

Edition 1

March 2020

Welcome to the first edition of Lilier News, a bi annual newsletter that is about keeping you, our supporters, up to date on what's happening at Lilier Lodge.

At this crazy time we also wanted to have some light relief for you, a little different, and something that is not focused entirely on all that is COVID-19.

Lilier Lodge is co-owned by Can Assist and Cancer Council NSW and was first opened in May 2004. It was built primarily to provide subsidised accommodation in a 'Home Away From Home' environment to country people travelling to Wagga Wagga for specialist Cancer treatment. When vacancies have allowed, Lilier Lodge has also extended its hospitality to people travelling for other medical reasons or are caring for someone in hospital.

At Lilier Lodge we understand that everyone staying with us is under stress of some sort, so the staff and volunteers endeavor to alleviate our guest's stress a little by creating a supportive, caring and safe environment for them to come back to. Where as well as listening, assisting with paperwork, providing opportunities for social connections there is also a lot of fun and laughter.



Team Lilier:

Margaret (Manager)

Alison (Reception/Administration)

Greg, Elise, Francis and Heidi (Housekeeping)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Lilier Lodge

The health, wellbeing, and safety of our guests, staff, volunteers, and community is a top priority for Lilier Lodge. People with Cancer are often at higher risk, due to their compromised immune system, of contracting infections, the flu, viruses, and these are likely to take hold at a greater speed.

The situation with COVID-19 is changing all the time and we are endeavouring to keep up to date with the latest information from NSW Health. Unfortunately, COVID-19 is starting to affect us all in different ways. With the first positive case of COVID-19 identified in the Riverina on the 22nd March, for us here at Lilier Lodge it is, without panicking and overreacting, to try to protect our guests who all have compromised immune systems.

With this in mind, Lilier Lodge is still open for business and taking bookings.

However, at this difficult time, we do respectfully ask for your consideration and support with the following.

- Lilier Lodge is currently in Lockdown. This means only essential staff and guests and their carers. No visitors.
- Our Volunteer Program and associated social activities are postponed until further notice.
- All people presenting to Lilier Lodge will undergo a COVID-19 screening questionnaire.
- Please do not attend Lilier Lodge if you are unwell or have flu like symptoms.
- Please do not attend if your Carer is unwell or has flu like symptoms
- If you have been in contact with anyone who has COVID-19 or you have recently been overseas please refrain from attending Lilier Lodge for 14 days after that contact.
- To protect yourself and others please practice the following hygiene steps:
 - Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water and hand sanitiser
 - Cover your nose and mouth if coughing or sneezing
 - Refrain from touching your face
 - Dispose of used tissues immediately in a bin
 - Avoid any unnecessary physical contact with others and practice social distancing. If you can't, use a hand sanitiser before and after the contact.

We understand this is a very stressful time and thank you for your continued support of Lilier Lodge.

Grants and Improvements

Thanks to a \$160,000 grant from **Dry July**, Lilier Lodge was able to fund several improvements in 2019/20. This included:

- The replacement in February and March 2019 of all the old **Air Conditioning** units in guest rooms and the building with new ones to improve the comfort of our guests year round.
- The installation in September 2019 of **Shade Sails** over the carpark.
- Development of a **Kitchen Garden** outside the Dining Room for guests to utilise. Work on this is being postponed due to COVID-19.

Special recognition to go to **Reece Plumbing** and **Andrew Linn from Ajile Plumbing Solutions**.

Andrew applied for and gained a grant in 2019 from Reece Plumbing for the supply of all materials required to upgrade the hydronic heating system at Lilier Lodge. Andrew then donated the substantial time to do the upgrade free of charge in May/June 2019. As well as upgrading the wall heaters in guest rooms, additional wall heaters were installed in the hallways. The difference in the hallways during winter was amazing.

Thank you also to **Wagga Wagga City Council** who provided us with \$3,000 to assist with the organisation and promotion of the Lilier Lodge and Can Assist Fundraising High Tea in October 2019.

A big Thank You to **Woolworths** in Baylis St, Wagga Wagga who, since May 2019, continue to donate \$100 per week to Lilier Lodge for needed supplies. Every week we utilise this donation to purchase guest continental breakfast provisions such as milk, bread, cereals, juice, and tea bags.

Thanks to the **Honda Foundation** and **Scott Braid** at **Wagga Motors** for the use of a loan vehicle for 18 months from 5th January 2018 to 30th June 2019 in order for us to assist our guests with access to vital appointments, grocery shopping and chemists.

