



## HELPING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ASSOCIATION (HCFA) Incorporated AUGUST 2020 NEWSLETTER

### Welcome!

Like everyone, HCFA struggles to understand how to do its good work week in, week out under the public health requirements necessary to control the current pandemic. We remain very proud of our activities, grateful to our supporters, and inspired by the small things we do that make a difference in the lives of local families and children.

### VALE: Anna Vlasoff, 1954-2020

Anna Vlasoff, who died on January 1, 2020 after an illness, joined HCFA as a volunteer in 2015. When Cathie Lamont, our coordinator at the time, needed to resign to look after her mother, Anna stepped up. Her contribution to HCFA in all capacities was remarkable.

This capacity to be 'remarkable' was a feature of her life. One of very few women doing Science and Engineering in the mid 70's at University of Sydney Anna went to England in 1978 and worked for General Electric's civil aircraft division, one of three women engineers of a staff of about 1,000 in this division. While in UK she met her husband and they returned to Australia where Anna became a 'computer fixer' in the days when computers were rare and as large as a small bedroom. Once again she made a contribution remarkable for a woman at the time.

In 1990 her family moved to Armidale and after a while Anna joined The Department of Family Services (DOCS) where she found her strong commitment to social justice, care for people and Christian faith fitted well. Her Russian parents, immigrants to Australia, had introduced her to the Russian Orthodox Church faith and despite a period of professed atheism, she returned to Christianity, joining the Uniting Church in Armidale. Here she played a major role as a lay preacher, educator, church committee member at local, State and Federal levels, and coordinator of projects and programs.

Anna loved reading, helping and interacting with people and life in general. She is survived by her sister Leonie, son Phil, and daughter Tessa.

It is clear from her contributions and her caring nature that she will be greatly missed.  
- By Christine Perrott

## ACTIVITY

After a brief flurry mid-July when it appeared that the Bunning's BBQ roster was back on, the pandemic's continuing spread has prompted a decision by head office to suspend them again. The comment received is that it's almost impossible under the new rules such as two tents with five people at all times, thorough clean every hour etc. HCFA is thankful for the opportunity we have had to raise money this way in the past.

## VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers remain the backbone and caring arms of our organisation. Without them, there is very little HCFA can do to support families. Big thanks to all who contribute - home visitors and management committee. We remain aware of how much a little bit of help is appreciated by the families we support. It can do a great deal to assist at certain times in the occasionally wobbly and always wonder filled parenting life cycle.



The **ARMIDALE FAMILIES GUIDE** (second edition) is available. Copies can be obtained at the Visitor's Centre, the Volunteer Centre and at the Armidale Business Centre. The guide provides advice and information to Armidale families about where the playgrounds are, what services and supports are out there, child friendly things to see and do. It a overview to what's going on for young families in our community.

If you would like a copy, or a few to distribute give Susan a call on 0467580016 or email her at [coordinator@hcfa.org.au](mailto:coordinator@hcfa.org.au) . If you don't get an answer straight away, leave a message and she will get back to you.

## FINANCES



We continue to get by on the good grace of our supporters and a bit of 'not to hard' work from the team. Small but important amounts are received from BBQs and donations. It's all well used and keeps the service operating.

## FAMILIES

Families in need of some help tend to come and go, some returning to stay with us for a little longer. We consider them part of our big HCFA family. Remember we also provide support for families from non-English speaking, and refugee/multicultural backgrounds. If you or someone could do with a hand there are no special criteria for our support. Our help is varied and is responsive to the need of the family. Our **BROCHURES** are available for friends or for your organisation.

We very much value our members, networks and partnerships. Our door is always open to old friends and new volunteers. Your thoughts, ideas, feedback and continued support are always welcome; they keep us going!

Till next time...Wishing you health and kindness from the HCFA team.