



AASW Tasmanian Social Worker

Australian Association of Social Workers, Tasmania

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Winter 2009

New Members

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Ethics Group

Masters of Social Work Practice: Beyond the Clinic Door

Masters of Social Work Practice: Critical Reflection: Social Workers' Practice Experiences

Rural and Remote Social Work Group



STOP PRESS!

NEW POSTGRADUATE COURSES IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE AT UTAS IN 2010!

Interested in further study and postgraduate qualifications in advanced social work practice?

Two new postgraduate courses will be offered at UTAS in Advanced Social Work Practice from 2010

- a Graduate Certificate in Social Work Practice, comprising two units of advanced practice taken over one year, and
 - a Graduate Diploma in Social Work Practice, comprising four units over two years.

Full credit for the Graduate Certificate and Diploma can be gained for ongoing study into the current Masters of Social Work Practice.

For further information please contact Social Work at UTAS on 6324 3946 or socialwork@utas.edu.au

More information will be posted in later editions of the 'Tasmanian Social Worker'.



Dear Readers

This is the first issue in this year of the 'Tasmanian Social Worker', the beginning, we hope, of a regular newsletter that will inform and entertain you.

This issue we welcome the new Head of Social Work at the University of Tasmania, Professor Sandra Taylor, who has replaced Professor Robert Bland, who is now enjoying the Sunshine State. The AASW, Tasmania looks forward to a long and productive relationship between the School of Social Work, University of Tasmania and the AASW, Tasmania.

This issue also contains the story of Ben Marris, a Social Worker, who for many years has devoted his life to those on the margins. Ben has most deservedly been the recipient of an OAM in this year's Queens Birthday Honours' List.

This year AASW, Tasmania has an active programme, something for everyone. We have CPE Committees, a Branch Ethics group, a Rural and Remote Social Work Group, and an International Group. Please consider joining one of our Committees, your input would be most welcome.

We look forward to your comments

The office is staffed from 9.30 to 1.30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays



A very warm welcome is extended to Alicia Phegan, Jacquelyn West, Mathew Bain, Shannon Hyland, Besta Peter, Katherine Tanner, Karen Cock, Julia Willoughby, Celina Sargent, Sarah Rubenach, Joanne Cameron, Victoria Newman, Danielle Jackson, Fea Kubala, Cecilia Nagy, Sony O'Beirne, Georgina Lithgow, Susan Willey, Susan Shand, on becoming or renewing membership of the AASW during the past year and look forward to a long and happy collaboration.



PLEASE PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY!

Joint AASW UTAS professional Seminar

KEEP
Friday, 20 November 2009
HOBART
ON YOUR MIND!

A Challenging Speaker Coming to Hobart

Friday 20 November 2009

From the President

Dear Members

Welcome to the Tasmanian Branch newsletter - our first in quite a long time. Thank you to the contributors.

It's the time of year to consider nominating for a role within the AASW. There are many ways in which you could become involved - either at the Branch Management Committee level, or as a National Director.

We welcome suggestions from members about areas where the branch should be active, and of course, there are always opportunities for you to take a role within the branch. We have newly established Ethics and Rural Social Work groups, both of which have been very well received and there is always plenty to be done in ensuring that we are able to offer a solid CPE programme.

The Branch Management Committee recently held a very enjoyable and successful Planning Day, skilfully facilitated by member Janine Combes.

This is the second year where elections have been conducted nationally, and the processes are being refined. It certainly makes for more consistency and reduces the administrative work load at Branch level. Last year, Tasmanian Sue Nesham was successful in being elected to the National Board and Naomi Spencer, from rural NSW, has been the Director with specific responsibility to liaise with the Tasmanian Branch.

Please consider nominating for a role within the Tasmanian branch or at national level.

