BERRY STREET

We're for Childhood

SINCE 1877

Berry Street 140 Years:

Restoring Trust and Hope

Alicia Cerreto



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Alicia Cerreto

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Images have been chosen to respect the identity, privacy and dignity of the children, young people and families the organisation has worked with over many generations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this book contains images of people who are now deceased.



Toddlers having their dinner at the Berry Street Foundling Hospital, Melbourne, 1956, NAA: A1805 CU1037/19 National Archives of Australia



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Foreword

We know that a good childhood really is the foundation of a healthy society. So my dream is that parents get the support and resources they need to give their children the childhood they deserve.

Since 1877, the people of Berry Street have strived to ensure that all Victorian children experience a good childhood. Over the past 140 years, Berry Street has evolved to meet the needs of Victorian children, young people and families. Berry Street continues to provide safe homes for vulnerable children, heal childhood trauma, help children to learn and develop, build stronger families, and speak out for childhood.

There are so many positive stories from our 140 years, of which a tiny number are in this book.

But when we look back — with the benefit of hindsight and new knowledge — we know we didn't always get it right.

Some children didn't receive the love, nurturing and care they deserved while in our care. Some were abused by adults who should have protected them. Some mothers had their babies forcibly removed without their permission. And Aboriginal children were too often separated from their community and culture.

This is why in 2006 our Board made formal Apologies to members of the Stolen Generations, to Forgotten Australians and in 2013 to people harmed through Forced Adoptions (see page 82).

It's timely to reflect on our past 140 years and the evolution of Berry Street through social change spanning three centuries.

A big thank you to everyone who has contributed to our journey so far.

Sandie de Wolf AM,
CEO Berry Street
October 2017

Introduction

It has been an honour and a privilege to work alongside the staff of Berry Street to bring you this book. As a historian, it is my role to delve into the layers of the past. I love to explore the stories of people and places and weave together the most important milestones with the smallest of details.

From my first meeting with the team, it became clear that the story of Berry Street was the story of so many people, from the committee and staff, to the babies, children and families who have needed their help. Over 140 years Berry Street has been home to many.

Designed as a book that highlights snapshots of the 140 year history of Berry Street, *Berry Street 140 Years: Restoring Hope and Trust* shows the organisation's commitment to Victoria's babies, children and families. The 140-year contribution that this organisation has made is significant and remarkable.

To pull together a history such as this one needs a committed group of people to work together. My thanks go to our engaged and involved steering committee who guided and shaped the project: Jacqui Riters, Julian Pocock, Heidi Reid, Wendy Haines, Jennifer Willis and Yola Armstrong; to the committed and knowledgeable team in the Berry Street Archives, in particular Sarah Green; to the Marketing and Communications team: Amy Nussbaumer, Tom Miller, Kelly McLeod and Imogen Baratta and endless thanks to Yola Armstrong for her energy, enthusiasm and leadership.

And of course, to someone who epitomises the passion and determination of the founders of Berry Street, Sutherland Homes and Lisa Lodge, Berry Street's outgoing CEO, Sandie de Wolf AM.

Thank you to the number of people who contributed reflections for this book: Mark, Coco, Zoey, Paul Wappett, Colin Scharp, Pat Holdenson OAM, Janine Kirk AM, Kate Jenkins, Vince Simeone, Peter Butler AM RFD and Sandie de Wolf AM.

My thanks also go to Kerry Bourke and family, who shared with me their recollections of the connections between Berry Street and the Richmond Football Club. And to Ian Frame, Hugh Howell and Ian Scott who shared their memories of being part of Operation Babylift during the Vietnam War, and allowed us to use their images. Though both of these stories were a tiny part of the history, it struck me that they embodied the underlying philosophy of Berry Street – to come together to meet the needs of children and women.

Thank you to the staff of the collecting bodies that hold records and images relating to the Berry Street story: Australian War Memorial, Museum Victoria, National Archives of Australia, National Library of Australia, Public Record Office of Victoria and State Library Victoria. Sincere thanks to Sophie Church, who edited this work with a keen and practiced eye, and to my colleagues and friends in the Professional Historians Association (Victoria), who offered encouragement and advice throughout the project.

Finally, to those who have needed the help of Berry Street and those who have offered it, this book is for you.

Alicia Cerreto
Professional Historian



Babies at Beaconsfield, c. 1915, Berry Street Archives

1870s

FIRST STEPS

In 1877, Melbourne was a growing city. The colony of Victoria was only 26 years old, and the gold rushes had inspired thousands to flock to the State that held previously unimagined riches. But the rush for gold did not deliver riches to all. Living and working conditions were improving for some, but rising poverty and homelessness were having a particular impact on women and children.

Social changes leading up to the foundation of Berry Street in 1877 affected the lives of men, women and children. In 1856, the building industry won workers the right to an eight-hour day. As well as enabling a better balance between work, health and education, the agreement gave men leisure time to focus on their roles as fathers. In 1864, Victoria became the first State to establish comprehensive child welfare legislation under the *Neglected and Criminal Children's Act 1864*. The Act defined the conditions under which children could be removed from their families and made provision for neglected children to be placed in a children's institution. 'Neglected children' included children found begging, frequenting a tavern, sleeping in the open air, or associating with a person known to be a thief, drunkard or prostitute. In 1872, the introduction of free, compulsory and secular education brought further changes to the lives of Victorian children.

Despite these advances, babies and infants of mothers with no support were still vulnerable to malnutrition, homelessness and premature death. On 15 June 1877 a group of intrepid and determined women who shared concerns about the plight of these children and their mothers made a decision to form a committee with the aim of providing a safe home for women and children facing adversity. From the outset, the Committee of the Victorian Infant Asylum sought to keep babies with their mothers, or where this was not possible, to find families to care for them.

In its first year, the Committee was dedicated to finding a permanent home, but first its members had to source adequate funds and attract like-minded supporters. In July the Committee received its first donation and within a few months had found a home in Hanover Street, Fitzroy. The first baby needing care arrived on 9 November 1877. Berry Street's journey, and its commitment to providing a good childhood, had begun.

THE FIRST COMMITTEE

Like many charities at the time, the Victorian Infant Asylum was managed by a committee of like-minded, well-to-do women. Mary Francis, Elizabeth Nankivell, Anna Maria Bright and Williamina Pearson brought Berry Street into being, and steered it through its first formative years. The Committee employed a matron, Mrs Owen, to oversee the home, and its members visited the children three times per week.



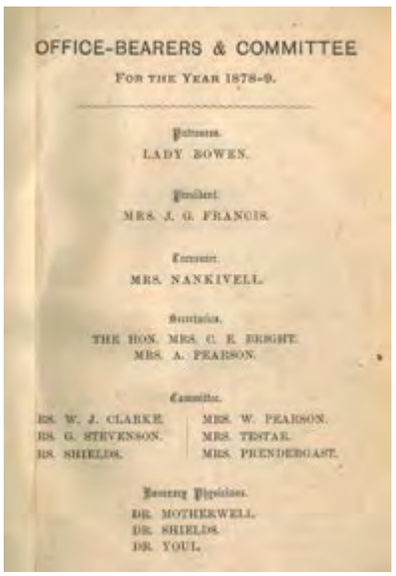
New plan of Melbourne and suburbs: Corrected to date expressly for Sands & McDougall's Melbourne & Suburban Directory, Sands & McDougall's Limited, 1877, Maps Collection, State Library Victoria

HONORARY PHYSICIANS

Dr Youl, the city coroner and a vocal campaigner for the prevention of baby farming, was one of a group of doctors who acted as honorary physicians for the Victorian Infant Asylum in its first year. Doctors Motherwell, Shields and Youl advised the Committee, supported the matron and tended to the babies in their care. Honorary physicians played a critical role in treating the babies and advising on their care until the 1960s.

THE FIRST BUDGET

In the first year, despite initially being advised by the government to 'look to the wealthy families of the colony' for support, the Victorian Infant Asylum received a much needed £500 government grant. Most of this money went towards rent and salaries for the superintendent, nurses and cook. Berry Street's first home, the rented house at Hanover Street in Fitzroy, had ten small rooms, and previous donations had funded the construction of a kitchen and a laundry. Despite these modifications, the Committee members were aware of the increasing demand for their services, and planned to build a place of their own as soon as they had sufficient funds.


OFFICE-BEARERS & COMMITTEE

FOR THE YEAR 1878-9.

Patroness.
LADY BOWEN.

President.
MRS. J. G. FRANCIS.

Treasurer.
MRS. NANKIVELL.

Secretaries.
THE HON. MRS. C. E. BRIGHT.
MRS. A. PEARSON.

Committee.

RS. W. J. CLARKE.	MRS. W. PEARSON.
RS. G. STEVENSON.	MRS. TESTAR.
RS. SHIELDS.	MRS. PRENDERGAST.

Honorary Physicians.
DR. MOTHERWELL.
DR. SHIELDS.
DR. YOUL.

1878 – 1879 Annual Report, Number 1, Berry Street Archives

DONATIONS

In the early days, support from volunteers was essential to ensure that the charity survived and achieved what it set out to do. From the very beginning, Berry Street took special care to record the efforts of volunteers and staff, every gift in kind and every donation, no matter how small. Like many of the charities that came into being at the same time, Berry Street relied on yearly subscriptions. In the first year, these donations ranged from as little as two shillings and sixpence, to a donation of £630. Those who gave an annual gift of more than ten guineas became Life Governors of the organisation.

BABIES AND MOTHERS

In June 1878, by the time the first annual report was written, the Victorian Infant Asylum had welcomed 32 babies and 20 mothers to the house in Fitzroy, helped a further five babies and, due to the lack of space, arranged for nine more babies to be boarded out (the precursor to foster care). Housing the mothers under the same



House in Hanover Street Fitzroy (now no.35), c. 1865, Berry Street Archives

roof as their babies was often critical to the children's survival. There were almost no reliable alternatives to breastfeeding at the time and the Committee noticed a significant difference in babies who were fed by their mothers than any alternative. During their time at the house in Hanover Street, the mothers helped to look after the babies and assisted with housekeeping. This experience enabled them to gain work and, in many cases, they were able either to return home with their babies or contribute financially to their ongoing care.

LADY DIAMANTINA BOWEN

Lady Diamantina Bowen, wife of Sir George Bowen, the Governor of Victoria, was a passionate charity worker, an accomplished host and an advocate for public health. As Governor's wife, she had previously occupied similar roles in Queensland and New Zealand and later served alongside her husband during his terms as Governor of Mauritius and Hong Kong. During her lifetime, Lady Bowen helped to found several organisations focused on supporting women and children and, in 1877, she was the ideal person to champion Melbourne's newest charity, the Victorian Infant Asylum.

