

# VOCAL POINT

COVER STORY | PAGE 03

## Stars of Minda



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Cover image: Jakob Crossfield, winner of the AccessPay Star (Unsung Hero) Award at Stars of Minda.



## Vocal Point is the official newsletter of Minda

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## FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER CLARE ALLEN



**It is fair to say that over the last year, we have had our resolve tested, been challenged to do better and were presented with an opportunity to transform into a much stronger organisation on behalf of the people that matter most – our clients.**

We also enjoyed plenty of highlights throughout the year, and as 2019 draws to a close, I would like to reflect on some of the positive progress we've made at Minda in recent months.

Our new Values – Heart, Opportunity, Respect, Community and Empathy – have been rolled out across the organisation and have been very well-received; they drive how we work and show the community who we are and what we hold most important.

Someone who really embraces these values is our Board Chair and President of the Association Joanne Denley, who was elected by the Board on September 25.

A professional Business Advisor and Independent Board Director, Joanne has held a variety of Board positions including the role of Chair in private and public sector organisations, including Bridgestone Australia Group.

In addition to more than 30 years of experience in Risk Management and Human Resources, Joanne has vast Corporate Executive experience in managing industrial relations and improving operational efficiencies across diverse business sectors, nationally and internationally.

Joanne holds an MBA majoring in Global Entrepreneurial Management and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of

Company Directors. I hope you will join with me in congratulating Joanne on her well-deserved appointment.

In another positive step, we recently launched our Reconciliation Action Plan, with our reconciliation journey starting in 2017 with the formation of our Reconciliation Action Plan working group.

The Reconciliation Action Plan guides the development of relationships and meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the organisation – whether that is employees, volunteers or the people we support.

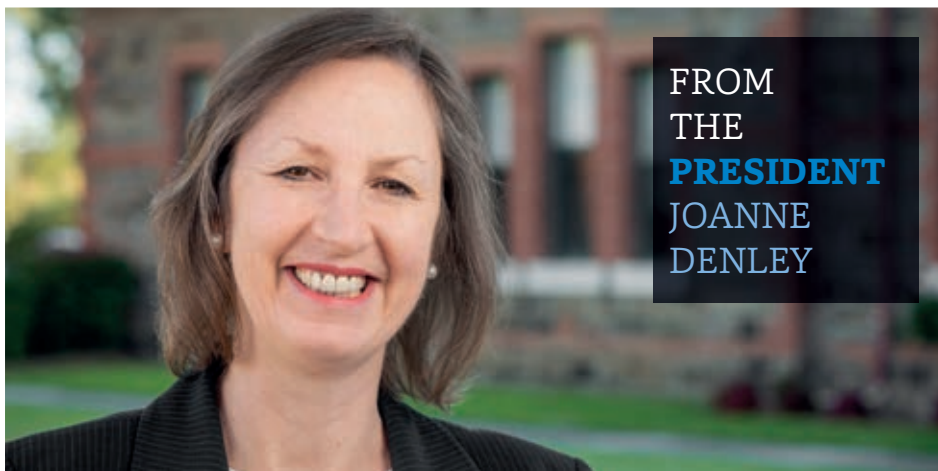
There was also the recent celebration of the official opening of the Minda Coast Park, a coastal pedestrian and cycling pathway linking the esplanade pathways from Glenelg and Brighton.

The Minda Coast Park is a fantastic way to welcome the community and encourage a real connection with Minda Brighton and we have been so pleased to work with the City of Holdfast Bay in creating something for the whole community, something where inclusion is at its heart.

Wishing you a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clare Allen".

**Clare Allen**  
Chief Executive Officer



FROM  
THE  
**PRESIDENT**  
JOANNE  
DENLEY

**W**elcome friends, family, supporters and advocates to the December issue of Vocal Point. It gives me great pride to represent Minda as Chair and President and I have been humbled by the welcome I have received from so many of you.

One of the warmest welcomes I have received was at October's Stars of Minda event in recognition of the outstanding service and achievements of supported employees. It was my first Stars of Minda, and I can already see it becoming my favourite event on the Minda calendar.