Best wishes

Ann Hughes

President

Committee Members

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AASW Tasmania

CPE Coming Events

North: Professor David Adams Wednesday, 12 August

Time: 5.30 – 7.30 (refreshments included)

Venue: Joan Marshall Wing, Kings Meadows Health Centre, McHugh St.
(NB: this is building to left at end of cul-de-sac)

Cost: **AASW Members & Students \$5.00 Non members \$7.00**

RSVP By Mon 10/08/09

aaswtas@aasw.asn.au or stewart.millar@dhhs.tas.gov.au Or 6336 5155

South: Karen Vincent (now living in San Diego, USA)

'A View from the other side of the Pacific Rim'

8 September 2009

Meeting Room 2, Level 1, MacDougall Building

9 Ellerslie Road

Battery Point

Time: 5 pm – 7 pm

Nibbles and refreshments provided

Cost: AASW Members & Students \$5.00 Non members \$7.00



Always take time to stop and smell the roses ... and, sooner or later, you will inhale a bee!



WHAT'S NEW IN SOCIAL WORK AT UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA (UTAS)

A profile of the new Head of Social Work Programme: Professor Sandra Taylor

Sandy Taylor assumed leadership of the Social Work Programme at UTAS in early March 2009 after relocating from Queensland. Sandy may be remembered by some Tasmanian Social Workers as she and her family lived in Tasmania from 1983 to 1999. During this time, Sandy worked for the Department of Health and Human Services in Launceston, mainly with services for individuals and families affected by Huntington Disease (HD). Sandy also tutored and lectured part time for the university as well as completed her PhD in the area of decision-making by individuals at risk of HD regarding predictive genetic testing.

Sandy left Tasmania at the end of 1999 to take up a lecturing position in Social Work at the University of Queensland in Brisbane. In 2006, she moved to the Central Queensland University, based at Rockhampton Queensland, where she headed up the Social Work Programme until the beginning of 2009.

Since leaving Tasmania, Sandy has taught across numerous undergraduate and postgraduate social work courses, assumed a range of senior administrative responsibilities and developed a strong research programme. Within the genetics area, Sandy has been Chief Investigator in two Australia Research Council funded studies, the first involving a comprehensive investigation of genetic discrimination in Australia and the second, investigating gender, risk and genetic risk within a public health context. Sandy's research interests have also extended into a range of social work-relevant areas including health policy, professional practice and teaching and learning.

Future directions of Social Work at UTAS

Since March, Sandy and the academic social work team at the university have been working to consolidate the social work programme at the uni as well as to undertake strategic planning around future development directions.

Ongoing work with the AASW

We welcome the opportunity of contributing regularly to the AASW Tasmanian Newsletter and of ongoing dialogue with the Association and our professional social work colleagues regarding social work education and professional issues in Tasmania and beyond.

Best wishes

Sandra Taylor

Sandra Taylor, PhD and the Academic SW team, University of Tasmania



Engaging men in family based programmes

Thursday, 5 Nov 2009 9:30—4:30 pm Facilitator: Andrew King

The New Grange Meeting & Function Centre
87 High St (Midlands Highway), Campbell Town

Cost: \$143.00 per workshop (GST is included)

To register: [Click here](#) or visit and register at www.groupworksolutions.com.au

This workshop allows workers, organizations or networks of services to provide more effective programs to men and families. The workshop will explore the importance of the fathers' role in family services and how programs can engage and support this opportunity.

Andrew King is the Men's Services Manager for Mensline Australia (Crisis Support Services). He is the Chairperson for the Institute of Group leaders and a specialist trainer in group work and trains professionals throughout Australia in 'working with men'. He is also an experienced practitioner and has published a range of professional articles.

Working Cooperatively with Separated Fathers

Friday 6th November 2009 from 9.30am to 4.30pm

This workshop explores cooperative ways to engage and work with separated fathers and strengthen their family relationship connections. A child focused approach is used to work with men through various stages of their involvement when accessing community welfare/health services or Family Relationship Centres.

Facilitators: Andrew King and Ross Fletcher

Ross Fletcher is Senior Project Worker with Uniting Care Burnside Fathers' Support Service. He has worked for over ten years in engaging fathers in telephone support and referral, group work and intensive casework. He has facilitated emotional support groups for separated fathers, early childhood parent education groups for fathers and Kids and dads playgroups. He has published articles on working with fathers and regularly consults other agencies on father inclusiveness in service delivery.