Lady Bowen's willing support and patronage was critical to the success of the fledgling organisation. Her influence and connections helped Berry Street to make a difference from the very beginning.



Lady Diamantina Bowen, Johnstone, O'Shannessy & Co., c. 1901, PIC/9157/13, National Library of Australia



Paul Wappett

BOARD MEMBER SINCE 2007
PRESIDENT 2010 – 2018

I often say to people that, compared to other facets of my life, my involvement with Berry Street provides me with my greatest sense of heart and my greatest sense of being involved in solving some of the world's most important problems. There's something very affirming about being involved with an organisation – and with all of the people who comprise that organisation – that is just so committed to and passionate about creating better outcomes for our kids, and so determined to ensure that the conditions of childhood are enhanced for as many kids as possible. It helps me build and keep my faith in humanity, it provides more moments in which I feel useful than just about anything else I do in my life, it envelops me with a sense of community that I crave, and it makes me really, really proud.

One of the things I most admire about Berry Street is our people. They front up day in, day out, to what must be amongst the most complex, difficult, emotionally draining and thankless (but still amongst the most important) work that anyone does anywhere in the world, and they do so while always looking to do more and always putting others first.

It's an extraordinary privilege to be the President of an organisation like Berry Street, let alone to have the organisation support me to do it for as long as I have. I'm humbled by it, and I count it as one of the great privileges of my life.

Paul Wappett – CEO, Open Universities Australia



Sketches at the Victorian Infant Asylum, F. A. Sleap, 1884, Ian06/08/84/117, Newspapers Collection, State Library Victoria

1880s
BECOMING BERRY STREET

In the 1880s, the Victorian Infant Asylum relocated from its rented house in Hanover Street, Fitzroy to a new home in Berry Street, East Melbourne, a move made possible through a combination of fundraising and government support, allowing the organisation to care for more babies and their mothers.

It is this address that is the enduring memory of the organisation for many Victorians and that has shaped the name we know Berry Street by today. While Berry Street's name has changed multiple times over the years due to changes in society's attitudes and a desire to better describe the organisation's services, its reason for existing has not.

- Victorian Infant Asylum 1877 – 1902
- Victorian Infant Asylum and Foundling Hospital 1902 – 1906
- Foundling Hospital and Infants' Home 1906 – 1964
- Berry Street Babies' Home and Hospital 1964 – 1975
- Berry Street – Child and Family Care 1975 – 1992
- Berry Street Incorporated 1992 – 2000
  (including amalgamation of Sutherland Homes)
- Berry Street Victoria 2000 – 2007
- Berry Street 2007 – current
  (including amalgamation of Lisa Lodge)

FROM FITZROY TO EAST MELBOURNE

The founders of Berry Street had always hoped for a permanent home, and as their work expanded it became a necessity. The property in Hanover Street, Fitzroy could not accommodate all the babies and mothers that needed help. In 1878, the government had reserved a parcel of land for the organisation in Eastern Hill. The Committee intended to build on the land and advertised for an architect, but decided to buy an existing property once the old Police Hospital in Berry Street, East Melbourne, became available. The Police Hospital had large wards and offices, which were eminently suitable for the organisation's needs. In 1881 the government transferred its gift of land to the adjoining block and the babies, mothers and nurses moved from Fitzroy to East Melbourne to make a new start.



Telephone 2308.

TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

... OF THE ...

Committee of Management

... OF THE ...

FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

AND

INFANTS' HOME,

Late Victorian Infant Asylum and Foundling Hospital.

BERRY STREET, EAST MELBOURNE.

For Year ending June 30th, '06

... WITH THE ...

RULES OF THE INSTITUTION, LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS, ETC.

Melbourne:
E. W. COLE, Printer, Book Arcade.

1905 – 1906 Annual Report, Number 19, Berry Street Archives



Sketches at the Victorian Infant Asylum, F. A. Sleap, 1884, Ian06/08/84/117, Newspapers Collection, State Library Victoria

GIFTS IN KIND

In order to keep Berry Street babies fed and warm, practical gifts such as food, clothes and bedding were essential. Every care was taken to list all donations, from a pair of baby's booties, to a sack of quinces, to tins of sweets for their Christmas treat. Each year the special Christmas collection provided gifts and a feast for the mothers and babies, and sometimes the loan of a musical instrument to add to the festivities. In those early years, when Berry Street was not well known, these gifts in kind ensured the continued existence of the organisation.

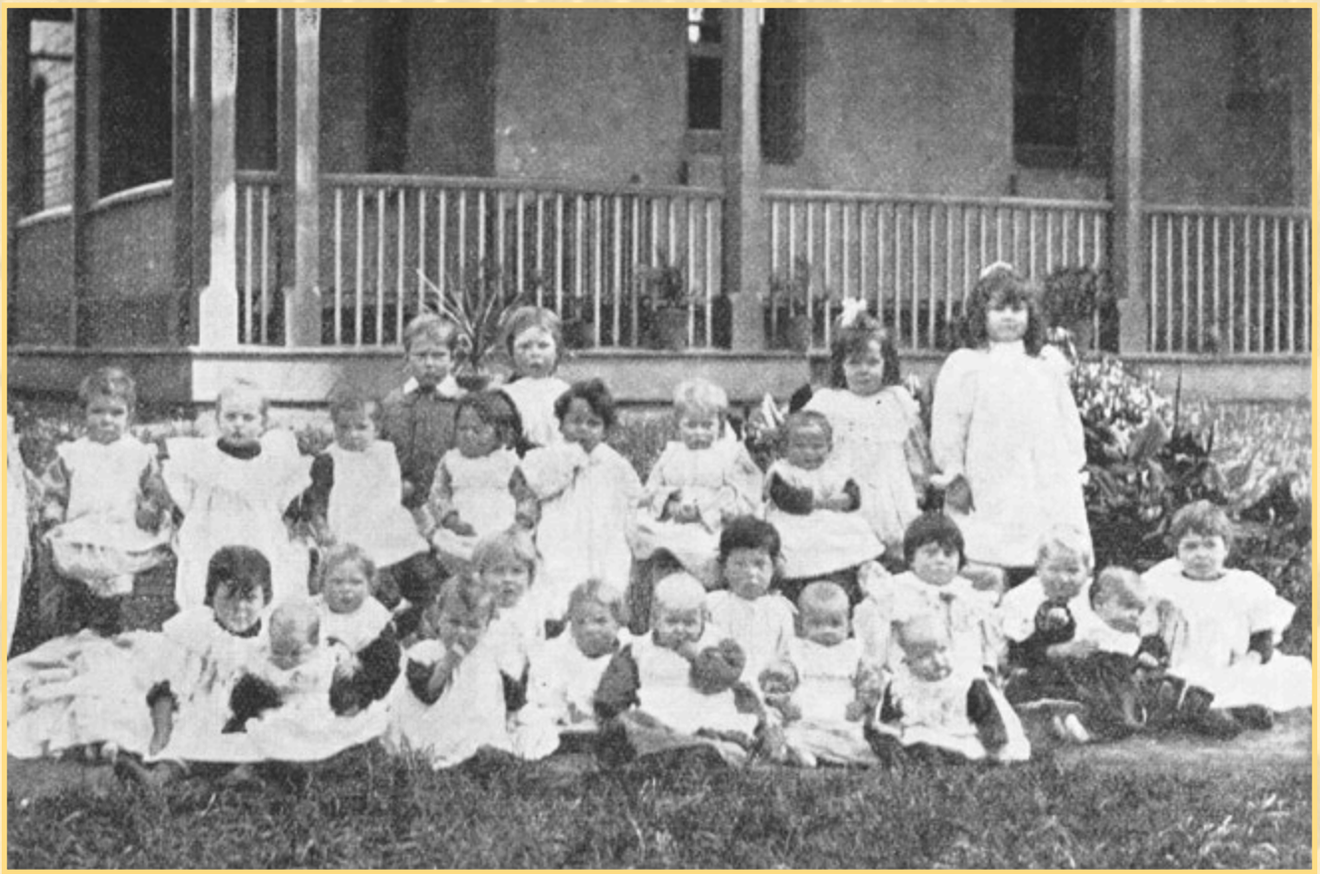
DONATIONS TO CHRISTMAS TREAT.

	£	s	d
A Friend (per *The Argus*) ..	£2	0	0
Mr. A. E. Fisken (per *The Argus*)	1	0	0
A Passer-by	0	4	0
Mrs. Hughes	0	10	0
Mr. C. W. Chapman ..	2	2	0
Mrs. J. A. Dallas	1	0	0
Mrs. C. A. H. Bland ..	0	5	0
Mr. J. Dean	1	0	0
A Thankoffering	0	5	0
One Who Loves Jesus ..	0	10	0
M. (per *The Argus*) ..	0	10	0
A Friend	0	1	0
Mr. W. Noall	1	1	0
E. A. W.	1	0	0
M. C.	1	1	0
Messrs. Clark and Co. ..	3	0	0
Mr. A. E. Buzzard (per *The Argus*)	1	1	0
Mrs. Carter..	0	2	6
Mrs. Hill	0	2	0
Mrs. Dawson (per *The Argus*)	3	3	0
R. M. B. (per *The Argus*) ..	1	0	0
Mr. G. A. Grant (per *The Argus*)	0	10	0
Mrs. D. R. Long (per *The Argus*)	£2	0	0
Mr. J. R. Murphy	12	12	0
A. B. (per *The Argus*) ..	1	0	0
Kind Wishes	0	5	0
Sympathy	2	0	0
Mrs. Ben. Rolls (per *The Argus*)	0	5	0
The Mayor of Melbourne (per *The Argus*) ..	2	0	0
Mr. Septimus Miller (per *The Argus*	1	0	0
A Friend	0	2	6
Mrs. Marshall	0	2	6
Messrs. Ball and Welch ..	1	1	0
Mr. Michael Kidston ..	1	1	0
Messrs. Guthridge & Co. ..	1	1	0
Messrs. H. Byron Moore and M'Leod	2	0	0
Officers of the Lands Department	4	0	0
Mrs. Hordern	1	1	0
Collected by Mr. Philpott, Railway Department ..	7	0	0
Mrs. Edward Henty ..	1	1	0

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

"Fernleigh," box toys.
Mrs. Fielding, parcel toys.
J. H. Walker and Son, case biscuits.
Lange and Thoneman, parcel stores.
Mrs. Keeson, toys.
Mrs. Sarah Davies, pictures, books, biscuits, sweets.
Anonymous, parcel dolls.
Friend, doll.
R. B., parcel toys and sweets.
Mrs. Hubbard, box soap, cheese, cakes, jam, &c.
Mrs. Worthington, toys and biscuits.
J. Service and Co., bag sugar, raisins, and currants.
Mrs. Sumner, toys.
By Post, parcel babies' socks.
Anonymous, parcel toys.
Gratitude, tin biscuits.
Mrs. Miller, cakes.
Swallow and Ariell, case biscuits.
Mrs. Purvis, toys.
Mrs. Garrett, goose.
Esther and Baby, box toys.
Miss Craffar, biscuits and sweets.
Two little girls, sweets.
Miss and Master Lovell, sweets.
Royal Horticultural Society, 4 cases apples, 1 case pears.
Mrs. Roberts, parcel clothes.
Mrs. Roberts, parcel toys.
Royal Horticultural Society, 3 cases fruit.
Messrs. Sargood and Co., parcel clothes and boots.
Mr. Peterson, box of toys.

