

MAQ

Montrose Access Quarterly

Summer 2008–09



Left: Kevin takes to diving like a 'duck to water'

Below: Sam and Sue have a ball at Brisbane Dive Academy



Shark Bait Boys test the water

When a young, fish-mad client of Montrose Access told physiotherapist Sue Nicklin he wished he could swim with the sharks one day, she thought, why not?

"Having been diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), this little boy was always being told of all the things he couldn't do," she said. "And so I thought, why not give children with disabilities the chance to experience the excitement of diving like everybody else?"

Sue developed the 'Underwater Experience', a world-first hydrotherapy program that is giving four Montrose Access clients – known as the 'Shark Bait Boys' – the once in a lifetime opportunity to experience the wonders of the underwater world before their mobility is impaired.

The boys, who all have DMD, are participating in a ten-week course of hydrotherapy at Brisbane Dive Academy, Bulimba, where they are learning the basics of swimming with a breathing apparatus. The course will then culminate in a camp to Sea World in December to swim in the artificial reef in front of proud family, friends and sharks!

"Hydrotherapy is one of the few forms of exercise children with neuromuscular conditions can enjoy safely," Sue explained. "This program makes hydrotherapy more interesting, goal-orientated and social, as the families are able to get involved, too. The kids are already seeing the benefits – you can read it on their faces. They can't wait to get to Sea World and see the real thing!"

Although the program is still in its infancy, Sue is keen to see it develop, pending funding, with more Shark Bait Boys and Girls being able to participate. "This pilot Underwater Experience has massive implications for children and young people with physical disabilities," she said. "It is my hope that the success of the first lot of 'graduates' will pave the way for a bigger and better program in years to come."

Follow the progress of the Shark Bait Boys on the Montrose Access website, www.montroseaccess.org.au.



Message from the President

Hello everyone, and welcome to the November issue of MAQ, our final newsletter for 2008.

On behalf of the Board and staff of MontroseAccess, it gives me great pleasure to welcome our new Patron, Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO, who was appointed Governor of Queensland in July. Ms Wensley brings to her role of Governor a commitment to humanitarian and human rights issues, and extensive experience in international relations. We look forward to working with Her Excellency in the future to promote the work of MontroseAccess within the community.

You'll notice in this issue some of the terrific programs and initiatives that have been developed and adopted by our staff in the past months, ensuring our clients are always at the receiving end of cutting edge research and techniques. The new 'Hanan It Takes Two To Talk Program[®]', 'Paediatric Rheumatology Multi-disciplinary Clinic' and 'Underwater Experience' are just three examples of our commitment to continuous improvement and partnerships that you can read about in the coming pages.

2008 has been a busy year of events in celebration of MontroseAccess' 75th birthday – culminating in the successful 'Diamonds & Ice' Charity Gala Dinner in October, and the annual Bribie Island Bowls Day taking place on Sunday 9 November. We are extremely grateful to former client Mr Paul Rigby, whose tireless efforts in coordinating this day for the past six years have raised in excess of \$40,000 for the organisation.

I encourage all our families and supporters to join in what promises to be a great day of bowls at Bribie. If you can't bowl, at least come along for the wonderful Monster Raffle prizes!

I hope you all have a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

John Kennedy
President



Young Adults Lifestyle & Leisure Program update

Rebecca Jones

The Lifestyle & Leisure Program for young adults has now been up and running for over a year, and has seen some great outcomes for our clients! The program is set up for young people aged 18 – 25 who have a physical disability and live in the greater Brisbane area. Its aims are to enable young people to reach their goals in the areas of life skills, accessing the community, linking to services, developing social networks and participating in leisure activities. As part of a twelve month program, clients are assisted to develop a plan to identify and achieve goals that are important to them.

Participants in the program have achieved greater independence and confidence in a range of areas, such as accessing TAFE studies, preparing meals for family, catching public transport, meeting new people, participating in recreation activities and handling money (just to name a few!)

The Lifestyle & Leisure Program also has a social group component which includes a monthly evening group, a fortnightly Northside day group, and two weekend trips away per year! Organised by the clients themselves, the social group provides a great opportunity for young people to meet new people, try new activities, and learn skills in planning outings and events.

The weekend trips away to the Gold and Sunshine Coasts have been very successful, with participants organising each trip through group sessions. This has given clients the chance to have a relaxing and fun time away, as well as gain abilities in holiday planning.

Places are currently available in the program for eligible young people. For more information, please contact the Lifestyle & Leisure Program Admissions Officer on **07 3379 9200** or email **lmccasker@montroseaccess.org.au**.

Our MontroseAccess stars



Keen-eyed readers may have spotted three MontroseAccess clients whose stories featured in Queensland newspapers in the past months.

