

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SHIRE OF WANNEROO AGED PERSONS HOMES TRUST

COMPILED FROM PAPERS PREPARED BY MIKE O'BRIEN WHO WAS

ASSISTED BY MR L DILETTI AND MOST RECENTLY BY MR L LOGAN

A CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

As a result of requests and enquiries from as early as 1978 from ratepayers and Senior Citizen Groups seeking accommodation for aged persons, it was decided to call a meeting to investigate the situation.

Selected persons interested in or associated with the welfare of the aged were invited to attend a meeting.

On Thursday 16th August 1979 fifteen people met in Wanneroo and inaugurated an "Aged and Disabled Units Management Trust Committee"

Those fifteen persons in alphabetical order were:-

The Reverend David APPLEBY - an Anglican Priest  
 Doctor Richard BAKER - A Medical Practitioner  
 Mrs Molly BROWN - Welfare Officer of the Municipality  
 Mr Leo DILETTI - Chief Health Surveyor of the Municipality  
 Mr Noel ETHERIDGE - Retired Bank Manager (Commonwealth Bank)  
 Mr Jim HALL - A Retired Business Person  
 Mr David HUXLEY - from the Perth Building Society  
 Doctor Mike JONES - a Medical Practitioner  
 Mr Harold LEAKE - Wanneroo Townsite Senior Citizen  
 Mr Geoff METCALFE - Service Groups (Warwick Apex)  
 Councilor Mike O'BRIEN - a Wanneroo Municipal Councilor  
 Councilor Tom RYAN - a City of Nedlands Municipal Councilor  
 Mr Clarrie TINK - Deputy Chief Health Surveyor of the Municipality  
 The Reverend Fr Barry WHITELY - a Roman Catholic Priest  
 Mr Noel WHYTE - Building Surveyor City of Nedlands and Communications  
 Officer Melvisla Retirement Village

Being aware of the progress achieved by other local authorities in providing aged housing, the two representatives from Nedlands City Council were invited to explain the concept of the Nedlands Aged Persons Homes Trust. From that meeting it was resolved to form the Shire of Wanneroo Aged Persons' Homes Trust with the prime objective of providing accommodation for the needy, aged and disabled persons of the Wanneroo Shire.

Officers were elected and a Constitution drafted and adopted. The Trust's Management Committee, comprising of four Shire of Wanneroo Councillors, three Council Officers and eight private citizens, met on a monthly basis.

In its continual investigations and research, the Trust discovered that there was no funding whatsoever available from Federal, State, Local Government or any other agency to provide homes for the needy, aged and disabled.

It became apparent that the only way the Trust could in the long-term, accumulate funds for rental units was through a fully resident funded project.

In addition to the absence of funding, the Trust was also even more frustrated in its attempts to acquire land for the project.

Considerable time was lost in extremely protracted negotiations with different Government Departments, Religious Orders and Council, over the availability of several sites, and unfortunately, the Trust in no position to do anything other than "wait".

Had it not been for the assistance of the Wanneroo City Council in acquiring the Belgrade Site, further complications and expense would have made the Trust's tasks even more difficult.

The decision to opt for a fully resident funded project was not a hasty one, but rather the end result, following lengthy investigations and discussions involving:-

- 1 Visiting and researching the majority of Aged Homes projects in Perth.
- 2 Closely examining three different concepts of providing funding and constructing Aged Homes.
- 3 Deputations to the State Housing Commission for assistance.
- 4 Conduction surveys that revealed that whilst there were a number of needy aged persons seeking accommodation, none had the means to finance the type of unit required.
- 5 By a process of elimination, establishing that there were no funds available or method to achieve our aim, other than by a fully resident funded scheme to accumulate funds in the long-term.

Members of the Trust showed great conviction and determination in deciding to continue with the project as a Trust in the manner that they have, rather than take the easy way out and hand the project over to private developers which would have resulted in considerable less work and worry to the Trust, but additional expense to the aged.

Having inspected various other projects, it was decided to engage the services of Mr Julius Elischer, Architect.

In April 1981, Council loaned the Trust \$9,000 for architectural, planning, advertising, legal and other miscellaneous costs.  
In August 1981, the Trust was legally Incorporated.