1888 – 1889 Annual Report, Number 12, Berry Street Archives



Children outside the Victorian Infant Asylum, 1897 – 1898 Annual Report, Number 21, Berry Street Archives

1890s

DEALING WITH DEMAND

In the 1890s, Berry Street's services were in high demand. The Committee knew that they needed more space in their existing East Melbourne home to ease the overcrowding, but their funds did not permit this. In an era where there was no air conditioning, refrigeration or modern laundry facilities, managing the health and other needs of all the mothers, babies and staff at Berry Street was an enormous undertaking, particularly in the hot summer months.

ALFRED FELTON BEQUEST

In 1899, Alfred Felton became a Life Governor of the then Victorian Infant Asylum after donating £25 towards the children's summer holiday, following years of support from his company. After his death in 1904, his estate became the Felton Bequest and provided support to Berry Street for over a century, including the start-up capital for the first Berry Street School campus in Noble Park. Other bequests, trusts and foundations have been a regular form of support over the years.



1899 – 1900 Annual Report, Number 23, Berry Street Archives

LADY MADDEN

Annie Eliza Francis Madden, later Lady Madden, was a donor in the very first years of the organisation. She was married to Sir Frank Madden, a lawyer who was later elected to the Legislative Assembly and became Speaker of the House. In the 1880s Annie joined the Committee and served as president from 1894. During her time at Berry Street she oversaw substantial change and expansion, but in 1913, after many years of trying to manage an overdraft that had been accessed for maintenance purposes, Annie and the Committee reached an impasse and she eventually resigned. She and her husband, also a great supporter, left the organisation.



1899 – 1900 Annual Report, Number 23, Berry Street Archives



1899 – 1900 Annual Report, Number 23, Berry Street Archives



1899 – 1900 Annual Report, Number 23, Berry Street Archives



Colin Scharp

PRESIDENT OF SUTHERLAND HOMES AND BERRY STREET BOARD MEMBER 1983 – 1997

I became involved with Sutherland Homes in 1971 when I joined the Freemasons from Brunswick, Coburg, Preston and Northcote Sutherland Homes Committee, who met monthly and had morning working bees at Sutherland's Diamond Creek Campus. I then joined the Committee of Management of Sutherland and continued on the Board of the merged organisation until 1997.

This committee changed its name to 'The Berry Street Masonic Support Group' when Sutherland merged with Berry Street in 1994. The Committee still meets monthly and relies on sausage sizzles at Bunnings to enable us to make regular donations to support Berry Street's clients.

One of the highlights for me was the farewell event held at the Diamond Creek site when it was sold in 2000. Over 4,000 people attended across two days and it was so good to be able to mingle with people who had been cared for by Sutherland.

I find it so rewarding to see the manner in which this organisation has developed and the excellent services provided to those in need. Thanks, of course, must be extended to all the staff, led so capably by CEO, Sandie de Wolf.

Colin Scharp – Berry Street Life Member



Children and nurses at the Victorian Infant Asylum and Foundling Hospital, 1902 – 1903 Annual Report, Number 26, Berry Street Archives

1900s

GROWING AND CHANGING

In the early years of the 20th century, the hard work of honorary physician Dr Arthur Jeffreys Wood and Berry Street's Superintendent Gertrude Edwards, meant that a safe alternative to breastmilk was found. Due to their painstaking efforts, more babies survived infancy, a constant concern of the Committee and staff. In this era, the Committee was also able to raise funds for an extension to the existing buildings at Berry Street, and in 1905 the Foundling Wing was opened by Lady Sarah Talbot, wife of the Governor of Victoria and an active campaigner for social welfare. Some of the newly acquired space was taken up in 1907, when Berry Street started a live-in training scheme for mothercraft nurses.

In 1909, Sutherland Homes, which merged with Berry Street in 1994, moved to a 40-acre property in Diamond Creek in order to care for abandoned and orphaned children over the age of six.

MOTHERCRAFT NURSES

In 1907, Berry Street began a residential year-long training scheme for mothercraft nurses, which operated until 1975. In the first year of the scheme, the idea was so popular that Berry Street was overwhelmed with 100 applications for only five places. These young women, known as probationers, cared for the children at Berry Street and became a fixture in the streets of East Melbourne as they took the children for walks through the local parks. They attended lectures given by honorary medical staff and at the end of the year received a qualifying certificate, providing them with training and employment opportunities.



Foundation stone commemorating the opening of the Foundling Wing, 1905, Berry Street Archives



Foundling Hospital, Berry Street, Annual Report 1919 – 1920, Number 43, Berry Street Archives



Nurses walking toddlers in prams in park, East Melbourne, Berry Street Archives



Tea time at Beaconsfield, 1906 – 1907 Annual Report, Number 30, Berry Street Archives



Nurses walking toddlers in park, East Melbourne, Berry Street Archives

SUTHERLAND HOMES

Sutherland Homes served children, young people and families for almost 90 years. From its founding, the organisation grew and changed with the times, moving from dormitory-style accommodation managed by a matron, to cottages with 'cottage parents' and later to a youth hostel in Greensborough in the late 1970s. Sutherland Homes also established its own state school, which was open only to residents until 1947, then opened to the wider community until it closed in 1975. The school motto was 'through difficulties to the stars'.

In the 1950s, a School Club, made up of women from the local community, supported the school with fundraising, events such as Christmas parties and by sewing uniforms for the children. The local community supported Sutherland Homes in other ways, particularly through gifts of food and sharing their skills with the children. In particular, the local Freemasons were an essential part of Sutherland Homes, providing outings, hosting a Christmas party, debutante balls and holding regular working bees. Their support continues to this day.

In 1994, Sutherland Homes merged with Berry Street. The organisations had a lot in common: both were founded and maintained largely by women, both were independent and secular, and both were driven to improve the childhood of Victorian children. Their amalgamation brought together Sutherland Homes' broad range of programs with Berry Street's higher profile and strong support base in Melbourne. In 2000, after the sale of the Sutherland Homes Diamond Creek property, Berry Street held a farewell weekend, which was attended by over 2,000 former residents and visitors.



Girls and boys at dining table, Sutherland Homes,
Berry Street Archives



Boys upside down on monkey bars, Sutherland Homes, 1938,
Berry Street Archives



Children and staff member on steps, Sutherland Homes,
Berry Street Archives

AUGUSTE MEGLIN

Sutherland Homes owed its existence to Selina Sutherland and its place in the world to Auguste Meglin. In 1909, Auguste anonymously donated her house and 40-acre property in Diamond Creek to Sutherland Homes. Over 30 years before, she had inherited her brother's wealth but lived relatively simply. Auguste continued to make improvements to the house in readiness for Selina and the children to arrive in October that year, but her death in July meant that she did not see them make her house their home. After her death, Auguste Meglin was named as Sutherland Homes' generous benefactor, and a large part of her estate was also left to the organisation.



Sutherland Homes, Diamond Creek, Berry Street Archives



Babies at Beaconsfield, 1919 – 1920 Annual Report, Number 43, Berry Street Archives



Children at Sutherland Homes, Berry Street Archives

SELINA SUTHERLAND

Selina Sutherland, the founder of Sutherland Homes, was passionate and uncompromising in her commitment to the children of Victoria. Born in Scotland in 1839, she moved to New Zealand in her early twenties, and found work as a nurse before moving to Melbourne in 1881. Selina's work in Melbourne centred on the care of children. She had a keen sense of justice and was determined to make a difference to children living in poverty, often disregarding formal procedures if she felt they stood in the way of providing care to those who needed it. In 1888 Selina became Victoria's first licensed 'child rescuer' and founded no fewer than three charities that still endure in some form today.



Selina Sutherland, Berry Street Archives



Selina Sutherland, 1908, Berry Street Archives



Berry Street Babies, Annual Report 1912 – 1913, Number 36, Berry Street Archives

1910s

TO THE COUNTRY

Knowing the value of spending time away from the city, over the years the Committee had regularly leased houses in the country or at the seaside, thanks to the support of generous donors. In 1913, due to a £1,000 government grant and years of saving, the Committee was able to purchase a 38-acre property close to the railway station in Beaconsfield. A year later, after some remodelling, the Beaconsfield Home was opened by Lady Margaret Stanley, wife of the Governor of Victoria. Most of the babies and their mothers were moved to the new home to benefit from the fresh country air and local produce, leaving the East Melbourne home to those babies most in need of extra care, and mothers about to give birth.

BEACONSFIELD

The children's health improved enormously after moving from the cramped conditions in Fitzroy to East Melbourne, but living so close to the city had its limitations. Each Christmas, Berry Street held a special fundraiser so that they could take the children on a summer holiday by the beach or in the country. But the Committee members had set their sights high, and in 1913 purchased a country property of their own in Beaconsfield. This became not only a holiday property and a place to retreat if illness struck at East Melbourne, but also became a permanent home for children and nurses. There was a farm and orchard that supplied both Beaconsfield and East Melbourne with fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs and dairy produce, which were essential during the Depression and war years. The Beaconsfield community supported the home by forming an auxiliary committee and the local medical practitioners mirrored the honorary support given by doctors at East Melbourne.



Sister Black and children at Beaconsfield, 1938, Berry Street Archives



Beaconsfield, 1938, Berry Street Archives



Beaconsfield, 1938, Berry Street Archives



Beaconsfield, 1938, Berry Street Archives



Beaconsfield, 1938, Berry Street Archives



Berry Street Babies, Annual Report 1912 – 1913, Number 36, Berry Street Archives

ANNIE COHEN

Annie Cohen was a well-known community worker who gave over 40 years of consecutive service to Berry Street. Initially contributing gifts in kind and financial donations, Annie joined the Committee in 1897, then served as President from 1921. In 1931, on the occasion of her and her husband Montague's 50th wedding anniversary, their friends presented them with a sum of money to donate to their favourite charity. With the money, Annie and Montague chose to buy Berry Street a large and much needed refrigerator. Annie continued to provide financial support and practical leadership until her death in 1939.