Over those 18 months there were:

336 trips or 18.5 trips per month

493 guests assisted or 27 guests per month

5,452 kms overall or 303 kms travelled per month



The great service started with the Honda Foundation Car has continued with the **Can Assist Tarago** now based at Lilier Lodge.

News Flash! We have just learnt that our funding submission has been successful in the **2019 Community Building Partnership Grant Round** for funding of \$38,000 to **upgrade the communal kitchen** at Lilier Lodge. Due to COVID-19 we are not sure when this work will occur but we will definitely keep you posted on this.

We are often humbled by the great support provided to Lilier Lodge from community groups and individuals in Wagga Wagga and across the region. These donations, both monetary and in kind, assist Lilier to continue to improve our facility and make our guests stays a much more comfortable one. Lilier Lodge is very appreciative of all donations as every little bit counts.

While in kind donations come in various forms these have included paintings, kitchen equipment, beanies & scarves, pottery, fruit, jam, and cakes. Three recent donations of particular note are the handmade patchwork quilts for guest beds from the Boree Creek Patchwork Group; the new dishwasher for the kitchen from the Leagues Club Swimming Club; and the large handmade Timber Swing Set from Riverina TAFE. Thank you all.

Lilier Social Activities

A small but dedicated group of volunteers, including Lyn & Jim, Margaret, Peter, Robyn, Alan, Di & Brian, Roy, Elaine, Steve, Laura, Beth and Bob has been ably supporting Team Lilier and our guests. We thank all our great volunteers for their dedication and support of Lilier Lodge and our guests. We will miss greatly their care and assistance during the coming months due to COVID-19. While our regular Social Activities are all postponed indefinitely due to COVID-19 here is a snapshot of what we normally have.

Guest Dinner Program

The following is our Volunteer, Lyn's perspective on the Guest Dinner Program and the positive impact it has for the guests as well as the community groups involved:

"Lilier Lodge has a Community group host a dinner and sweets for the guests on a Wednesday night. It is such a rewarding experience for Jim and I and we meet such amazing guests and hosts. When Jim and I first took this activity over in 2017 we were having dinners once every few weeks

After seeing how much the guests enjoyed it and how they interacted socially, we now have it weekly. Lots of our guests come from very small country towns located 100 kms or more from Wagga Wagga and aren't familiar with the City so they don't go out much other than to their treatment. But just to see how they mostly interact with each other on Dinner nights is amazing and they become quite good friends by the end of their treatment.

The Community groups we approached were just so happy to come and after being there once and seeing the response from the guests, they want to come back which is wonderful.

Jim and I set up the dining room and help clean up and help in any way we can.

We have had Poet's and baritone singers amongst the guests who have given impromptu performances to lots of laughs and appreciation. At times, we have shared tears with the guests as well.

We couldn't run this program without the very generous support we receive from the Wagga Community Groups. People like: Rotary Groups, Apex; School Staff; Book Clubs; Salvation Army; Legacy; Leagues Club Swimming Club; Agrifutures; Inner Wheel; View Club; Men's Shed; Lions; CWA; Prostate Cancer Support Group; Corporate partnerships attached to some Rotary Clubs and the list goes on. We thank these Groups whole-heartedly for their support and beautiful food they supply, when their turn comes around. We look forward to 2020 being just as successful.

It is the loveliest place to volunteer and Margaret and Alison are the most caring wonderful girls you could ever meet.

Jim and I are the lucky ones, so lucky to be involved with this wonderful place Lilier Lodge, so lucky to meet such wonderful guests and share their journey, so lucky to meet so many willing hosts and so lucky to be able to give back! "

Lyn and Jim Gibson



Thanks to our Volunteer Guest Dinner Coordinators Lyn & Jim Gibson who do a great job not only hosting the Dinners every Wednesday night but also promoting Lilier Lodge and recruiting groups for the dinners.

Please Note, that the Guest Dinner Program and the other regular activities described below have all been postponed until further notice.

Guest Morning Teas are held every **Tuesday** morning in the Dining Room. Our Volunteers, Robyn and Alan, host the morning teas and are more than happy to spoil you. Thanks also to the staff of **Wagga Wagga Christian College** who make and donate cakes for the morning teas.

Laura Birchall holds **Gentle Exercise and Tai Chi classes** in the lounge every fortnight on a Wednesday afternoon. This recognises the importance of keeping active.

