

In The Press



Wish List

Poolside rescue equipment, such as a ring buoy with an attached line and/or long handled hook.

Diary Dates

For further information on any of these events, please contact marketing on (02) 9820 9999 or email marketing@odysseyhouse.com.au

On the Wagon - February 2006

Rugby Dinner - March 3, 2006

Real Men Cook - August 2006

Odyssey Recognition

Support that Odyssey House has recently received from the following donors is greatly appreciated.

G Armstrong

Caf Australia

J Cameron

Grantham Management

M Hawker

K Hocking

J Lawrence

Mallesons Stephen Jaques

M O'Connor

Orion Asset Management

C Stilwell



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Newsletter

ODYSSEY HOUSE



'A Calm in the Sea of Addiction'



"Young Adults" From left to right they are: Amy, Chris, Alex, and Hanh

Special Populations Young Adults Group

There are a number of "special populations" within the Odyssey House residential service. These include parents with children, residents with co-existing disorders of alcohol and other drug problems and mental health issues, and our younger residents, the young adults.

The Young Adults Group was established in July 2004 to accommodate the growing number of "young adults" within our population. It was felt they needed an adjustment to their therapeutic regimen

which was fun, had more action orientated activities, and was therefore more challenging and relevant. Residents aged 18-25 years of age are eligible to participate in these groups, the focus of which is to have a learning experience in a fun way.

Hong Lu, who co-ordinates the groups says, "It takes some effort to get the young adults involved, but once that's done there is no stopping them!" Hong says he tries to introduce activities that are fun and have educational and life experience qualities. These include writing

a poem as a group; writing a story sentence by sentence with each person contributing a sentence; and visiting the local radio station 91.3FM in Campbelltown to gain a better understanding of how it works.

The results of the groups are, the young adults are more comfortable being themselves; they are more confident, they feel they have a significant "voice" in a community dominated by "older" peers, and it has enhanced their role identification and responsibility within the resident population significantly.

Wish us a Merry Christmas

Christmas, as is the whole of the holiday season a time for cheer, reflection, spending time with loved ones, and most importantly seeing the glee on the faces of children as they unravel the wrapping paper on the gifts Santa has left for them.

This scenario will be a constant in many of the homes across Australia, in New South Wales, and Sydney. For many of the children at Odyssey House the prospect of Christmas is one of uncertainly and insecurity based on past experiences. At Odyssey

we endeavour to ensure the children in our Parents and Children's program have as happy a time as their peers in the general community.

Many of the children in the program have suffered delays in their attainment of developmental milestones due to their parent's alcohol and other drugs misuse. Research studies indicate that children of drug misusers are more prone than their age equivalent peers to learning difficulties, emotional problems while at school, and delinquent behaviour.

The program at Odyssey breaks that cycle by providing parents and their children with a safe environment, structured living, security, and tutelage in appropriate child rearing techniques. The Parents and Children's program gives families a chance to be real families again.

This Christmas help us make our wishes come true which are for each child, their parents, and other residents of Odyssey House to have that undeniable, but recognisable smile on their face on Christmas Day. Your donation to us will go a long way to make our wishes come true! Merry Christmas!

YES! I would like to help Odyssey House assist residents to live a drug free life.

Please find enclosed my donation of: (please circle) \$50.00 \$100.00 \$500.00 or \$ _____

Enclosed is my cheque / money order made payable to the Odyssey House McGrath Foundation or charge my credit card.

Bankcard Visa Mastercard Amex Diners Club

Card number: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name on card: _____ Title: (Dr/ Mr/ Mrs/ Ms/ Miss): _____

Signature: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Facsimile: _____

I would like to pledge \$ _____ per month to be deducted from my Credit Card until revoked in writing by me or Odyssey House.

DONATIONS OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

For more information on Odyssey House, visit www.odysseyhouse.org.au

Telephone: (02) 9820 9999 - Facsimile: (02) 9820 1796

Please return this coupon and your donation to:
Odyssey House McGrath Foundation, PO Box 459, Campbelltown, NSW, 2560.



PO Box 459
Campbelltown NSW 2560

Telephone: (02) 9820 9999
Facsimile: (02) 9820 1796

www.odysseyhouse.org.au

A message from the
Chairman



Eric R Dodd

It is with great pleasure that I take over the role of Chairman of the Board of Odyssey House following on from the great work of my predecessor, Maurice Green. Initially, I wish to thank Maurice for all the effort he put into this role particularly in driving the renovation project at Eagle Vale.

The role of the Board of Odyssey House is important to the ongoing profile and fund raising activities but also important as it plays a pivotal role in the good governance of our organisation.

We are indeed blessed to have a Chief Executive Officer of the calibre of James Pitts to run the day-to-day operations and the Board's role is very much one of supporting James and his team so they in turn can provide the wonderful support and help to so many people in the community.

The atmosphere that was apparent during our recent open day at Eagle Vale instils not only confidence in the future but provides a strong level of inspiration to all of us on the Board.

I look forward to working with James and all of the staff and residents of Odyssey House in the years ahead as we seek to make a real difference.