Annie Cohen (middle), publication unkown, Berry Street Archives



Pat Holdenson OAM

PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER 1974 – 1994

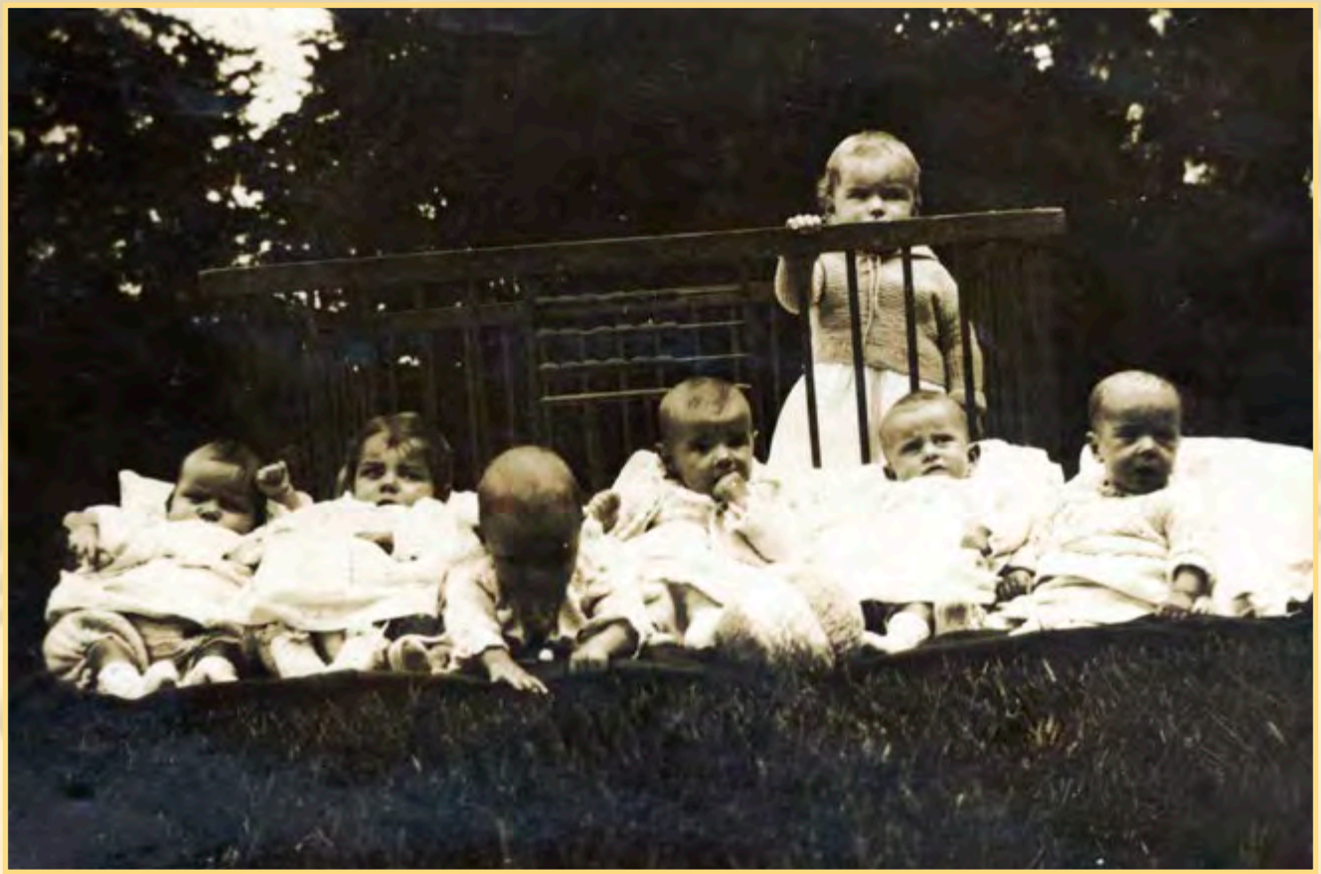
I was invited to join the Committee of Management of Berry Street in 1974.

I abhor child abuse and domestic violence and thought this was an opportunity to help disadvantaged and desolate families and frightened and bewildered children to find peace and stability with our help.

I became Vice President in 1978 and President in 1980 – 1982. During this time, we provided day care programs, emergency care units and family group homes. We also opened an adolescent centre for boys and encouraged community fundraising. Success in community fundraising inspired me to further fundraise and we formed a committee with the kind offer of the Governor of Victoria to hold a Strawberry Fair at Government House. This was a great success and we raised valuable funds to run future programs.

Since the amalgamation of Sutherland Homes in 1994 and under Sandie de Wolf's leadership, she and her staff have revolutionised child and family welfare in this State. Regional school campuses, an extensive foster care program and family violence assistance are but a few of Berry Street's achievements. Congratulations to Sandie, the Board and wonderful staff for their dedication.

Pat Holdenson — Berry Street Life Member



Babies on grass in front of cot, c. 1922, Berry Street Archives

1920s

MEETING THE NEED

In the 1920s, the Committee ran a public appeal, launched by the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sir John Swanson. They aimed to raise £10,000 to extend the Berry Street buildings. In 1927, the Committee used this money to buy the neighbouring property in Vale Street and named it Tandarra. The Committee then opened the Tandarra Infant Welfare Training Centre, which provided extra care for premature babies, support for new parents, and training in infant welfare for registered nurses.



1923 – 1924 Annual Report, Number 47, Berry Street Archives

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

With the new Tandarra Infant Welfare Training Centre, Berry Street was able to offer more support to families in how to care for their babies. Mothers could come in for help with breastfeeding, receive advice on dealing with illness, feeding older children and looking after themselves while pregnant.



Tandarra Infant Welfare Training Centre, 1931 – 1932 Annual Report, Number 55, Berry Street Archives



His First Show, The Argus, Friday 20 September 1929

MATRON MCGAIN

Hilda McGain, a war widow, began work as a nurse at Berry Street in the late 1920s. She soon became Matron and was a champion for the trainee mothercraft nurses. Hilda started the Past Nurses Association in the 1930s and was the organisation's president for some time. The Association provided a way for past nurses to stay connected with each other and were a significant support to Berry Street. As Matron, Hilda managed the significant changes during the war years, including the evacuation of all the children and staff to Beaconsfield. Hilda retired from Berry Street in 1945, and continued her support of the organisation by giving gifts in kind to the home after her departure. After her death in 1979 the Past Nurses Association commissioned a sculpture in her memory in the form of a fountain, which was placed in the garden at Berry Street, East Melbourne.



Statue at the pond, Berry Street Archives



Babies at Berry Street, Berry Street Archives

1930s

MAKING ENDS MEET

The Depression of the 1930s meant that there were more admissions and demand on Berry Street's services, but not as much money to go around. Food from the Beaconsfield property was essential at this time, with vegetables, fruit, bacon and milk filling bellies at both Beaconsfield and East Melbourne. At the end of the decade, Berry Street had acquired a large overdraft and, although there was still a need to expand, the Committee could not afford to start any construction.



1934 – 1935 Annual Report, Number 58, Berry Street Archives

DEPRESSION

Through the economic depressions of the 1890s and 1930s, Berry Street struggled to attract donations. It was also difficult to help older children find work outside the home. For the first time, in 1930, Berry Street took in children of married parents who were living in dire poverty, as the Committee felt that to do so would save their lives.

FOUNDLINGS

While many babies who lived at Berry Street were brought in by their mothers, some were foundlings, children who were abandoned either directly at the home or in the streets of Melbourne. During the 1920s and 1930s, a large number of children were left in this way, and the staff told tales of sudden discoveries and bringing these little ones back to health. In many cases, the foundlings were named after the streets or the location where they were found. So a little girl found in the lane behind the Berry Street home might be called Margaret Lane, a boy found at a nearby church might be dubbed Peter East, and a baby found on the doormat of a neighbouring home, might be named Matthew Vale. There was a lot of media attention for these children, and this often resulted in a large amount of unsolicited calls from hopeful adoptive parents keen to take them home immediately. But the Committee ensured that these babies regained full health before adoptive parents were found or the babies were boarded out into foster homes.

CHILDREN SUPPORTING CHILDREN

Berry Street's annual reports are filled with lists of donors and gifts in kind. Amongst them are gifts from guide and scout groups, schools, youth groups and even child subscribers who would send in a donation on their birthday each year. During the 1930s and 1940s, an egg appeal was run through the state schools of Melbourne, which provided thousands of eggs for Berry Street. Later, in 1954, the children of Dandenong High School collected an extraordinary 20,580 eggs in one week and Berry Street was one of nine grateful recipients.

VERA SCANTLEBURY-BROWN OBE

Dr Vera Scantlebury-Brown OBE was a pioneer in infant welfare, ante-natal and pre-school care. In the 1920s she became a director in infant welfare in the Department of Health and was a regular visitor to Berry Street. Vera advocated for a focus on both the physical and mental development of a child and was a wholehearted supporter of Berry Street's mothercraft nurse and infant welfare training scheme. In 1938, at the Annual General Meeting, Vera spoke in admiration of Berry Street, its origins and how it had done great work as a foundling hospital. She also paid particular attention to Berry Street's significant influence on education of both health practitioners and parents. After her death in 1946, Berry Street remembered Vera as a good friend to the institution.



1934 – 1935 Annual Report, Number 58, Berry Street Archives



Janine Kirk AM

PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER 1996 – 2009

Throughout my business career, I have always found it important to give back to the community. I have found, over the years, that engagement with a range of community or government organisations broadens your perspective on life. The experience also enriches you as a person, and I think makes you ultimately a better citizen, manager and leader.

The "why Berry Street" was that I was approached by a colleague who had served on the Berry Street Board for over 20 years. He briefed me on the organisation and its work, and asked if I would be interested in joining the Board. I liked what I heard about the purpose and vision of the organisation and thought that I had the skills and networks that would be of assistance. Therefore, I accepted a role on the Board and subsequently became Vice President and then President, spending 12 years on the Board.

We worked with the most vulnerable and troubled children and their families. This position was very soon tested in the public arena. Berry Street was cited in a State Government parliamentary report on best practice in dealing with young people who were chroming (inhaling solvents to get high). We had implemented a policy position around substance use which had, in fact, won a State Government best practice award. A journalist picked this case study out of the report, and without any context, or indeed speaking to Berry Street about the program, turned it into a sensational story reported on the front pages of the *Herald Sun* where the issue continued to be covered for about five weeks.

