

Macrossan & Amiet CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

news update

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**MACROSSAN
& AMIET**
CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION

New Newsletter

We are sure that all Donors and Trustees at times wonder exactly how a grant was put to use.

I have wondered that myself so I thought I would take the time to track through a few of the grants to see how the recipients have applied them and what difference they make.

Kids Kids Kids

Pioneer Preschool and Kindy is a C & K accredited facility at High Street, North Mackay. They actually run two kindy groups where the kids attend two or three days a week under the skilful guidance of Liz Springall.

You need to understand that a kindy works entirely different from a childcare centre as a kindy is just about left to survive on what it can on donations from the State Government and fundraising by the parents. I should know I have had three kids go through kindy (which had a benefit in that it meant there was a convenient place for all my clean recyclables to be sent!).

The Pioneer Preschool and Kindy applied for a grant to buy some sturdy children's play furniture. Ms. Springall said that they are dismayed that every time they buy play furniture for the

kids it just does not stand up to the riggers of many children giving it a "good work out" every day, five days a week. So they embarked on finding some sturdy solid timber furniture (just imagine, in this day and age, furniture actually built to last).

With the help of the grant they have been able to purchase some quality kitchen play equipment (and there is even a BBQ so the boys will learn young).

Liz said that she is amazed by the reaction of the kids to the play furniture because, as it is designed for their height, it means they can play just like mum or dad in the kitchen (whoever thought domestic duties could be fun – but the kids now think so).



Liz said that the real benefit is being able to buy quality equipment which will last for years and is a great assistance to the kids' learning and development so, hopefully, they can help mum and dad at home.

How hard can it be to get weighed?

We are all familiar with quickly jumping on the scales at home to work out if we are gaining or losing a few pounds but have you every thought how difficult it is if you are in a wheelchair?

Prior to the Macrossan & Amiet Charitable Foundation providing a grant to the Mackay and District Spinal Injuries Association, if you are in a wheel chair and wanted to know your weight you would be facing either, a trip to Brisbane or a three-week delay while you waited for your turn to use the scales at the Mackay Base Hospital.

I had no idea how important weight is to people in wheel chairs not just for them (you cannot even order a cushion for your wheel chair without knowing your weight) but also for the people helping them as they need to know what amount they are lifting.

Now because of the grant given to the M&DSI Association at their Bridge Road, Mackay premises have a new set of digital scales where anybody can simply roll on in their wheelchair, check their weight, and roll off. It is as simple as that.



Alison Morris from the association said it has clearly been the most popular piece of equipment they have ever bought and not only is it popular with people residing in their para-villa accommodation but other wheelchair bound people in the community even drop into have their weight checked. It is just so quick, convenient, and beneficial.

I had no idea how their weight affected so many things in their life. If they want to travel to Brisbane the first question they are asked by the airlines is what they and their wheelchair weighs because the ground staff of the airline need to know their weight when they are lifting them to and from their chair.

Of course these people do not have sensation in the lower half of their body so generally do not know if they are putting on weight or not which can greatly affect their health. Now with the digital scales they are able to check their own weight in less than thirty seconds and importantly keep on top of their diet and prevent strain injuries to themselves and others.

What was remarkable about visiting their accommodation (was not just how all the residents seem to be avid fishermen) but this is the only fully furnished and dedicated home style residence which is wheelchair accessible and specifically designed for people with a spinal cord injury in Queensland. It provides for either respite care or as a transition from hospital to their own home.

Whilst in the accommodation they go through a series of transitional support programs to participate in a range of activities which can result in significant gains in their abilities in areas of self-care, dressing, mobility, social and recreational participation (this is where the fishing comes in). In short it allows them to become more independent and teaches them the skills they will need for their own independent living at home.

Alison Morris told us that because they rely totally on donations for funding they simply have not had the ability to purchase a set of scales before the grant received from the Macrossan & Amiet Charitable Foundation.

This organisation is outstanding not only for the work they achieve but also how they achieve it on such limited funds.

I was amazed to learn that this is the only facility of its type in the whole of Queensland. I simply thought that there would be one in each capital city. Mackay can be justifiably proud of the work these people do.

Update on the donations

2009 Grant Recipients

- Alzheimer's Australia Mackay Region Inc.
- Anglicare North Queensland Limited
- Dragons Abreast Australia (Mackay Group)
- Epilepsy Queensland Inc.
- Mackay & District Spinal Injuries Ass. Inc.
- Mackay Kindergarten & Preschool Association
- Mackay Meals on Wheels Ass. Inc.
- Mental Illness Fellowship NQ Inc.
- Ozcare Mackay Residential Drug & Alcohol Treatment Service
- Pioneer Preschool & Kindergarten
- Proserpine Homes for Aged Persons Society Inc.
- Proserpine Public Kindergarten Inc.
- Sarina Surf Lifesaving Club Inc.
- Shakespeare Child & Family Centre
- St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland
- Volunteer Marine Rescue Whitsunday Inc

Fact: -

Through our generous Donors assistance, the total of the Grants distributed from the M&A Charitable Foundation since 1995 is now over: -

\$138,894.00 !

Future Issues

We hope to be able to bring you three issues each year so you can see how grants are used by charities in the communities of the Mackay and Whitsunday Districts.

The constant comment that I am receiving when I speak to people who receive grants is just how appreciative they are to provide something extra at these charity groups.

(P.S. If the quality of the photos are not *National Geographic* standard remember I only have been trained as a lawyer not a photographer).

Until next time,
David O'Connell