I presented the major award to TRAK Furniture's Jakob Crossfield and it was such a privilege, and a tangible reminder of why we are here – to support people to live lives where they are valued, respected and listened to.

I don't just mean people who access services, but their families and the wider Minda community and I was pleased to meet with a big part of our community, the Association, at the Annual General Meeting on 27 November. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Association for their support and for the contribution they make to Minda.

The Board and Executive team also recently met for a strategic planning day, and it was a great opportunity to hone in on our core purpose and what will be driving our organisation in the future.

There is much work ahead, but we are motivated by a shared desire to make a difference in the lives of the people we support. Together, we can make Minda as

best as it can be, working in collaboration with our clients, their families and many other stakeholders to make that happen.

We have a real opportunity to honour the commitment of those who have worked hard to make Minda such a trusted partner within the South Australian community and I am excited for the journey ahead.

I would like to thank the Board, CEO Dr Clare Allen and the Executive team for their support and for all the amazing people at Minda who keep things running, who live our values each and every day.

On behalf of the Board and management team I would like to thank you, our Minda community, for your ongoing support during the year.

Wishing you and your family all the very best for the upcoming festive season.

**Joanne Denley**  
President



*Jakob Crossfield won the AccessPay Star (Unsung Hero) Award at Stars of Minda*

## Jakob is our Unsung Hero

**J**akob Crossfield from TRAK Furniture has taken out the top award at Stars of Minda, which was attended by 450 people at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre last month.

Jakob was presented with the AccessPay Star (Unsung Hero) Award by Luke Minton from AccessPay and our Board Chair Joanne Denley.

MC Allan Browne, the voice of the Adelaide 36ers, told the crowd Jakob leads a team of colleagues to produce bed frames for two major manufacturers in South Australia.

"Jakob has developed processes for a production line to ensure a more efficient service is provided to customers," he says.

"He has also taken the initiative to organise a number of social activities for his colleagues and is very active in his local football club as a volunteer organiser."

The AccessPay Star (Unsung Hero) Award recognises an employee who has worked quietly behind the scenes for the good of Minda and SAGE and has demonstrated endless dedication and provided exceptional service.

This year's finalists for the award were Jakob, Ian McMahon from Envirocare and Roger Turner from Electronic Recycling Australia. Well done to our top award finalists!

*Story continues pages 4-5*



# Stars of Minda

*Continued from Page 3*

**I**n other individual awards presented on the night, Dale Giumelli from Laundry and Linen Services won the Foodland Service Excellence Award, which was presented by Foodland's Christopher Villani.

Donna Eerden from Blend Creative won the TerryWhite Chemmart Marion Compounding Persistence in Practice Award, which was presented by Matt Boulter from TerryWhite Chemmart Marion Compounding.

Winner of the BankSA Professional Development Award, presented by BankSA's Jessica Lendrum, was Luke Dunaway-Benson from Envirocare.

In an exciting development on the night, a joint winner was declared in the Phil Hoffmann Travel Team Performance Award, presented by Jo McLaren from Phil Hoffmann Travel. The award was won by two teams, both from Electronic Recycling Australia – the Line 3 Team and the Sorting Team.

Rotary Club of Somerton Park Pride of Workmanship Awards were presented by Club President Kevin Tumes to: Cynthia Wilson from Cleaning Services, Michael Wiseman from Envirocare, Jeshua Paterson from Packaging at Reynella, Phillip Gommers from the Nursery, Hayden Modra from TRAK, Nash McLean from Blend Creative, David Tester from Stores, David Morris from Electronic Recycling Australia, Bronwyn Sauer from Laundry and Linen Services, Cheryl Cox from Catering Services, Eleni Androutsis from Worklink Enclave, and Stephen Taylor from Packaging at Seaton.