The program essentially involved working with some of our young clients who were chroming and trying to find the root cause of their addiction while keeping them safe. But under the sustained attack from the media and others, Berry Street stood firm and argued the case and stood by our young people. I thought Sandie as the CEO and the Board handled the situation with dignity, strength and with the protection of our young people uppermost in our minds. It was a true test of the character of the organisation.

It is a privilege to have been a part of the Berry Street family, even for a short time in its distinguished 140-year history.

Janine Kirk AM — Chief Executive, Prince's Trust Australia



1940 – 1941 Annual Report, Number 64, Berry Street Archives

1940s
UNDER THREAT OF WAR

During World War II, Berry Street nurses also stepped up to look after children who were in need of care due to one or more of their parents being away on military service. In 1942, the Committee decided to move its operations back to the safer rural area of Beaconsfield and soon after, the military took possession of the East Melbourne home. After the war ended, the East Melbourne home was renovated and refreshed. The babies and children returned from Beaconsfield to a cream and turquoise nursery, modern bathrooms and lovely new gardens.

During this period, the Committee had trouble attracting staff, due to a shortage of nurses Australia-wide, and closed the Beaconsfield Home as a result. However, after the war, Berry Street was inundated with 500 nurses returning from service in the Army, who wanted to train in infant welfare and mothercraft nursing. Given this extraordinary demand, Berry Street was able to accommodate more than its usual number by having some of the nurses live out of the home. In 1949, doctor and community worker Lady Mary Herring (later Dame Herring) opened a toddlers' wing with a kindergarten on Vale Street, East Melbourne. The toddlers greeted their new environment with delight; the nurses reported that they seemed to grow in personality and size almost overnight.

WARTIME

During World War II, in an attempt to reduce costs, the Committee initially closed its home at Beaconsfield for a time. But in 1942, Berry Street's babies and staff were evacuated from East Melbourne to Beaconsfield due to fears of air raids in central Melbourne. They remained there for the rest of the war, in order to make way for the Australian Women's Army Service, which was billeted at Berry Street in East Melbourne.



1940 – 1941 Annual Report, Number 64, Berry Street Archives



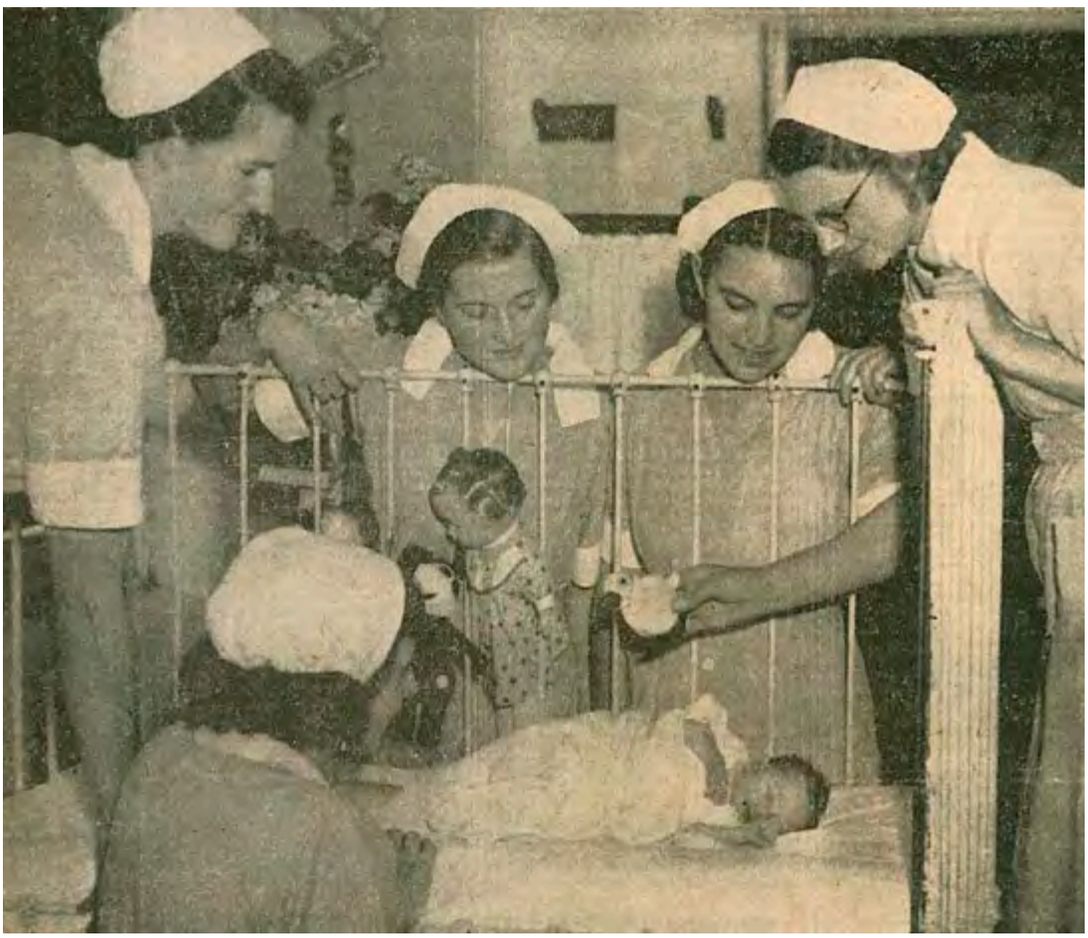
Private L.M. Lee inspecting a hat while Corporal A.L. Edwards presses the crown of another in the millinery section at the Australian Women's Army Service barracks in Berry Street, Melbourne, VIC. 26 April 1944, 065847, Australian War Memorial

KEEPING CONNECTED

Though children may have left their care, the staff and Committee of Berry Street tried to maintain the connections with their young charges. The children were always invited to special events at the East Melbourne home, especially the Christmas parties. During the 1940s, the Committee set aside money especially for supporting older children who had moved on. Over the years the funds were used to support the schooling of a boy who wanted to study engineering, a girl who trained as a nurse and other small but significant acts of support.



1947 – 1948 Annual Report, Number 71, Berry Street Archives



The newest baby at Berry Street, 1940 – 1941 Annual Report, Number 64, Berry Street Archives



Children playing with toys, Berry Street Archives

1950s

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

During the 1950s, a new nurses' wing opened on Vale Street. This gave the hardworking nurses a quiet area to sleep and recuperate, and helped with overcrowding. But this was a stopgap measure, as the Committee had high hopes for future renovations. It planned to replace the East Melbourne properties with purpose-built, spacious and modern buildings.



Nurse feeding two babies, Berry Street Archives

GRATIFICATION, GRATITUDE AND GRAVE CONCERN

The Committee began the 1950s with 'gratification, gratitude and grave concern'. The concern was for the increasing costs associated with managing the organisation, the gratitude was for the generous support that was given to Berry Street, and gratification was for the high standards they were able to maintain in the nurseries. At the end of the decade, finances were still a big worry but the Committee was grateful for the ever-expanding range of supporters, including the Richmond Cricket Club, which supported various small renovation projects around the home, and Charles Schultz, who collected, delivered and paid for fruit and vegetables for all babies, mothers and nurses for an entire year.



Playing on a rocking horse, Berry Street Archives

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

As far back as its establishment in 1877, it is likely that Berry Street was caring for Aboriginal children, placing them in foster care and placing them in adoptive homes. However, records at the time paid little or no attention to the cultural identity of children and the full extent of Berry Street's involvement with Aboriginal children and families is unknown.

From 1869 to 1957, Victoria had separate child welfare legislation specifically focused on Aboriginal children and families. The 1869 *Aborigines Protection Act* authorised:

- the removal of Aboriginal children from their families
- the relocation of Aboriginal families and communities from their lands and onto missions and reserves
- the transfer of Aboriginal children from missions and reserves into children's homes and orphanages
- the allocation of these children to work for non-Aboriginal families as domestic servants, farm labourers and in low-skilled occupations.

Legislation applying to Aboriginal families assumed that every Aboriginal child needed protecting from their family and could be removed from families because they were Aboriginal. There was no specific requirement to demonstrate that a child had been harmed or neglected by their family. The underlying belief was that Aboriginal cultures were inferior to those of the settler colony and that Aboriginal children would be better off if they were removed from their families and traditional cultural practices.

Since that time, these attitudes, laws, policies and practices have been exposed as racist, a form of cultural genocide and with devastating consequences for Aboriginal children and families across multiple generations. Aboriginal children who were removed from their families have become known as the Stolen Generations.

In 2006 and in 2016, the Berry Street Board acknowledged Berry Street's role in these policies and practices and made formal apologies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities and to the Stolen Generations.

Today Berry Street's work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities continues with a focus on supporting self-determination and the cultural identity of children. Read Zoey's story on page 88.



Three babies in a rocker, Berry Street Archives



Smiling baby at Berry Street, Berry Street Archives



© Barry Gittins

Kate Jenkins

VICE PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER 2001 – 2016

I started working with Berry Street in the 1990s when I worked as their employment lawyer through Freehills' pro bono legal program. One of the Senior Partners of my firm, Peter Butler, had had a long connection with Berry Street, including having been the President of their Board. I joined the Board in 2001.

I have felt privileged to be involved with Berry Street for 20 years, serving 15 years as a Board member. It has been an honour to be involved with an organisation that has such strong values and such a clear commitment to improving the lives of Victoria's children, young people and families. While I am pleased I could share my skills on the Board, I have also personally learned so much from Berry Street's talented staff, dedicated volunteers and resilient clients.

During my period on the Board there were many challenges and significant achievements. The turnover of the organisation increased from $14 million when I started in 2001, to close to $80 million when I left in 2016. Berry Street established the therapeutic program Take Two, the Berry Street School, now with numerous campuses, the Berry Street Childhood Institute, developed a strong public policy and advocacy voice, acquired Lisa Lodge in Ballarat, worked with Aboriginal communities to improve care for their children, delivered apologies to the Stolen Generations, Forgotten Australians, and mothers and children harmed by forced adoption, established Open Place for past care leavers, and so many more things.

I admire Berry Street's staff, volunteers and its clients. The staff, and especially its CEO Sandie de Wolf, demonstrate everyday their commitment to children and young people and to their vision that every child deserves a good childhood. The volunteers, donors and foster and kinship carers are remarkable people who give their time, money and love. I am equally inspired by the clients with whom Berry Street works, who want to make for themselves a better future, from a very challenging starting point.