Fourteen-year-old beat boxer Ryan Bayley hopped into a Lamborghini in promotion of our Charity Gala Dinner, and his remarkable talents were reported in October editions of The Satellite, Fraser Coast Chronicle and Hervey Bay Independent newspapers.

The Early Childhood team has been achieving wonderful successes with clients in the past year, and few more so than little Ryan Dyer of Narangba, who – along with mum Danielle – was a cover boy on the 3 October issue of the Northern Times.

Tom Moore, a client of our Sunshine Coast office, was featured in The Sunday Mail in September, after winning a competition to name a baby dolphin at Tangalooma, Moreton Island. Tom not only named the dolphin – 'Phoenix' – but he also won free accommodation at the resort. Well done, Tom!

New Paediatric Rheumatology Multi-disciplinary Clinic

MontroseAccess is leading the way in the care and support of children with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis and their families with a new monthly clinic at the Corinda site.

The Paediatric Rheumatology Multi-disciplinary Clinic is staffed by Dr Navid Adib, Queensland's only paediatric rheumatologist; as well as a MontroseAccess physiotherapist, occupational therapist and social worker.

"MontroseAccess clients who are currently treated by Dr Adib can request referral to the clinic through their team physio," explained clinic coordinator Lynne Borgert. "However, new clients can be referred by their GP or other treating doctor."

All enquiries about the Paediatric Rheumatology Multi-disciplinary Clinic can be directed to Lynne on **07 3379 9200** or email lborgert@montroseaccess.org.au.



Meet Hayley



Hayley has never let Rheumatoid Arthritis hold her back.

Hayley Gardner is an inspirational young woman who has been a volunteer for MontroseAccess since early 2007. Here she shares with MAO readers her experiences of being a young person with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA).

"I'm a happy, healthy 25-year-old who has been given, and taken, every opportunity in life. I studied hard to earn a Biomedical Science degree and a Law degree, and I am now a lawyer and absolutely loving my job. Outside of work, I spend a lot of time being active, whether at the gym,

or going for a swim. I'm involved in community groups, and spend a lot of time with my friends and family.

Sounds like the life of an average 25-year-old, right? What most people don't know is that I have had Rheumatoid Arthritis since the age of ten. I have had numerous operations, including a full shoulder replacement and, most recently, pins in my toes – but I have not let it stop me from doing what I want to do.

I'm the first to admit that it hasn't always been easy. There have been some tough times where I have struggled to maintain a positive attitude; but with the support of my amazing family and friends, I have achieved more in my life than I ever imagined. My parents have been beside me every step of the way, and whenever I feel down, they are always there to pick me back up. My parents also taught me one of the most valuable lessons in life – never let anything, not even RA, hold you back."

Myer Indooroopilly morning teas for MontroseAccess



Staff from Myer Indooroopilly present Marketing Manager Martha Saw with a cheque for \$13,332. Maria is pictured fourth from the left.

The Myer Community Fund is committed to investing in the health and wellbeing of the community; each year supporting over 80 charities nationally, with a focus on children and youth.

In September the Community Fund Board generously matched the \$6,666 raised for MontroseAccess by the team at Myer Indooroopilly. Management and staff presented the Marketing team with a cheque for \$13,332 at a presentation in store.

The team at Myer Indooroopilly has been supporting MontroseAccess since 2002, championed by staff representative, Mrs Maria Horrigan. Maria's endless enthusiasm in promoting MontroseAccess to her colleagues and organising fundraising morning teas and raffles has seen her nominated for a 2008 Myer Inspirational People Award in the category of Community Passion. She is truly an inspiration.

Well done, Maria, and thank you Myer!

Marketing & Events Update

And they're off and racing!

The MontroseAccess Charity Race Day, held at City Pacific Doomben on Saturday 26 July, was a great success, with guests enjoying a delicious lunch and trackside view in the elegant Chief de Beers Room. A dozen volunteers sold meat tray raffle tickets to eager punters throughout the course – which once again proved an excellent source of fundraising revenue. Several MontroseAccess families came along on the day to lend their support, making use of the special children's area, with jumping castle and animal farm.



Volunteers Marty and Lauren oversee the raffle prize distribution at Doomben

A big thank you to Ownit Homes, Meridien Retirement Living, BDO Kendalls, Markinson Business Solutions, Ray White Works, Greg Grant Group and OAMPS Insurance Brokers for supporting this great event.

Fore!

Beautiful spring weather meant that the Charity Golf Challenge on Wednesday 10 September was a marvellous day to be out on the green at Indooroopilly Golf Club. Twenty-three teams teed off for MontroseAccess, trying out tips provided by master coach Charlie Earp, and fuelled by two on-course barbecues. Congratulations to the team from Corporate Administration Services, who had the winning score on the day.



Charlie Earp gives the team from Hutchinson Builders a few pointers

A special thanks must go to Genesys Wealth Advisors as our Albatross sponsor, and to Jack's Creek Marketing for supplying the delicious wagyu burgers.