*Dale accepts the Foodland Service Excellence Award from Chris Villani from Foodland and CEO Dr Clare Allen*



*Donna won the TerryWhite Chemmart Marion Compounding Persistence in Practice Award, pictured with Dr Clare Allen and pharmacist Matt Boulter*



*Jeshua Paterson (centre) with his Pride of Workmanship Award, with Kevin Tumes from the Rotary Club of Somerton Park and CEO Clare*



*Cheryl Cox receives her Pride of Workmanship Award from Rotary Club of Somerton Park president Kevin Tumes, and CEO Clare*



*Nash McLean receives his Pride of Workmanship Award from Kevin Tumes and Clare Allen*



*The Phil Hoffmann Travel Team Performance Award joint winners - ERA Sorting Team and Line 3 Team*



*Well done to Gloria Veitch on 45 years' service*



*CEO Clare Allen congratulates Shane Lambert on 40 years' service*

# Service Milestones

**S**tars of Minda celebrates the outstanding commitment of supported employees who have worked with Minda and SAGE for 10 years or more.

Congratulations to Gloria Veitch for achieving the very impressive 45-year milestone, and to Shane Lambert for achieving the 40-year milestone.

Recipients of the 35-year milestone were Bryan Clarke, Marty Flavel, Davnet McKenzie, Donald Martin and David McLean.

Celebrating 30 years' service were Yvonne Kelly and Dennis Mackay.

Celebrating 25 years' service were Malcolm David, Gregory Evers, Gregory Masters, Ashley Masters, Shannon Mitchell, Bronwyn Penn, Warwick Smith and Tracey Smith.

Recipients of 20 years' service were Andrea Cech, Ronald Martin, Matthew Morrison, Tarrin Mudrakovic and Clinton Wright.

Celebrating 15 years' service were Kate Ainsworth, Mark Andrew, David Buzzacott, Catherine Eerden, James Harris, Ian Matthews and Lucy Royal. Recipients of the 10-year service milestone were Anthony Allen, Benjamin Armstrong, Michael Bonsor, Rosie Byles, Janet Levy, Benjamin Marrett, Michael O'Neill, James Rault and Stephen Stewart.



*David McLean is pleased to receive his award for 35 years' service*



*Clare congratulates Marty on 35 years' service*



*Jeffrey Noble received his 35 years' service award*



# Coast Park Launch

**T**he Minda Coast Park is officially open!

A community celebration was held on Sunday October 20, with Emma Brougham helping to declare the pedestrian and cycling path open by cutting the ribbon with The City of Holdfast Bay Mayor Amanda Wilson, SA Government Minister and Member for Gibson Corey Wingard and Member for Morphett Stephen Patterson.

The Minda Coast Park is 500 metres long and four metres wide and is the final section of the Coast Park to be built in the City of Holdfast Bay.

Minda worked together with Council to establish an easement for the pathway on Minda's land title, which enabled Council to construct and maintain the pathway and allow public access.

The \$5.3million project includes the 500-metre long pathway through the Minda Dunes, a multi-use public plaza at Somerton Surf Life Saving Club, along with a large elevated deck and public seating with spectacular views of the sea.

The City of Holdfast Bay Mayor Amanda Wilson says the project, which has been under construction for almost a year, now links the council's two Jetty Road main streets in Glenelg and Brighton.



*Members of the public enjoying a walk on the path*

**“The Minda Dunes is a beautiful and culturally important section of our coastline. A significant aspect of the project has been the protection and revegetation of the remnant dune system including the planting of more than 10,000 native plants,” she says.**

The Minda Coast Park features a new public education zone near the dunes, with a focus on the indigenous environment and natural plantings. There are new seating areas, a picnic shelter, and public art installations.



*Julie and her parents enjoying the opening*

## Born to Fly

**A** delightful illustration of Minda Brighton by Timothy Ide is included in a new book 'Born to Fly' by Beverley McWilliams.

The book tells the story of amazing pilot Captain Harry Butler, who became a familiar sight in the SA skies, including at Minda Brighton, where he would drop cards to the delight of children in the 1920s.

A double page illustration (shown left) shows Harry flying over Minda's Verco and Rogerson buildings.

'Born to Fly' is available at [www.booktopia.com.au](http://www.booktopia.com.au)



*The Born to Fly illustration over Minda Brighton*





Clare addresses the crowd after the smoking ceremony



Our RAP artist Lorelle and CEO Clare

# Reconciliation Action Plan Launch

**O**ur Reconciliation Action Plan was officially launched last month, signifying Minda's commitment to promoting diversity and greater inclusion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community across all areas of the organisation.