My connection with Berry Street has been one of the most personally and professionally rewarding relationships in my life. Not only have I learnt more than I could ever have imagined, but I too have been the beneficiary of the care and loyalty of my Berry Street friends. I wish Berry Street a happy 140th birthday, as it continues to move with the times in meeting the needs of Victoria's children and young people.

Kate Jenkins – Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner



Berry Street Foundling Home Preschool Centre, VPRS16682/P0003, Maternal and Child Health Service (Infant Welfare) Photographic Collection, Unit 3, Public Records Office of Victoria

1960s

GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT

With their eyes set firmly on funding the modernisation of the East Melbourne buildings, the Committee reluctantly sold the Beaconsfield Home in 1963. The resulting funds, and a successful public appeal for £200,000, enabled the beginnings of an ambitious building program at Berry Street. The first step was a small preschool, opened in 1968 by Dr Betty Wilmot, Director of Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Welfare. In 1969 a new Toddlers' Wing, named the Appleton Wing for long-serving Committee member Eirene Appleton MBE, was opened by Lady Eleanor Delacombe, wife of the Governor of Victoria.



Felt & Textiles Auxiliary visiting Berry Street, Laurie Richards Collection, 23 January 1960, MM 137560, Museum Victoria

AUXILIARIES

In January 1960, the women of Berry Street's Felt & Textiles Auxiliary donated a large fridge to the organisation. The children and staff of the Toddlers' Wing in East Melbourne wholeheartedly welcomed this new addition as they sweltered through a summer heatwave. In order to raise the funds needed to buy the fridge, the Felt & Textiles Auxiliary organised a fashion parade, a raffle and a slide night at their workplace, Felt & Textiles Australia, which was located close to Berry Street's home in East Melbourne. Auxiliaries played a large part in supporting Berry Street at that time. Members visited the children, ran their own fundraisers and donated clothing, food and other essentials. The Redesdale Auxiliary began supporting Berry Street in 1969. Over many decades, the members of the Auxiliary ran functions such as bingo nights, dinner parties and regularly supported Berry Street raffles and events.

EIRENE APPLETON MBE

In 1967 Eirene Appleton received an Order of the British Empire in recognition of her service to social welfare, including 42 years of service to Berry Street, as well as work for the Red Cross, St John's Ambulance and the Royal Children's Hospital. Eirene's mother, Elizabeth, was a regular and generous donor to Berry Street and had served on the Committee from 1913. Eirene became a donor to Berry Street in 1915 and joined her mother on the Committee ten years later. Eirene finally stepped away from Berry Street after 45 years on the Committee and the new Toddlers' Wing was named the Appleton Wing in her honour in 1969.



Berry Street Hospital Preschool Play Centre. Health Department officers including Doctor Elizabeth Wilmot, VPRS16682/P0003, Maternal and Child Health Service (Infant Welfare) Photographic Collection, Unit 3, Public Records Office of Victoria



Berry Street Hospital Preschool Play Centre. Health Department officers including Doctor Elizabeth Wilmot, VPRS16682/P0003, Maternal and Child Health Service (Infant Welfare) Photographic Collection, Unit 3, Public Records Office of Victoria



Berry Street Foundling Home Preschool Centre, VPRS16682/P0003, Maternal and Child Health Service (Infant Welfare) Photographic Collection, Unit 3, Public Records Office of Victoria

FUNDING

Government funding has ebbed and flowed over time, but since the 1960s has made up an increasing proportion of funds. In addition to donations from large organisations, smaller gifts from schools, country shires, local councils, businesses and social groups have all contributed to making Berry Street what it is today.



Berry Street Babies' Hospital needs $200,000 to help these little children

WHAT IS THE BERRY STREET HOSPITAL?

The Berry Street Babies' Home and Hospital (to give its full name) is a privately run and Government recognised home. It cares for babies and for unmarried mothers, and trains 35 mothercraft nurses a year.

The children are all in need of loving care and help. They come from broken homes . . . are wards of the state . . . have parents unable to look after them . . . or have unmarried mothers. Some are to be adopted . . . some are being looked after until home conditions improve. All these children are Australia's citizens of tomorrow. All need your love and most generous help.

Fundraising Appeal, 1966, Berry Street Archives



Berry Street building with donations sign, Berry Street Archives

1970s

CHANGING TIMES

The 1970s were a time of enormous change for Berry Street. As social values changed, unmarried mothers received more support from governments and the wider community. As a result, Berry Street closed its adoption services in 1975. As Berry Street continued to professionalise, social workers were employed and took over much of the work of the Committee. Change came to the mothercraft trainee program too. Though a much loved part of Berry Street, the trainees were reclassified as employees rather than students, and the cost was too high for the Committee to bear.

By the time of Berry Street's centenary in 1977, another rebuilding program was completed, and as the organisation began its second century, its services had changed to include day care, long-term residential care in suburban group homes, and short-term emergency residential care at East Melbourne. In Ballarat, Lisa Lodge, which later merged with Berry Street, was founded to offer vulnerable women and girls accommodation and local support.



Lisa Lodge, Berry Street Archives

LISA LODGE

In 1970, the compassionate women who founded Lisa Lodge in Ballarat recognised that vulnerable women and girls needed to access local support and accommodation when in need. These honorary probation officers were trained to work in a voluntary capacity with young people and did not want the girls to be moved to Melbourne if conditions at home were untenable. They were determined to find supporters from within their community who would help to make Lisa Lodge a reality. In 2012, after more than 40 years of providing this service and many other means of support, Lisa Lodge merged with Berry Street, enabling it to achieve more for the young people and families of Ballarat.



Lisa Lodge Committee, Berry Street Archives

ADOPTIONS

From Berry Street's inception, children were placed for adoption with families. However, it was not until 1928 that adoption legislation was introduced in Victoria.

Prior to 1928, adoptions had no legal status and agencies like Berry Street managed and facilitated adoptions according to their own processes. In Berry Street's case, the Committee managed the process of reviewing prospective parents and placing the children in their care. The 1928 legislation enabled parental rights and responsibilities to be legally transferred to adoptive parents, emphasised 'secrecy' in adoption and offered stability to the child and the adoptive parents.

Social attitudes to adoption and to the rights or appropriateness of unmarried mothers raising their own children continued to change over time. By the late 1950s, organisations like Berry Street were facing increasing demand for adoptive babies from couples who were unable to have children. This led to a shift in practice from supporting mothers to retain the care of their children to encouraging mothers to relinquish their children and make them available for adoption. Berry Street's annual reports from this time show that up until the mid 1950s most mothers who came in for assistance retained the care of their children, whereas during the late 1950s and 60s most children were placed for adoption. In that era, too, many mothers in Victoria and across Australia either relinquished their children under duress or their children were adopted without their proper consent.

Eventually, in 1975, Berry Street's adoption service closed as government support and social attitudes towards single mothers improved. In 2013, Berry Street made a formal apology for forced adoption practices and any harm caused to mothers, fathers, children and adoptive parents.

Today, Berry Street's Heritage Service continues to receive enquiries from people wanting to find out about their time in care, as well as enquiries from parents and adult children regarding adoption. The Heritage Service facilitates access to records and supports former clients as they explore their childhood and family history.



Toddler smiling with arm around baby, Berry Street Archives

VIETNAMESE CHILDREN

In April 1975, during the Vietnam War, hundreds of children were airlifted from war-torn Saigon to Australia as part of Operation Babylift. Berry Street stepped in at short notice to care for the children who arrived in Melbourne. At the time, the home was closed and awaiting renovation, but despite this, Committee members, former staff and past nurses rushed to prepare a welcoming, warm environment for the children until adoptive or foster homes could be found.



Children arriving with nuns at RAAF aircraft Tan Son Nhut, 17 April 1975, Image courtesy of Ian Frame



Waiting to load children, Saigon, 17 April 1975, Image courtesy of Ian Frame



RAAF C-130E A97–190 waiting to load, 17 April 1975, Image courtesy of Ian Frame



Flight Lieutenant Ian Frame, pilot RAAF C-130E Hercules A97–178, and baby, 17 April 1975, Image courtesy of Ian Frame



Babies in boxes loaded in aircraft and waiting for take-off, 17 April 1975, Image courtesy of Hugh Howell

FOOTBALL CLUBS

Both the Melbourne and Richmond Football Clubs have had an ongoing association with Berry Street, visiting the children, offering gifts in kind, attending social events and supporting fundraising activities. In the mid-1970s, an arrangement was made for the children of Richmond players to be minded at the Berry Street Day Care Centre during Saturday afternoons, allowing the wives of the players to attend the games, knowing their children were close by and well looked after.

ANTI-FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Although Berry Street has a long association with both the Richmond and Melbourne Football Clubs, the Anti-Football League also proved to be a boon for the organisation. Founded by journalists Keith Dunstan and Douglas Wilkie, who were fed up with endless footy talk, the Anti-Football League raised $30,000 for Berry Street over 10 years, with some creative fundraising of their own.



The Sun-News Pictorial, c. 1972, State Library Victoria



Vince Simeone

LONGEST SERVING STAFF MEMBER SINCE 1987

In the early years, the main challenges were to maintain and improve facilities for our children and young people and staff, managing our motor vehicle fleet, as well as establishing policies and procedures.

Since the merger of Sutherland and Berry Street in 1994, the continual evolution of the organisation has kept me energised, forever bringing new challenges, particularly with property purchases and sales, office set-ups, moves and fit-outs, assisting to establish ourselves in new locations and working with the Department on developing purpose-built accommodation for our young people.

Approximately 20 years ago, whilst on holidays in Mildura, I was standing in line at a supermarket checkout when a tall, bearded man approached me and said, "Hi Vince". After seeing the blank look on my face, he introduced himself and thanked me for helping him and his brother when they moved into independent living. This man was the oldest of four siblings in our care in the 1980s and, as it happens, I had a small part in assisting him and his brother secure their first independent accommodation. This meeting turned a grown man (me) into a blubbering fool with tears streaming from my eyes. This was one of the most special moments in my working and personal life.

Vince Simeone — Manager Property Services, Berry Street



Children playing at daycare, Berry Street Archives

1980s

RAISING AWARENESS

During the 1980s, Berry Street consolidated its professional approach. The Committee was now known as a Board of Management, a director was employed, and various social workers led the organisation's expanding range of services. Berry Street was committed to caring for the child in the context of the family and providing continuity, security and stability. Berry Street regularly reviewed its activities, to ensure that it was meeting the needs of the community and using resources wisely. Volunteer support, donations and publicity continued to be a big part of Berry Street's story.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Ensuring that the public was aware of Berry Street's work with Victoria's most vulnerable children, young people and families has been important throughout the organisation's 140-year history. From the newspapers of 1877, to radio and television, and to today's social media, Berry Street has shared its work, fundraising appeals and advocacy on behalf of the children of Victoria.