The Race Day and Golf Challenge together raised over \$27,000 for MontroseAccess.

Other Events

In August and September Style Magazines hosted two 'Style Sessions' fashion events at Westfield Chermide and Byblos Bar respectively.

Fashion-loving ladies from all over Brisbane watched closely as master stylist Kim Ring put outfits together using the latest Westfield Spring fashion finds. Thanks to some stellar prizes and a moving testimony by MontroseAccess mum, Susan Perry, the Style events raised over \$1,400 in raffle ticket sales for MontroseAccess.

We will once again be taking over the green at Bribie Island for the sixth annual Bribie Island Bowls Day on Sunday 9 November.

The hardest working man on the Island, Mr Paul Rigby, has lined up a spectacular selection of raffle prizes for the occasion, including an 81cm plasma TV donated by Mr Rental; a clothes dryer courtesy of The Good Guys; and dozens of other prizes. All are welcome to attend – contact MontroseAccess on **07 3379 9200** for details.

On Saturday 22 November all MontroseAccess families, friends and supporters are invited to shop – guilt free!

The 2008 Warehouse Shopping Tour will depart from MontroseAccess' Corinda site at 8am, taking in warehouses not usually open to the public – linen, pasta, kitchenware, fashion, toys, confectionary and cosmetics. Funds raised on the day will directly support the Corinda Boys Group. To book your seat, contact Annette on **07 3818 9390** or **0421 364 928** by 14 November. Tickets are \$28 and include morning tea.

Dads Weekend a success

Michael Deutscher

Ten client dads attended a 'Dads Weekend' held at the MontroseAccess units, Windward Passage, in Caloundra in late August.

The dads – some of whom came from as far as Cairns to attend – enjoyed various activities, including go-karting, jet skiing, and boating over to Bribie Island, where Chris was able to use his marine biology background to keep the group informed as we explored the beaches. Thanks also to Greg who ably 'captained' the boat on the day.

When the more frenetic daytime activities ceased, and after dinner at the RSL on the Saturday night, a number of dads were up into the small hours sharing a cold one (or two), playing cards,

or simply watching pay TV programs they never get a chance to at home. A few caught up on some much needed sleep.

Myself (Social Worker) and Anthony (Recreation Officer) had the privilege of facilitating the weekend for the group, and were in awe of the great spirit of camaraderie and mutual support leant to each other by all the dads in the group. It was a pleasure to mix with guys from such a range of interesting and diverse backgrounds. Due to heavy bookings at Windward Passage only a couple of Dads Weekends can be held each year. Dads, talk to your team Social Worker if you'd like to be on the mailing list when invitations are sent.

Items for sale

- Small motorised rollerchair (electric wheelchair)
- Adjustable daylounge for a person requiring support and comfort. Has tilt and water and foam cushions.
- Patslide for transfers
- Adjustable turntable slide for transfer into vehicle
- Television stand for flat screen TV.

Family would like to sell at a nominal cost to any families in need. Items are located on the Gold Coast. Please phone Don or Rhonda on **07 5554 6145**.

Calling all creative types

MontroseAccess invites young people with neuromuscular disorders throughout Queensland to submit an artwork expressing their experiences to the HeartSCAPE art competition.

The competition is part of the HeartSongs Project, that will feature the works of children, adolescents, and their families, who are living with chronic and life-threatening neuromuscular diseases.

Artworks can be submitted to HeartSCAPE via the MontroseAccess Recreation department. In January 2009 a panel of artists will select four representative artworks from young people throughout Queensland to be sent to the HeartSongs Summit in Greece.

Contact a Recreation Officer at your MontroseAccess office for competition guidelines.



Canoeing was a huge hit at the 12 – 14 Years Camp

Recreation update: 12 – 14 Years Camp

Amanda Holmes

The September school holidays once again brought our 12 – 14 Years Adventure Camp. On 22 September we headed down to PCYC's Bornhoffen Camp in the Gold Coast Hinterland – a beautiful camp site nestled amongst the gorgeous green mountains!

Wednesday was a little overcast, but perfect for our outing to Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary. With plenty of staff coming along to help out, we spent the whole day checking out as many animals as we could - the bird show, joeys and a baby koala being the highlights! That night was spent relaxing in front of a movie, taking it easy.

On Thursday morning half the group headed off to canoeing in the morning, while the other group finished their mosaics and played games. After lunch the groups swapped. Canoeing seemed to be a highlight of the week, with many kids raving about it.

The last morning everyone was feeling a little worse for ware. The parachute was brought out for some games, and then it was the Earthball's turn. We had a great time rolling the massive ball down the hill, and getting almost everyone to have a go on top. After lunch it was time to pack the bus and head home sweet home.