Mr Elischer quickly presented the Trust with what he believed to be a suitable concept for the site - six villages of 24 units, each as individual and independent as possible with a communal atmosphere, central communal facilities and an on-going nursing facility, possibly a Hostel and 50 bed nursing home.

Having received and accepted the Architect's proposal, the Trust commenced attempts to sell the units in September 1981. Newspaper advertisements and public meetings resulted in limited success and in November 1981, a Project Sales Manager Mr John Arthur was appointed and it was through his stirring efforts that the first village of 24 units was sold out in April, 1982.

In May 1982, Council confirmed its support of the Trust by transferring the Belgrade Site to the Trust and resolving that the \$127,000, no interest loan to the Trust (\$118,000 land content and \$9,000 miscellaneous) be repaid by the Trust at the rate of \$1,000 per unit sold for the first 127 units. This was bought about through the efforts of the then Shire President Mr Charles Searson and the then Shire Clerk Mr Noel Bennetts. An additional 5 acres at \$57,250 was acquired by the Municipality and "advanced" to the Trust on the same arrangement and was also paid back ahead of schedule. The whole arrangement was a transaction satisfactory to all parties.

The "Municipality" was able to dispose of, "at a profit", its unsold "residential" lots in the Wanneroo Townsite. The "Rural Land Vendor" was able to obtain "easier to sell" residential lots in exchange for his "not so easy to sell" rural land. The Trust was able to construct, as an "A.A. use" Retirement Units, Hostel and Nursing Home on Rural Land, with the endorsement of the State Planning Authority. The Trust was able to donate a 1500 square metres Sump Site to the Municipality a land value content which could be assessed at approx \$20,500.

Tenders for the first village were called and closed on the 15th June, 1982.

The 192 unit Village comprising of eight groups of 24 units was completed in October 1987.

The 50 bed Hostel Jacaranda Lodge was opened in November 1987 at a total cost of \$1,780,190.

#### UPON COMPLETION OF THE VILLAGE AND HOSTEL IN 1987 THE TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CONSISTED OF

Mr Mike O'BRIEN	: J.P. Trust Chairperson (a former President of the Shire of Wanneroo and Municipal Councilor).
Dr Richard BAKER	: Vice Chairperson and Chairperson of Hostel Sub Committee (a Medical Practitioner).
The Hon Les LOGAN	: Chairperson of Residents Sub-Committee (a former Minister for Local Government and Member of Legislative Council).
Mr Don SLATER	: Trust Secretary, Treasurer and Administrator.
Mr George SANDERS	: Senior Citizens Associations.
Mr Leo DILETTI	: Trust Member (Currently of State Health Dept. and former municipal Chief Health Surveyor).

Mr Bill GODENZIE	: Residents Sub Committee Representative.
Mr Frank BURROWS	: Residents Sub Committee Representative.
Mr Lou HOLM	: Trust Finance Sub Committee Chairperson (former National Bank Manager and currently Executive Director of the Australia Day Council).
Mr Graeme JOHNSON	: Trust Member (former Municipal Councilor)
Mrs Molly BROWN	: Trust Member Nursing Sister and former Municipal Welfare Officer.
Mr Julius ELISCHER	: Trust Member (Trust's architect.
Mrs Margaret DAVEY	: Trust Member a Nursing Sister.
Councilor Fleur FREAME	: (a south west ward municipal Councilor.
Councilor Brian Smith	: (a North Ward Municipal Councilor
Councilor Clive HARRISON	: (a Central Ward Municipal Council
Councilor John MOLONEY	: (a south Ward Municipal Councilor
Mr John ARTHUR	: Project Sales Manager
Mr Domenic CARBONE A.A.S.A C.P.A	: Trust Auditor.

The fifteen people, who without any money, sat around a table and agreed to put an idea into action, on Thursday the Sixteenth of August, 1979 certainly can be proud of their achievements only eight years on. A substantial number of those Inaugural members were still with the Trust at the end of the eight years.

MIKE O'BRIEN J.P  
CHAIRPERSON 1979-1987