OPPORTUNITY SHOPS

In the 1980s, after running a number of joint ventures in Prahran and Lalor, Berry Street opened an opportunity (op) shop, 'Nearly New', in Bridge Road, Richmond. Soon after, the Charlotte Street Neighbourhood House took over the responsibility for running the shop, which gave them some independence over their funding. With good demand for the low-cost items, a reasonable profit was made for the Neighbourhood House, and by 1990 the shop was able to employ its first manager. 'Nearly New' was officially transferred to Charlotte Street Neighbourhood House (later known as Finbar Family House) when it became independent of Berry Street in the early 1990s. Berry Street later ran an op shop in Northcote, which closed in the mid-1990s.



Opening of Berry Street Op Shop, Berry Street Archives



Child looking in window of Berry Street Op Shop, Berry Street Archives



Inside view of Berry Street Op Shop, Berry Street Archives

ACTIVITIES

From the beginning, Berry Street staff believed in the value of the children in their care having regular outings in the fresh air. Whether it was the nearby parks, playing outdoors or later attending camps and education programs, physical activities were a key part of life for the children at Berry Street, as well as at Sutherland Homes and Lisa Lodge (both of which later merged with Berry Street).

THANKYOU

Berry Street would not exist without the people of Victoria. From the pounds, shillings and pence donated to form the organisation in 1877, an enormous £200,000 donation to fund a major renovation in the 1960s, to continuing offers of financial support today, Victorians have always pulled together for Berry Street.



Group fishing with Sutherland Homes, 1980s, Berry Street Archives



Children in the park and a man on a horse, 1980s, Berry Street Archives



Group swimming with Sutherland Homes, 1980s, Berry Street Archives



Boys upside down on monkey bars, Sutherland Homes, 1938, Berry Street Archives

1990s

EXPLORING NEW PATHS

In the 1990s, the Board made tough decisions to hand over Finbar Neighbourhood House and the East Melbourne Child Care Centre to independent management. East Melbourne and Richmond were becoming gentrified and the Board wanted to retain its focus on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families.

In 1994, Berry Street and Sutherland Homes merged, bringing together two of the oldest child and family welfare organisations in the State. Recognising Berry Street's experience, the then Department of Human Services was keen to see Berry Street's services extend into regional areas. This led to new offices being established in Seymour, Shepparton, Dandenong and Morwell.

CREATIVE FUNDRAISING

Over the years, Berry Street has been creative in its fundraising. From Melbourne versus Richmond Football Clubs in the Berry Street Cup, to celebrities rowing across the Yarra River in the Berry Street Bathtub Dash at Moomba, to a family day at Melbourne Zoo and today's participation in Run Melbourne, Berry Street events bring people together to raise awareness as well as money, and to have fun.



Melbourne Show Street Parade, Berry Street Archives



Members of the Greek women's group chat in the sun in the backyard of the Charlotte Street Neighbourhood House, later known as Finbar Neighbourhood House and Finbar Family House, while their children play, Berry Street Archives



Toast to a cup worth filling

Rivals: youngsters warm to Mark Merenda (Richmond, left) and Todd Viney (Melbourne).

ONCE there was the Premiership Cup. Then the pre-season Ansett Cup or whatever the particular sponsor of the secondary competition was, such as the Army Reserve Cup.

Now it seems there is at least one cup a week that the clubs play for.

This week, it is the original MCG co-tenants, Richmond and Melbourne, doing battle for the Berry Street Cup. Donations to this worthwhile charity can be made at the ground tomorrow or at the home in East Melbourne.

It's great to see football lovers and the clubs becoming involved in worthwhile community projects.

Richmond vs Melbourne Berry St Cup, Berry Street Archives



Football Banner for 120th anniversary of Berry Street, 1997, Berry Street Archives



David Neitz and Darren McNamara with the Berry Street Cup, 2000, Berry Street Archives

SANDIE DE WOLF AM

Sandie de Wolf began her career in 1974 as a Department of Community Services social worker in Broadmeadows. Since 1989 she has worked in the community sector. In 1991, Sandie became the director of Sutherland Homes, before going on to lead Berry Street following the merger of the two organisations in 1994.

For over 26 years, Sandie has led Berry Street to become Victoria's largest independent child and family services organisation, with nearly 1,200 staff and revenue of over $105 million in 2017. Sandie's leadership and commitment has been recognised over the years with the Robin Clark Inspirational Leadership Award, her induction into the Victorian Women's Honour Roll, the award of Member of the Order of Australia, the Vida Goldstein Award for Women in the Professions and a La Trobe University Distinguished Alumni Award. Inspired to continue the work of the founders of Berry Street, Sutherland Homes and Lisa Lodge, Sandie is a champion for the vulnerable and neglected children and young people of Victoria.



Sandie de Wolf AM, CEO Berry Street, 2014, Berry Street Archives



Peter Butler AM RFD

PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER 1984 – 1998 & 2000 – 2004

Berry Street turns 140 this year and there are two great things about such a milestone.

First, it truly enables us to contemplate what it is about the organisation that makes it possible to say that it has not only survived to this memorable age, but it has thrived!

Secondly, it gives an opportunity for us to think about the past.

I am a lawyer. When I was still in my post graduate year at the honorary solicitors for Berry Street, my partner asked me to give a presentation to the Board of Berry Street about their insurance needs

Somewhat surprisingly, I was invited to join the Board! It was 1977. I was 24.

Berry Street became a big part of my life for almost 30 years. I remained on the Board until 2002, when a move to Sydney for work made an ongoing role impractical. I was lucky enough to have two terms as President of Berry Street – from 1987 to 1991, and 1995 to 1998 and I was its first male President.

For some time, one of the issues that had plagued Berry Street was that while it had a reasonably strong balance sheet, it had limited services and was struggling to find relevance in a changing world. Fortuitously, in 1993, Sandie de Wolf, the then CEO of Sutherland Homes, approached us as they were looking for a partner. After due diligence, both Boards decided to merge under the Berry Street name and I became its first President. After interviews with the two CEOs, a decision was made to appoint Sandie as the new CEO.

Sandie is one of the most impressive leaders I have ever met. She has that rare ability to combine personal humility, with great passion and drive and her knowledge of the sector in which Berry Street operates is second to none. While there are many factors leading to the extraordinary growth and success of Berry Street, and its excellent standing in the community, I think the standout for me was Sandie's vision and leadership.

I know Sandie is shortly to retire as CEO after 26½ years. She has been an amazing CEO and she should feel incredibly proud of all that she has achieved.

I am extremely proud of Berry Street. While my own contribution has been small, I regard my time on the Board as some of the most fulfilling and satisfying of my life. I know Berry Street will continue to thrive and provide support to many more children, young people and families for another 140 years.

Peter Butler — Partner, Herbert Smith Freehills



Berry Street East Melbourne, Berry Street Archives

2000s

THE START OF A NEW CENTURY

This decade was a time of significant change, growth and reflection for Berry Street. Berry Street expanded into new program areas and geographic locations and cemented its position as a leading and innovative child and family services organisation.

FAREWELL TO SUTHERLAND HOMES

In 2000, Berry Street held a farewell reunion at the Sutherland Homes property in Diamond Creek. Over 2,000 people had the opportunity to attend the reunion to reconnect with old friends and say goodbye before the land and buildings were sold.

APOLOGIES

During this period community awareness and concern regarding the care for children who had experienced life in child welfare institutions was growing. The Stolen Generations, Forgotten Australians (adults who grew up in children's institutions during the 20th century) and former child migrants often experienced deprivation, neglect and abuse while in the care of children's institutions or in foster care. Adults who had grown up in care successfully campaigned for recognition and formal apologies from governments.

In 2006, Berry Street offered its own apologies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for its part in the Stolen Generations, and to Forgotten Australians and former child migrants for any harm they experienced while in care. As Berry Street became more aware of the role it had played, further detailed apologies were issued in 2016, and these are on display at every Berry Street office and on the Berry Street website.

In 2010, with funding from the Victorian Government, Berry Street established Open Place, a statewide support service for any Victorian who spent a significant part of their childhood in State care prior to 1989. The service has assisted thousands of people to access their records and receive counselling, to join social support groups, find help with housing and to access funding for their health and medical needs.

In 2013, prompted by mothers who gave up their children through forced adoption practices, Berry Street offered an apology for forced adoptions and made a commitment to never repeat the mistakes of the past.

LEAVING EAST MELBOURNE

Over the years, the East Melbourne buildings housed babies, toddlers, children and mothers. They were home to young women training as mothercraft nurses, and were also used for a day care and holiday care centre, an emergency care centre, and more. After the 2005 sale of Berry Street's East Melbourne buildings, the administrative team moved to Richmond. By then, Berry Street's services had spread far beyond central Melbourne and had exceeded the dreams of its founders, by supporting children, young people and families across Victoria.

TAKE TWO

In 2003, Berry Street extended its services with the establishment of the first statewide intensive therapeutic service, known as Take Two, for children and young people in the child protection system. Take Two is the only accredited mental health service located within a child and family services organisation and focuses on helping children recover from the trauma they have experienced.



Memorial of Forgotten Australians, Berry Street Archives

BERRY STREET SCHOOL

Also in 2003, the first campus of the Berry Street School opened in Noble Park to provide access to learning for young people who have either been excluded or dropped out of mainstream education. Since then, Berry Street has opened other campuses in Shepparton and Morwell, and in its 140th year, a fourth campus in Ballarat. The students receive intensive support from teachers and staff, as many have gaps in their education and have experienced difficulties in previous schools. At the Berry Street School, students feel safe and able to learn without distractions, and relish this second chance at an education.

"My son was barely able to function by the time he came to Berry Street. He is growing and improving every day. Words can't express how very grateful I am" (parent of student).

BERRY STREET EDUCATION MODEL

Drawing on our knnowledge and experience from the Berry Street School, we developed the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM). BSEM takes a unique approach, combining knowledge about the impact of trauma with positive psychology, which has been very successful in helping teachers to teach and students to learn. The BSEM has been embraced by mainstream schools and in its first 18 months has worked with 700 schools, inspired 7,000 school leaders and impacted on 270,000 students.



Berry Street Education Model Training Session, 2017, Berry Street Archives



Tea time at Beaconsfield, 1906 – 1907 Annual Report, Number 30, Berry Street Archives

2010s

ENSURING A GOOD CHILDHOOD

In 2010, the Board and Executive Team were looking towards Berry Street's 150th year, 2027. What did they need to do to ensure *all* children have a good childhood? Berry Street developed its 2027 Strategic Directions, which set out the changes it needed to make within Berry Street, the sector and wider community. It also changed its branding to 'We're for Childhood' to make it easier for people to understand the organisation's purpose.