We can confidently say that it was one of the best camps ever! Thank you to the ANZ Staff Foundation for funding this camp.

Perpetual Trustees visit



Helen Posselt, Charlie Fraser and Lloyd Hancock.

Mr Charlie Fraser, Senior Financial Consultant for Perpetual Trustees, visited MontroseAccess Corinda for a thank you morning tea in August, in recognition of their generous support of the Wheelchair Seating Clinic.

The William Wyper Estate donated \$27,000 earlier this year to run and purchase equipment for the clinic,

which maps children's seating patterns and provides chair maintenance. This funding was in addition to a grant from the Tattersall's George Adams Foundation.

Merry Christmas... and thank you MontroseAccess

Keep in Touch Cards has a great selection of Christmas cards that can be personalised for your business.

This Christmas, Keep in Touch Cards is supporting MontroseAccess by donating 50 cents from every corporate Christmas card sold to help us continue our essential work in the community.



For information on how your organisation can support us this holiday season, email sales@keepintouchcards.com.au for an order form and card sample.

Hanen It Takes Two To Talk Program® for Parents

For the first time the Hanen It Takes Two To Talk Program® is running at the MontroseAccess Corinda office throughout term 4. This internationally recognised program for children with language delays is designed to show parents and carers how to:

- Recognise the different ways their child is communicating, and establish the next steps in development
- Identify what motivates their child to communicate
- Turn everyday situations into language learning opportunities
- Communicate with and respond to their children in ways that will help to develop language.

The pilot program consists of group and individual sessions with four families across the Early Childhood and Marchant Programs. MontroseAccess speech pathologists take video of the children, which is then used to provide valuable feedback for parents.

"So far parents are telling us they are getting a lot from the group sessions," said speech pathologist Nicole Seath. "They are amazed to see the different ways their child is communicating, and how much easier daily interactions are with them.

"We are looking forward to having larger groups in the future as more staff are trained in running the program."



Can you help?

The University of Queensland is conducting research on early intervention for children with physical disabilities, and invites client families of MontroseAccess to have their say.

UQ wants to understand how the services you receive from MontroseAccess support you, your child and your family.

Parents with children up to eight years of age who are currently receiving early intervention services from the Early Childhood team at MontroseAccess are eligible to participate.

Participating in the study involves completing three surveys, which can be done by you at home, with a researcher over the phone, or face to face, and will take about an hour. You will be asked to complete the surveys again in 12 months to see how your views might have changed.

If you are eligible to participate, you should have received a package with information on this research project and copies of the surveys. If you did not receive this package, or would like more information on the project, please phone Rachel Feeny (Project Officer) at the University of Queensland on **07 3346 7487** or email r.feeny@uq.edu.au.

History project update



The MontroseAccess 75 year history project is well under way, with dozens of current and former clients taking part to share their stories and memories with historian Helen Gregory.

Some discoveries of note so far include:

- An original letter from Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of American President

Franklin D Roosevelt, dated 19 March 1943, to the American Red Cross Club. Mrs Roosevelt wished to thank the club for the collection they took for the children at Montrose during a visit to Australia.

- An exercise book owned by Brisbane business identity and MontroseAccess benefactor, Mr George Marchant, referencing the gifting of his Corinda property to The Queensland Society for Crippled Children in 1937.
- Numerous old films containing footage of, amongst other things, Montrose children being entertained aboard an English Navy ship; a 1960s garden party and Grand Fete at Corinda; and nurses and children leaving the grounds for the Queen's visit in 1954.

If you'd like to be involved in the history project, or know of someone who does, please contact Rachel on **07 3379 9200** or rmorgnbesser@montroseaccess.org.au.

Supporter profile: the Zig Zag Foundation

The Zig Zag Foundation is a Brisbane-based organisation, launched in May 2007, that raises money on behalf of Australian charities to provide funding for special projects and needs.

The focus of the Zig Zag Foundation is to help sick, underprivileged and at-risk children – and it seeks the support of the business community and the general public to do this, through a number of fundraising events each year.

In late 2007, the Foundation awarded MontroseAccess a grant of \$2,500 to purchase textbooks and assessment books for staff at the new Sunshine Coast office. This enables therapists to learn about the latest literacy techniques to ensure our clients receive the best possible care.

MontroseAccess was also fortunate to receive a grant of \$7,000 from Zig Zag in October, to import, test and approve a device called the 'Neater Arm Support'.

The device – which is only available in the UK – fits on a wheelchair and over the arms of a person with limited mobility, enabling them to have 'normal' arm movements; such as for eating and personal care. After being approved for use by our clients, the Neater Arm Support will be available in 2009 for families to borrow at no cost from the MontroseAccess Resource Centre.

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Our Mission

To provide support services to clients with physical disabilities and their families to assist these clients to achieve their maximum individual potential for participation in the community.