Walking with Bob on a Thursday morning for the guests. Guests could be strolling through the Botanic Gardens, down at the Wagga Beach, or just round the block at Lilier Lodge.

Regular **Guest Outings** are also organised with the assistance of our volunteers. Outings can include a \$10 lunch at the Commercial Club, a trip to the Junee Licorice Factory, or the local Botanic Gardens, or even to the RAAF Base Museum.

Guest Shopping Trips are generally held Tuesday to Thursday afternoons depending on need. Our volunteers Peter, Brian and Di are happy to take guests in the Can Assist vehicle to the supermarket for needed groceries, chemist, shops, or other appointments.

Our **Gardening** volunteers, Elaine and Beth, visit regularly to do their little bit in helping to keep our gardens at Lilier Lodge under control and free of weeds. If you are interested in being a gardening volunteer here at Lilier Lodge please let us know. We will need more assistance particularly when our Kitchen Garden is up and running.

Once we get back to normal, we would love to start a regular **Craft Group** at Lilier Lodge for our guests. If you would be interested in assisting with this or know someone who would be please let us know.

Fundraising Activities

A very successful **Lilier Lodge Garage Sale** was held on the grounds on Saturday 6th April, 2019. Over \$1,600 was raised and this has assisted with the purchase of 5 new bar fridges for guest rooms.



The **2020 Lilier Lodge Garage Sale** which was due to be held on the 18th April has unfortunately had to be postponed due to Coronavirus COVID-19 issues. Hopefully we can advise of a new date soon.



On Sunday 13th October 2019, Lilier Lodge and Can Assist Wagga Wagga Branch held a fundraising **High Tea** at Borambola Winery. The location was spectacular as was the weather. Approximately 120 people attended the day including a busload of 36 people from the Leeton area. Murrumbidgee Magic Chorus provided entertainment. We had two wonderful and interesting guest speakers – Dr Kerin Fielding and Kerry Gestier. The day was a celebration of life and a recognition of the great work both Can Assist and Lilier Lodge undertake. Over \$10,000 was raised which was shared equally between Lilier Lodge and Can Assist Wagga Wagga Branch.

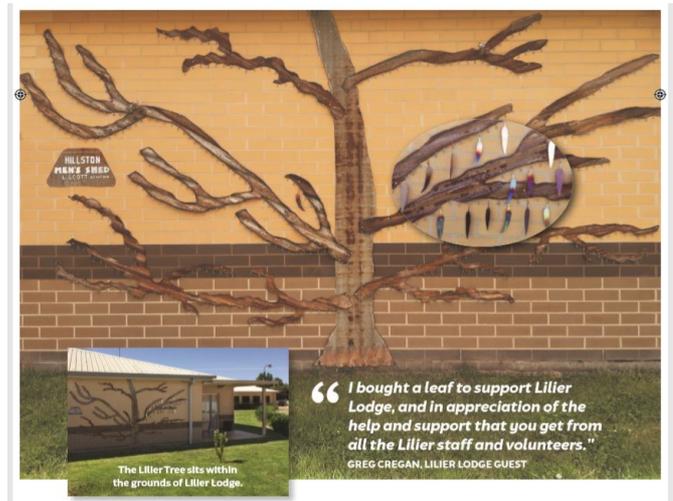


Planning is underway for the **2020 High Tea**, which will be at **Borambola Winery** again on **Sunday 11th October, 2020**. This year sees us celebrating Can Assist's 65th Anniversary. For more information about this great day contact Lilier Lodge on 02 6925 5240.

The Lilier Tree

A new project at Lilier Lodge is the Lilier Tree.

Made by the Hillston Men's Shed and attached to an external wall of the building the tree is comprised of corrugated iron. Special stainless steel leaves have been made to hang on the tree. What better way to acknowledge your association with, and support of, Lilier Lodge than by buying a leaf to hang on the Lilier Tree. Leaves which can have a name and date engraved on them can be purchased for \$100.



At this time, with fundraising opportunities difficult to undertake, the Lilier Tree is a great way to continue to support Lilier Lodge financially. All money raised goes towards making our guest's stays a more comfortable one. For more information about the Lilier Tree please contact us at Lilier Lodge on 02 6925 5240.



We all need a big hug at times, so please accept a big hug from us at Lilier Lodge, Can Assist and Cancer Council NSW. We hope you are all keeping safe and well. Remember, it's important at times of stress that we try and take things day by day and keep a sense of humour.

Love and virtual hugs to you all.

Best wishes,

Margaret Dalmau
Manager, Lilier Lodge