The event included a traditional Kaurna welcome and smoking ceremony performed by Kaurna representatives Allan Sumner and Corey Turner, and raising of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags by Minda customer Maria Edwards. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags will now fly with the Australian flag onsite at Minda Brighton, symbolic of our commitment to reconciliation.

Maria and a number of Minda customers have been attending the Karrarendi program for 25 years. Karrarendi is a culturally focussed program for Aboriginal adults with disability, which is run out of Kura Yerlo at Seaton.

A group of around 20 people from Kura Yerlo attended the Reconciliation Action Plan launch. Also in attendance was our Reconciliation Action Plan artist Lorelle Hunter, whose fabulous painting is on display at Minda Brighton reception.

CEO Dr Clare Allen says the Reconciliation Action Plan provides a framework for Minda to support the national reconciliation movement.

"It's all about 'walking together, working together' towards a just, equitable Australia," she says.



Maria with the Envirocare team after raising of the flags



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MARKETS**

**SATURDAY  
7 DECEMBER  
11AM - 7PM**  
[mindainc.com.au/christmas](http://mindainc.com.au/christmas)





Phil and Reece



Jonathan with Kaye and Pauline

## Envirocare's Community Spirit

**E**nvirocare's Certificate II in Horticulture team recently spent a day helping the South Australian School for Vision Impaired restore its vegetable garden back to its former glory.

Well done James, Ian and Michael, who did a great job with supervisor Alan, in helping to clear weeds, cultivate garden beds and repair irrigation lines.



Envirocare team members ready to get to work

## Volunteering to Make a Difference

**V**olunteering with Meals on Wheels is helping participants of Minda's MyPATH day program give back to their local community.

MyPATH participants and staff deliver meals to people in need for Meals on Wheels' Hallett Cove branch every Monday and Wednesday and alternate Fridays.

Meals on Wheels Hallett Cove branch president Kaye August says the regular help from the MyPATH crew is invaluable.

**"They're a very big help," says Kaye, who has been volunteering at the branch for 19 years.**

"We need a driver and deliverer for each round, and they take care of this as a team. It's wonderful they come regularly and at exactly the right time, because finding volunteers who fit with when we need them is challenging. Knowing the Minda group is coming is a relief."

MyPATH participant Georgia says she loves volunteering for Meals on Wheels deliveries, which normally take the group just over an hour.

"I love spending time with my friends,

and it's good to see the customers each week and give something back to the customers too," Georgia says.

Reece says he likes volunteering because it enables him to get out and about in the community.

Minda's Senior Manager Lifestyle Services, Dale Govett, says: "Providing MyPATH customers with the opportunity to make a contribution back to the community through their volunteer work at Meals on Wheels does a lot for their self-esteem and helps change the perception of young people with disability as active and contributing members of society."

MyPATH LSP4 Support Leader Michael Charlton says up to 20 MyPATH customers attend the Meals on Wheels delivery run over the three days each week.

"The crew is assisted by staff members Amber and Grace on Mondays, Amber and Brad on Wednesdays, and Phil and Nicole on Fridays," Michael says.

"MyPATH has been doing Meals on Wheels for the Hallett Cove branch for a number of years, and we were doing it for Holdfast branch before that.

"It's been a successful long-term partnership."



# Carols Christmas Elf Costumes

**W**ith their level of energy and enthusiasm, these Christmas elves are definitely not on the shelf!

Thanks to our fantastic volunteers who look after the Minda Op Shop each week – Ann, Janet, Valerie, Colleen and Carol – we have these gorgeous elf costumes for support workers who will be roaming our Christmas Carols & Markets event to ensure the safety and wellbeing of people we support.

The Op Shop volunteers funded the purchase of the costumes with proceeds from Op Shop sales, and we thank them for their hard work and support.

Special thanks to Anthony, Sam and Robyn for modelling the elf costumes!



