be gift wrapping at <u>The Good Guys in Chadstone for Fathers Day</u> and all proceeds go to our centre. We have various shifts to choose from and we appreciate ANY time you can offer. You don't have to be an expert wrapper either!</i>
<b>Please contact us ASAP to express your interest. Email: <a href="mailto:admin@jpc.org.au">admin@jpc.org.au</a></b>

<b>COME AND VISIT OUR BOOTH AT THIS EXPO (EXPO COORDINATED BY VICDEAF).</b>
<b>WE WILL SHARE MORE ABOUT WHAT WE DO AND WE WILL HAVE A PLAY AREA FOR THE KIDS!</b>
<b>WHEN:</b> SAT 22ND OCT
<b>WHERE:</b> MELBOURNE SHOWGROUND
<b>TIME:</b> 10—4PM