

SEPTEMBER 2019

PYRMONT CARES NEWSLETTER



Recycling furniture and white goods to those that need them most in the inner city



Honouring Peter Devoy (OAM)

While I'm pretending to be a journalist asking Peter about his life, his career and the path that led to his very recent Order of Australia (OAM) honour, he is sitting at his current campsite outside Bourke surrounded by the buzz of flies. Not only has this unassuming Pyrmont local devoted hours and years to working for the benefit of those less fortunate, he has managed to cram in an enviable amount of travel adventure as well.

Peter Devoy's OAM honour is not based solely on his founding and continuing work at Pyrmont Cares but on a long history of supporting others. More than merely following the lead of others Peter has been a driving force behind the creation and development of Pyrmont Cares as well as the Pyrmont-Ultimo-Glebe Men's Shed. He volunteered for St Vincent De Paul, gaining a first-hand understanding of the challenges faced by Sydney's homeless. He has worked with refugees and through the Jesuit Priests at Darlinghurst, and has been involved in teaching financial literacy, using the skills gained over many years in the Financial Services Industry.

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HONOURING
PETER DEVOY

OUR NEW DEPOT

CITY OF SYDNEY
TO THE RESCUE!

HOMELESS
CONNECT

WHO DO YOU
KNOW WHO CAN
HELP??

Born a country boy from Mudgee, working for a bank offered Peter his first big travel opportunity and saw him spend a number of years in Fiji before following the Bondi girl who holidayed in Fiji (Helen, his wife of 46 years) home to settle down and start their family. Later, moving from banking and working in an accounting firm Peter reinvented himself as a Tour Director guiding tour groups through South America, Japan, Taiwan, China and Hong Kong, just to name a few. His favourite experiences during that time I hear you ask? - Cherry blossoms in Japan and South America come the swift replies. No wonder this man whom we all know and admire is so easy to talk to, he clearly relishes the company of others, is a great listener, genuinely cares and takes action.



So how did Pymont Cares emerge? Having worked with the homeless in Woolloomooloo, Peter was well aware of the services available - there were plenty of services providing food he says, there were services providing blankets. When he saw good furniture being discarded in the basements of our Pymont towers, he knew that there was a better new home for those pieces than the tip. So, with his mate John Hoff, and with the endorsement of the City of Sydney Council, he established Pymont Cares. Today, our organisation is ensuring that people in need have not only a roof over their head, but some of the comforts that we all take for granted, such as a bed to sleep in. Peter recounts the tale of a delivery of a bed to a home of a mother and daughter. Watching our volunteers set up the bed the child was quiet but transfixed. The Mother quietly explained that this was the first time this little girl would have a bed of her own to sleep in. There wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Peter has been a Pymont resident now for 19 years, he's seen many changes, he has been instrumental in the Community Dinners that encourage all of our diverse residents to come together, building a stronger sense of community and mutual understanding and respect. I can't think of anyone more deserving of this honour. CONGRATULATIONS PETER DEVOY!!



Our New Depot

Welcome to our new depot premises at Leichhardt. You will have seen the announcements that firstly, we were forced to move, with little notice, from our long-established Balmain premises just after Easter. It caused many volunteers and the Pymont Cares Committee a lot of angst to have to temporarily cease our operations while we found a new premise. The Committee and others worked furiously over the ensuing weeks lobbying councillors, politicians and landlords seeking an affordable solution to the dilemma. So, it was with some excitement when in June, we took possession of the keys to our new depot at Leichhardt. Thanks to all those who pitched in to move our remaining stock and organise the new site, special thanks to Muriel Chen who was tireless in her pursuit of new premises.

Volunteers have given our new light and airy space the thumbs up and donations have been rolling in. We are always in need of good quality; smaller profile pieces though so bear us in mind and tell your friends. Did you know that we also provide Kitchen Packs. Crockery, cutlery, mugs, glasses, toasters, kettles and other items are much appreciated for those setting up their home. We are desperately short of bowls, mugs and teaspoons at the moment so this could be the opportunity to have a clean out.

City of Sydney to the rescue!

When Pymont Cares was given two weeks' notice in April to vacate its storage premises in Balmain, it had two immediate tasks to address:

- 1) To identify suitable alternative premises and to relocate the inventory; and
- 2) To manage the unexpected and unbudgeted increase in monthly rental expense that would surely result.

We applied to City of Sydney for a Quick Response Grant and, on 28th June, we received \$2,000 into the Pymont Cares bank account. This relieved the financial pressure for three months of the \$650 increase in monthly rental that was required to secure suitable alternative accommodation, giving us breathing space to review and restructure our budgeting processes in order to manage the new level of monthly overheads.

Thank you, City of Sydney, for helping Pymont Cares at a time of need!



Homeless Connect

We were delighted to again participate in the Homeless Connect initiative in July. Jeannette Tran, Sue Thomas, Bob Innes and Maree Van Doorn represented Pymont Cares. They shared our story with representatives from agencies, found some new donors and made a lot of valuable connections. This is a wonderful event where those that are homeless can meet with groups like ours who provide services and also enjoy some pampering on the day, enjoying haircuts, massages, getting new shoes etc.

We are certainly getting our name out there, no wonder we are so busy. Thanks to the team for taking our message out within this community.



Who do you know who can help?

The more we do, the more need we find. The demand for the service we provide is ever expanding and that means that more than ever we need volunteers. Did you know that there are no paid roles at Pymont Cares, we operate entirely on the generosity of our volunteers? Did you also know that we are incredibly flexible in the way our volunteers operate? We recognise that we all have complex lives and having many retirees as part of the team, someone is always on holidays. Our volunteers commit time monthly, fortnightly, bi-monthly, on Tuesdays (Collection day), on Wednesdays (Delivery day), on both, on our truck crews and in our operations teams. We need drivers, crew to help move and deliver furniture, people to liaise with over 60 Case Workers and Agencies who contact us representing their clients in need, people to liaise with those generous people in the community who have furniture to donate, people to work in our depot scheduling collection and deliveries and communicating with our drivers and crew. No matter what skills you or your friends have to offer there's a place for you on the team. Encourage a friend and come along to meet us.

Contact Michele Jackson at sec@pymontcares.org.au or 0411 303 597.