*Robyn, Anthony and Sam are all set for Christmas Carols & Markets*

# Gift Wrapping

**T**ake a bit of stress out of Christmas this year by visiting one of our amazing gift wrapping volunteers!

You can find us in Adelaide Arcade again this year thanks to our wonderful supporter Andrew Jonats and his team.

We'll also be at a range of locations across SA, including:

- Adelaide Arcade – 2nd to 24th December
- Harbour Town Shopping Centre – 10th to 24th December
- Cheap as Chips Glenelg, Port Adelaide, Colonnades – 14th & 21st December 2019
- Cove Civic Centre – 16th & 17th December 2019
- Marion Cultural Centre Library – 18th & 19th December 2019

# Nuago Corporate Volunteers

**W**e were delighted to have the team from Nuago volunteer with Envirocare at Minda Brighton over two days recently.

Managing Director Brendon O'Rourke and 11 team members from the IT solutions company spent time weeding and planting at the wetlands between the Store and Brighton Dunes.

Thanks to Nuago for your work!



*Nuago and Envirocare working together on weeding*

# We Back SA

**W**ith a relationship that goes back close to 50 years, BankSA is one of Minda's valued partners.

An understanding of South Australia and the local community it serves is something that really sets BankSA apart, and this is something Minda's staff and clients have experienced for many years.

"Our relationship with Minda is such an important one, not just as two South Australian icons, but from a local Glenelg/Brighton perspective," Glenelg Branch Manager Jessica Lendrum says.

"We have a lot of locals working at our branch and you really get to know each other over the years – I've been living in the area for more than 30 years and some customers come in that I've known since school days, people who would come past and say hello. It's really nice to continue that long-term connection with the community."

BankSA does more than provide financial services and with an underlying commitment to drive South Australia's economic, cultural and social prosperity, the bank takes pride in its major sponsorships and partnerships, as well as a variety of grassroots community work.

"It's about building connections and taking a personal approach so people have a great customer experience," Jessica says.

BankSA staff are also volunteers and supporters of many Minda events, including Christmas Carols and Markets, International Day of People with Disability, Night of Stars and Stars of Minda.

"Stars of Minda was a recent highlight for me because we're used to seeing Minda clients and staff in our branch, but to see them in their element with their friends was fantastic," Jessica says.

"It's such a happy event in celebration of outstanding achievements; I felt really privileged to present the Professional Development Award to Luke who works in Minda's ground maintenance team Envirocare – well done to everyone on their outstanding achievements!"



BankSA Glenelg Branch Manager Jessica Lendrum with Stars of Minda Professional Development award-winner Luke Dunaway-Benson and Minda CEO Dr Clare Allen.



Luke Minton from AccessPay presents the Stars of Minda Unsung Hero Award to Jakob Crossfield, with Board Chair Joanne Denley.

## Supporting our Sector

**L**eading national salary packaging provider and supporter of Minda, AccessPay have been helping employers and employees make the most of their benefits since 2001.

"As a privately owned, Adelaide-based company we've built a strong, personalised service for people who choose to devote their careers to the wellbeing of their communities," AccessPay Client Services Consultant SA/NT Luke Minton says.

"Since acquisition by Smartgroup Corporation in 2017, that 'small business' service is backed by the scale, governance and capacity of a national, ASX listed organisation, while allowing us to maintain the personalised focus our clients expect."

Luke has worked at AccessPay for three years and says he finds it rewarding helping people in the not-for-profit (NFP) sector reduce the amount of tax they pay and increase their disposable income.

"Salary packaging allows a portion of your salary to be allocated to pay certain everyday expenses, before your income tax is calculated," Luke says.

Luke says the most popular items people choose to salary package are rent or mortgage repayments, credit cards, personal loans, or the salary packaging card.

Salary packaging through AccessPay also offers Entertainment Benefits, which is a way to enjoy additional tax savings on top of everyday expenses, and novated leasing.

"We're here for the NFP community and so pleased that we can partner with organisations like Minda," Luke says.

As the event's major sponsor, Luke presented the AccessPay Unsung Hero award to Jakob Crossfield at Stars of Minda.