Eric R Dodd
Chairman

Open Day



CEO James Pitts was proud to Celebrate Odyssey's 28th year on Open Day



Professor Ian Webster, President and Daryl Smeaton, Executive Director of the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation



Eddie, graduate, speaks of the benefits of completing the program, while Susan Cordeiro, Residential Programs Manager looks on

Odyssey celebrated its 28th year of operation by hosting an Open Day for family, friends, and supporters of its programs. Over 400 people were in attendance to view the completed refurbishment of the 68 year old Mount St. Joseph's Novitiate Seminary building that houses the main treatment facility. The theme of the days celebration was "Home" and was kicked off by a rousing rendition of "Our House" sung by the Odyssey Choir.

Acknowledgements of how the renovations have impacted upon the staff and residents were delivered by Debi Ingram, counsellor, and Shane, a senior resident. The total cost of the project was \$1.8 million, almost all of which was raised through private donations. Acknowledgement of the significant level of financial support received for the renovations included the presentation of plaques by current Chairman, Eric Dodd to Mr Ross Grant, CEO of Grant Samuel, and former Board Chairman, Maurice Green. Other supporters included in the acknowledgements were the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation, owner of bel mondo restaurant Michael Lloyd, and Michael Hawker, Managing Director, Insurance Australia Group.

The highlight of the day was the awarding of certificates to the 16 graduates in attendance in the presence of family and friends. There was an outpouring of emotion as each one reflected upon the difficulty of their journey to abstinence as well as its tremendous rewards! Additional awards were made to staff for their achievements over the year. These included staff member of the year – Steve Hocking; The Pussycat Award – Wayne Giles, and the Ex-Addict Award – Donna May. The day ended with the choir leading those in attendance in the song, "I am, you are, we are Australian". A Great Day, and ours is "a very, very, very, fine house!"

Our most recent GRADUATES

We felt it fitting to highlight our most recent graduates in this edition's "A Resident's Story". Participating in the Odyssey House program has many tangible benefits as indicated by recent research studies. These include reductions in criminal activity and illicit drug involvement, increased general health and mental health functioning, and reductions in levels of depression. Other studies highlight the benefits of time in treatment having a direct correlation to positive treatment outcome. That is why the ability of these individuals who have graduated recently bodes well for their long term welfare.

There were 16 individuals who were honoured by receiving their certificates of graduation. The following are excerpts from some of their proposals:

CHRIS

19 years old – referred to Odyssey House as part of a Home Detention Order through the Magistrates Early Referral Into Treatment (MERIT) scheme.

"I found it difficult to really trust people and make connections as I felt my personal safety was violated when I was growing up. Through attendance at the Grief and Loss and Domestic Violence workshops while at Odyssey I have a better understanding of how these issues have affected me. I am currently studying Information Technology at TAFE and working in telesales and marketing".

TANIA

Tania's 4 children were returned to her care during rehabilitation.

"I learnt how to be a good parent and positive role model. Through the program I have learnt the therapeutic value of letting my kids play and get dirty, where this would not have happened in the past. We learnt how to live in a safe and happy environment that led us to becoming a family again. This gives us the chance to understand each other and brings us together in a strong, warm and loving family situation which we all deserve".

WILLIAM

"I now realise that in a lot of cases it's better to be respected than liked. I now have an understanding and value real friendships based on positive

common goals, factors, and interests. The way I look at it, I've done the best apprenticeship and obtained the most valuable tools in order to actively achieve a good career of recovery".

OLIVIA

Incarcerated while in Odyssey previously but returned after being released.

"During my true "get away from society" I had a period of time when I felt I could snap and throw it all in or use what I had learned at Odyssey. Over the past year what I have wanted in life has changed as has the way I deal with things. I feel I have demonstrated that I can use my sources within Odyssey effectively and those of my own. I can trust myself now!"

These excerpts are indicative of the struggles all of our graduates have experienced during their odyssey.



Chris is looking forward to a much brighter future now he has graduated from the Odyssey House program

A message from the
Chief Executive Officer



James A. Pitts

There is nothing more satisfying than to witness the completion of a task that had a tentative genesis. This statement applies to two important areas at Odyssey House: 1) our capital works project, and 2) our most recent graduates. In both domains the concept of being committed to complete what one has started, despite many unexpected obstacles, is the key. We were pleased to be able to celebrate both achievements during our Open Day celebrations recently.

We have had much to celebrate over the past year. Due to the nature of our business, we sometimes are so closely in tune to solving problems we don't take the opportunity to appreciate the victories we do have. This was evident during the Open Day celebrations when so many parents and loved ones present looked on proudly as their sons/daughters/husbands/wives were acknowledged for the progress they had achieved during their rehabilitation. Many of the relatives in the audience had participated in our Better Relationships In Every Family program, which assists families to work through conflicts. The impact of this program upon the lives of all involved was evident.

We receive tremendous support from the general public, state and federal governments, private trusts and foundations, and the corporate community. We would be unable to achieve many of our goals without the tangible support these groups and individuals provide. Many are so generous they seek no public acknowledgement or accolades. We were extremely pleased to be able to publicly thank many of them during Open Day.

Any company or corporate entity is adjudged by its "product". Those individuals who participate in the Odyssey program by struggling to confront, work through, and overcome the multitude of problems they face are our "product". We are therefore extremely proud of all that they as individuals, and we as an organisation have accomplished to date, and to this end we celebrate!

James A. Pitts
Chief Executive Officer