In 2012, after 42 years of serving the community, Lisa Lodge merged with Berry Street, strengthening Berry Street's services in Ballarat and Horsham. That same year, the Berry Street Childhood Institute was launched to provide a knowledge-to-action centre for improving childhood.

In 2013, the Australian Government established the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission focused on how organisations protect children from sexual abuse and their response to victim survivors. Berry Street representatives gave evidence, were called as expert witnesses on a number of occasions and supported Forgotten Australians to tell their personal story.

In 2016/17, the Victorian Government established the first Royal Commission into Family Violence, which put a spotlight on the often hidden impact of family violence, especially on children who they described as the 'silent victims'.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

After the merger of Berry Street and Sutherland Homes, family violence programs became part of the organisation's work. Today, Berry Street offers an extensive range of specialist family violence services in the northern suburbs and Ballarat, as well as educating the community and professionals about the impact of family violence on women and children.

Young mum Jane needed Berry Street's help to escape the family violence perpetrated by her partner. With her baby daughter, Jane was referred to Berry Street by Victoria Police. Jane explains that Berry Street gave her the safety, security and support she needed to plan a new life for herself and her child, a new life free from the threat of violence. Although this was a difficult road to walk, Jane says, "The future is bright. I actually get to be an individual, independent woman raising my daughter now. I've never had that before".

RESPONDING TO TRAGEDY

On 7 February 2009, terrible bushfires, known as Black Saturday, ravaged Victoria. The area around Alexandra in north-eastern Victoria suffered unprecedented loss and damage. Due to the generosity of the Dara Foundation, Berry Street already had a small team on the ground working to build the community's capacity to provide good childhoods for all children and young people through the 'Connect for Kids' program. Berry Street quickly established a large Bushfire Case Management team that worked intensively with the community over the next three years and provided counselling for young people affected by the fires until 2015. This was a massive undertaking, but demonstrated the organisation's enduring commitment to do whatever it could to help people recover.

CORPORATE SUPPORT

From the beginning, support from businesses has been an integral part of the Berry Street story. As awareness of the organisation's work spread, companies were able to step in with gifts in kind, pro bono work, and financial and volunteer support. In 1877, the ANZ Bank's founding companies were some of the first donors to Berry Street, and later supported the organisation through times of financial need during the 1950s and 60s.

More recently, ANZ has contributed 20 years of consecutive support to deliver two financial literacy programs, Saver Plus and MoneyMinded. ANZ staff have also supported Berry Street over the years through volunteering, workplace giving and other programs. ANZ's Head of Financial Inclusion, Michelle Commandeur, describes the long-standing relationship with Berry Street as a great example of a cross-sector partnership that addresses issues of mutual concern in society. She regards Berry Street as an organisation that plays an important part in the Victorian community.

HERITAGE SERVICES

In 1962, Sue came to Berry Street as a three-week-old baby and lived at East Melbourne for a number of years before being adopted. Many years later, Sue came to Berry Street's Heritage Service, looking for information about her early years. Her dates of arrival and departure were confirmed, and in looking through photos from the 1960s, staff started wondering if a smiley baby featured in a collection of professional photos, which were used on a series of fundraising matchboxes, might be Sue. Having never seen a childhood photograph of herself, Sue could not be sure but she showed the photo to her brother and partner, who agreed it was her. Finally, some former mothercraft nurses from Berry Street confirmed absolutely that the baby was Sue, and helped her put together pieces of a lost childhood.

FOSTER CARE

From the beginning, the Berry Street Committee was determined to help as many children as it could. This meant that a boarding out system, the forerunner to foster care, was instituted by the Committee in 1877. Children who were boarded out were visited, weighed and measured regularly and were always invited to special days at the home. In the early 1950s, foster care was phased out due to reduced demand, but was offered again from 1975.

In 2017, its 140th year, Berry Street has supported more than 1,300 children and young people in foster or kinship care. To enable these children to be cared for, hundreds of foster carers like Kerryn and Stephen open their homes and their hearts. In the 30 years that Kerryn and Stephen have provided foster care, they have welcomed more than 300 children into their lives. Over the past eleven years, they have been providing care for three siblings, who are now flourishing at school and university, as well as maintaining a connection to their heritage. Kerryn and Stephen also continue to take on short term care for those children who need it.



Kerryn and Steven, 2017, Berry Street Archives



Zoey

ZOEY'S STORY

Despite spending eight years of my childhood in several out-of-home care placements with my siblings, with the support of Berry Street I can see a brighter future emerging for myself.

I want to show young people living in care who might be feeling helpless or like they don't matter, that people *do* care and that you *can* break the cycle.

As a result of my experience, I'm committed to improving the lives of young people in care, advocating for young people to help them navigate the system and to ensure they get their voices heard, particularly Aboriginal people.

It's so important for us to remain connected to our community and culture and to be proud of who we are. Maintaining my own connection to my community has been so important to me.

I'm working hard to build a new life for myself and for others. I recently got a job as a teacher's aide and I hope to one day become a foster carer for other young people who need stability, love and guidance.

Being supported and encouraged by the staff at Berry Street has given me so much confidence. It's shown me that there are other, more positive things in the world. Berry Street makes me feel like I fit in. It's my happy place.

Zoey receiving Ricci Marks Award, 2017, Berry Street Archives



Mark

MARK'S STORY

I'm not entirely sure when I went into out-of-home care. It could have been at four, five or seven years old. But I was young. Between the ages of 7 and 12, I was placed in more than 40 foster homes and went to 15 schools.

I spent those years deliberately pushing boundaries, with my foster parents, other foster children and the kids at school. Looking back, I can see now that I was testing people. Testing everyone in my life to see if they'd stick around. I didn't know that then, of course.

By the time I was ready to leave care, I had been working with Berry Street staff member, Kylie. She encouraged me to join the Berry Street Mentor Program, which connects young people in care to mentors, to help them map their goals and pathways post-care.

Being connected to a mentor gave me a whole new perspective on the care system and gave me a real understanding of the sector. After I left care I went on to become a mentor myself for other young people in care.

Now, I work full time in the sector myself, as an advisor in Berry Street's Stand By Me program, supporting young people as they leave care and as a facilitator for people in the Work for the Dole program.

Having experienced life in out-of-home care, it's important to me to advocate for other young people in the same situation. I've been involved in multiple youth action and reference groups and I hope to one day be able to improve the system for young people, to ensure they get their voices heard.

Mark, 2017, Berry Street Archives



COCO'S STORY

The guidance and support I received from Berry Street throughout the years made me realise that I am someone who deserves a successful and happy life.

As soon as I was referred to Berry Street, things started turning around majorly for me. I was 16 years old at the time and heading down a bad path, with no family, in an abusive relationship, with nobody or nowhere to turn.

Berry Street gave me everything I needed, from guidance and support, to tools and equipment, and love and care to keep me strong and to work my way through these issues every day.

I learned that I could do whatever I put my mind to. I didn't complete high school, in fact I missed out on most of it, but when I asked my Berry Street worker about doing a nursing course, I was instantly set up with everything I needed and have now successfully completed my Diploma of Nursing.

I am proud of myself for what I achieved. I've learned that I am a worthy person, deserving of care and respect and that the bad things in life help you to become the person you are today.

I can say that I am a very happy person, with wonderful people in my life, a family of my own, and with a career pathway. I couldn't be more grateful.

Coco, 2015, Berry Street Archives



Sandie de Wolf AM

SUTHERLAND HOMES AND BERRY STREET CEO 1991 – 2017

It's hard to believe that Berry Street's roots go back 140 years to 1877.

Although we are such a different organisation now, especially in scale and reach, there are seven core themes which haven't changed:

- Courage – our key organisational Value – which was demonstrated by our founders as they challenged the status quo, and continues today through individual, policy and system advocacy.
- A focus on the most vulnerable children, young people and families.
- Our adaptability and ability to innovate, and the many examples of how we continue to find new ways to help.
- Maintaining our independence and working collaboratively with governments and colleagues.
- The critical role of women, who have been our backbone, and continues today with 70% of our workforce being women.
- Our deep roots in the community – adapting what we do to changing needs and connections to individuals, groups, organisations and businesses.
- Our leadership role, retaining both an internal commitment to improving what we do, and our external focus and contribution.

After 23 years (and another 3 with Sutherland Homes before the merger), I leave Berry Street in December 2017.

It's been an honour and a privilege to lead Berry Street over this time. I am so proud of what we have been able to achieve together – through our staff, carers and volunteers, and with the support of governments, philanthropic organisations, businesses, community groups and colleagues.

The work we do is critical as a good childhood really is the foundation of a healthy society.

Although no doubt there will continue to be challenges, I am confident that the Berry Street story will continue to flourish.

Sandie de Wolf AM – CEO



Nurses walking toddlers in park, East Melbourne, Berry Street Archives

Looking to the future

The world was a very different place in 1877 when a group of strong and determined women took steps to provide shelter and support for mothers and babies in Melbourne who had nowhere else to go. Over the past 140 years, Berry Street has continued this legacy, helping children, young people and families recover from violence and abuse.

Despite changes in society that have benefitted children in so many ways, many children in the community are still not enjoying a good childhood. Poverty and disadvantage, the impact of social media and the prevalence of pornography and obesity, threaten children's wellbeing.

Berry Street is determined to change the current trajectory for Victoria's most vulnerable children. The organisation believes that every child has a right to a childhood that is safe, happy and free from violence. A good childhood is the foundation for a healthy adult life and a cohesive society.

Although demand for its services is increasing, Berry Street continues to witness many wonderful stories of hope. The children, young people, women and families with whom the organisation works are incredibly resilient and courageous, despite often very difficult circumstances. Each story reinforces the issues still faced by vulnerable children, and the reality that the trauma of abuse can last a lifetime.

As always, Berry Street will meet challenges head-on, with persistence and integrity, working to change for the better the conditions of childhood, for all children.

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BERRY STREET

We're for Childhood

SINCE 1877

The dandelion flower is designed to withstand difficult conditions and survives despite its many challenges. It symbolises the ability to rise above life's struggles and is said to have the power to heal emotional and physical pain.

Since 1877, Berry Street has embodied the warmth and power of the dandelion, striving to help children, young people and families recover from the devastating effects of violence, abuse and neglect.

This book traces the evolution of Berry Street, within the context of social change spanning three centuries and its determination to change conditions of childhood for all children.

Berry Street strongly believes in the right of every child to a good childhood, growing up feeling safe, nurtured and with hope for the future.



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