"It was a great night and I was honoured to present Jakob with the major award for his work with TRAK Furniture – congratulations to all the award-winners, nominees and service milestone recipients on their achievements."



# The Royal Adelaide Show

**T**hanks to the generosity of the Royal Adelaide Show, many people we support were able to enjoy a fantastic day out at South Australia's longest-running event on the state's calendar.

The Royal Adelaide Show kindly donated 250 tickets to Minda to allow people to enjoy a day out at the state's best loved event.

Everyone had a great time enjoying side show alley, the animals, food and exhibits, and everyone came home with a show bag and a big smile!

We were also so happy to see nine people from our MyPATH Cottage Craft and Pottery programs win ribbons for their work at this year's Show.

Congratulations to Bruno, Fay, Lianne, Dianne, Carolyn, Cathy, Simon, Janet and Cathy – your awards are well deserved with such incredible entries!

Bruno entered five pottery pieces in the craft division, and won three prizes and a 'Best in Section' award. Well done Bruno on your efforts, and congratulations to all our cottage craft and pottery winners at the Royal Adelaide Show!



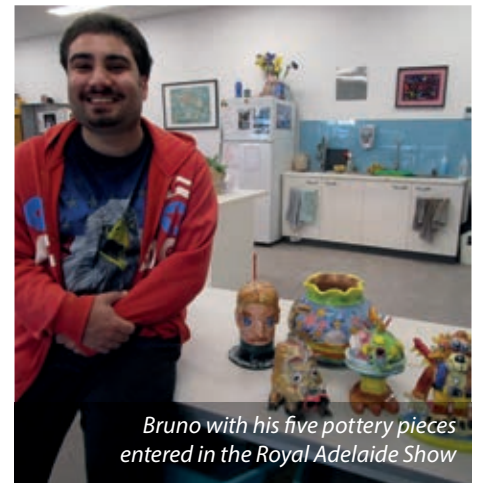
Our Royal Show prize winners - back row Carolyn, Lianne, Simon, Janet, and front, Fay, Cathy, Cathy and Dianne



Ziggy takes home a Hogwarts showbag



Adam hanging out with a scarecrow!



Bruno with his five pottery pieces entered in the Royal Adelaide Show



Allan enjoying the food



Lianne is well known for her artistic abilities



David meets Brenton Ragless and Kate Collins



# More Than Work

**F**or Donna Dalling, working at Commercial Enterprises at Reynella is more than just a job – it's about friendships, socialisation, self-confidence and self-worth.

Donna works in packaging two days a week and says it gives her “a lot of other skills and enjoyment than simply what the work is”.

Donna spoke about what work means to her at the Disability at Work Summit held at the Hilton Adelaide earlier this year.

Donna, who is visually impaired, started her supported employment career at the then Packaging Solutions Lonsdale six years ago.

“I have had sight before – in my 20s, I could see and drive and work,” she says.

“I worked for the ambulance service for 10 years but then my vision started to deteriorate and I was making some mistakes in data processing, things like the zeros and the eights on a cheque looked very similar.”

Donna moved on to complete a Certificate III in Community Services and worked at the Salvation Army on switchboard, but as her vision deteriorated further, she decided it was time to reassess her options in consultation with the Royal Society for the Blind.



Donna (second from left) with workmates Amy, Luke and Corey

**“The lady at RSB had just placed another person in packaging, and I said to her, ‘brilliant, let’s do that’,” she says.**

**“I went for an interview and I got offered a place, and I’ve never looked back.”**

Having worked in mainstream and supported employment, she says supported employment provides “a fantastic opportunity”.

“I think it’s been wonderful to have this opportunity and I wish more people would give supported employment a go, because you do have better quality of life when you’re working.

“When you get your pay slip, it gives your confidence a boost. When you’re able to do a job, it gives you that self-confidence and feeling of value.”



Donna (in red) on the panel

## Jim’s Passion Pays Off

**J**im Taylor loves being in the great outdoors and his passion has paid off working for property maintenance business Envirocare.

Since joining the Envirocare team as a supported employee in 2015, Jim has learned an abundance of new skills and is currently studying a Certificate II in Horticulture while working full time.

“I couldn’t do an office job; I definitely like working in the outdoors,” Jim says.

“What I like most about my job is the people, but also being able to boost my skills.”

Jim encourages others to consider a

career with Minda and SAGE, as he wants to see more people “have a fun job, have their own money, and get a good life”.

“When you’re working you’re out and about and not home sitting around,” he said.

“You have your own income for independence and you get to learn new things and meet new people.”

Commercial Enterprises is currently on the lookout for more supported employees to join the team. If you know anyone who might be interested, ask them or their carer to contact Disability Choices on **1800 164 632** for more information.



Jim with the garden bed he and the Cert II team planted near the Store.



# 40 Years of Service for Tony



Tony Beveridge receives his 40 years' service certificate from Dr Clare Allen at Night of Stars



Minda football team 1986



Tony in 1987

**G**rowing up, Tony Beveridge always thought he'd become a painter-decorator. But work experience at Minda during his final year at Brighton High School changed that.

Tony arrived at Minda Catering for two weeks' work experience as a 17-year-old and jokes "they haven't let me go since".

Fast forward four decades and Tony has notched up an impressive 40 years' service for the organisation.

A young Tony hit the ground running at Minda as an apprentice chef in 1979. He enjoyed learning the skills of the trade, and in 1980, he won the SA Gas Company Apprentice of the Year Award, featuring in Adelaide's tabloid daily newspaper of the time, The News, as well as in the Australian Women's Weekly magazine.

He's seen a lot of change at Minda Brighton and remembers when

there were market gardens and even a bowling green on site. Tony also used to play in Minda's sports teams.

"It was mainly football and cricket, but we'd go away on camps at the end of the year, and there are some old photos of me in the football team from the 80s with a mullet and a little on the thin side, but you wouldn't recognise me now," he jokes.

Tony has also seen many renovations in the kitchen, and remembers when Minda was small enough that he "knew everyone" – he even gave everyone a small gift at Easter and Christmas, and gave all the mothers on staff a small gift for Mother's Day.

Asked what's given him longevity in the job, Tony says his "favourite part is the clients – and the staff too". "It's all because you like the people," he says.



Rodney at home

## Rodney Enjoys Independence with Home Care

**R**odney's independence is of utmost importance to him, as well as receiving services and supports that enable him to do the things he wants to do – like enjoy a hot cup of Dilmah!

With the guidance of his Home Care staff member Marilyn, Rodney recently purchased a safety kettle that tips effortlessly for easy pouring of those all-important cuppas.

Rodney made the choice to leave his old kettle behind for the snazzy red Easy Pour kettle which is available from the Independent Living Centre and Medimart Brighton.

To find out more about the Home Care team at Minda, contact [homecare@minda.asn.au](mailto:homecare@minda.asn.au)

## ACE Graduation

**C**ongratulations to eight new graduates of Adult Community Education units in Oral Communication and Digital Technology – well done to Nathan, Grace, Adam, Maria, Jasmyn, Shanae, Kinnie and Corey who completed the courses run by the SA Learning Centre (SALC).

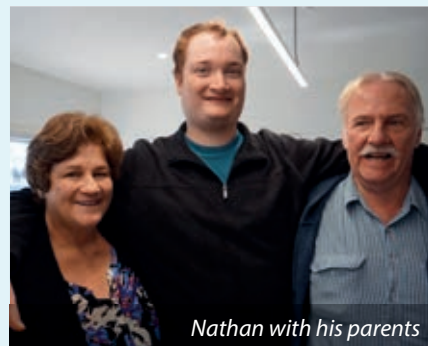
Lead consultant (VETIS) Karen Berry says the SALC students are participants in MyPATH, and enjoyed celebrating their graduation with their families, support staff, and their MyPATH friends and staff at a presentation in INC Café's function room.

"The students completed Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways courses: 'Use digital technology for basic workplace tasks', 'Use digital technology for simple workplace tasks' and 'Participate in simple spoken interactions at work,'" Karen says.

"Thanks to everyone who came along to support the students, and thanks to volunteer Marwa and the trainees Maddie and Abigail studying the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) at SALC for their assistance."



*Kinnie and mum Liz*



*Nathan with his parents*



*The eight graduates with Karen Berry, Phil Golding and volunteer Marwa*

## RLS Mid-Year Birthday Party

**R**etirement Lifestyle Services (RLS) recently held a dinosaur-themed midyear party to celebrate a number of recent birthdays.

RLS Support Leader Jen Warncken says she was inspired by a Jurassic Creatures display in Bonython Parklands to create a dinosaur-themed party. She even sent out dinosaur-themed invitations which everyone received in the mail.

"Next was the party hats and how to incorporate the theme. After searching Google, it was decided to put red fins on the back of the hats to represent the dinosaur in the invitation," Jen says.

"The gang got busy painting cardboard red for the purpose and making the hats."

On the day, there were plenty of cakes to go around.

"After quizzing everyone about which flavoured cake they like the most, we came up with a variety for the party. We made some apple and sultana muffins, a strawberry cake, Tira Misu and orange cake," Jen says.

"Ian came up with the idea of making some dinosaur biscuits. He chose yellow and Maria chose red.

"Of course, a dinosaur-theme cake was essential and everyone had fun making it. (Support worker) Clare shaped the cake and worked on the green rice frill with some of the customers. The finishing touch was to put googly eyes on it – worked a treat!"



*Pass the parcel is pure joy for Ian*



# The Path to Minda

**A**s a new mother, Sabine did what every mother does – compares their child to others. She worried, at eight-months, that Monice was developing more slowly than the other children in her mother's group.

Monice wasn't sitting up or moving in the same way, so Sabine took her to their pediatrician to talk through her concerns.

"Monice was three to four weeks early so the pediatrician said not to worry about the development delay, she will catch up. But despite the professional reassurances, there was a niggles that just wouldn't go away," Sabine says.

After returning to work, Sabine noticed Monice falling asleep more often. She put this down to a new routine that included swimming lessons. But despite the logical explanations for the changes in Monice's behavior, something still continued to worry Sabine. Then she noticed the seizures. Only she didn't know they were seizures.

"I videoed Monice as she was doing this weird head drop thing. It was a really quick head drop and her arms would flick. It looked like a twitch, like she was over tired. I showed my GP but she said not to panic and to show the pediatrician the next time I see them," Sabine said.

With assurances from her GP, Sabine left Monice with her Mum and Dad for her first ever sleep over. The next day, their lives were changed forever.

"When we picked Monice up from Mum and Dad's she was happy enough but driving back home I couldn't ignore the feeling that something was wrong. We went straight to the Women's and Children's Emergency and after sitting for half an hour, she started dropping her head again," Sabine says.

"I went to the nurses' station to show them and next minute there were buzzers, and whirring and flashes and people running everywhere. All of a sudden, we were in a room and there were three doctors and five nurses and no one said anything."

After a short time, a doctor returned to deliver the diagnosis for Monice. "I was relieved to see the doctor, who said he knew what was wrong with Monice. I thought, great we'll get a tablet for her and be off. I couldn't have been more wrong."

Monice was diagnosed with West Syndrome, a collection of symptoms characterised by spasms, abnormal brain wave patterns called hypsarrhythmia and intellectual disability.

"By this stage the floor was opening up and I couldn't stand up anymore. One minute we had a child that had a very clear future, the next minute we were on a completely different journey – life changing, from one minute to the next," Sabine says.

**"They told us she would never walk, talk, sit or anything - but with a lot of work and some great support she does much more than that now."**

Today, Monice is your typical teenage girl. At 19, she loves spending time with the friends she's made in school, loves to swim and loves to eat.

With Minda, Sabine found a team to make Monice smile, a team she can laugh with and teach her skills to grow her independence.



Monice is reaching her goals thanks to the help of two of Minda's support workers and Sabine says, "Louise and Sophia are absolutely extraordinary carers for Monice – I cannot speak highly enough of their level of care, their professionalism, and their dedication to providing Monice with fabulous opportunities to interact with people and her wider community."



# THANK YOU



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