There is a massive amount of literature that Social Workers must read if they are to keep up with policy trends and techniques when working with clients, not an easy task in our busy world, but David Hunnerup recently found an excellent article on the art of practice in Social Work and let us know. Below is an extract and a link to the article.

Evidence for the Art of Social Work

Clay T. Graybeal

Social Workers have long endeavored to develop helping relationships that are grounded in a core set of values and derived from a strong empirical foundation. The author notes that much of the quest for evidence of validity has focused on determining which theory, model, or technique will be most effective with a particular problem situation or diagnosis. Yet improved outcomes often are due to additional factors in the client/practitioner relationship. In particular, the art of practice is embedded in the capacity of the individual practitioner to form working alliances with clients, and to abstract from the generalities of accumulated knowledge to the particulars and exigencies of a moment in time. This article summarizes existing literature and research, and concludes that the evidence supports an improvisatory conception of practice.

The article is available at:

<http://www.talkingcure.com/documents/EvidenceForTheArt.pdf>

3--day

Instructor Training

“Survival Skills for Healthy Families”

24—26 Aug 2009

Melbourne

Cost \$660 includes GST, instructor manual, handouts, resources & family workbook.

For further information & bookings, please ring

Anglicare Sydney

(02) 9895 8054

education@anglicare.org.au



Ben Marris
(OAM) Order of Australia Medal
Congratulations to a Ten Pound Pom!

Social Worker, Ben Marris, was awarded a Queens' Birthday Medal on 8 June 2009 for service to the community through health, charitable and palliative care organizations.

Ben is a former General Manager and Director of Corrective Services, Tasmania and a past President of the *Hospice Care Association of Tasmania*. He is also the author of *'The Future of Prisons in Tasmania'*.

Ben began his career in Birmingham in 1962 when he drifted into a lowly custodial job at Birmingham Senior Boys Remand Home. Ben said, "I was only a few years older than the inmates. Although we had grown up in the same city there was a huge gap between my privileged but unsuccessful public school background and their life in the depressed, crumbling, industrial slums. Despite our differences I enjoyed the work and later moved to Stamford House Remand Home in London and then spent a year as a 'Housemaster' in a large, authoritarian institution for young offenders near Liverpool, home of the Beatles. This was the 1960's and it was time to throw out the old and invent the new."

Ben said that in the 1950's & 60's, after the work of John Bowlby and others, there was a recognition that the big warehouses of small children called orphanages were depriving their charges of the continuity of love and care that would provide them with a decent go at life. "At first the old buildings were divided into smaller 'units', often with plywood partitions. Then the ideal model became cottages on a campus, which were replaced in turn by group homes in the 'community' and eventually by increasing support to individual children with their families or in individual care.

The late 1950's in the UK saw large institutions for young offenders follow a similar pattern, when they began to break down with riots etc. Ben said, "The Home Office ordered that they be split up into 'houses'. Out came the plywood panels again, and then they were rebuilt as scattered units on a campus and there was increasing attention to alternatives to institutionalization. Again we had learned that big is not beautiful when we care for people."

Ben said that you can follow this trend as it replicated, somewhat later, in the care of people with a psychiatric illness, and later again for people with an intellectual disability.

"In 1966 I was fortunate to receive a Home Office grant to do a one year course in Residential Child Care at Leicester University School of Social Studies where I was introduced to 'casework'.

A placement at St Francis School for Boys, on the site of Homer Lane's Little Commonwealth, introduced me to therapeutic communities. The wonderfully positive, compassionate, resilient, child-centred care was a stark contrast with the oppressive institutions of my experience."

Ben said, "For two years my wife and I enjoyed living and working in a children's reception centre

which had just those qualities, but this is a difficult environment in which to raise your own family.”

During this period, there was a concerted effort by the Australian Government to attract migrants to Australia, in particular British migrants; the carrot being free or assisted passage, with children under the age of 18 travelling free and adults paying £10 per person. The Marris family answered the call.

Ben said, “By happy accident we arrived in Tasmania as Ten Pound Poms in 1969. I started as a Child Welfare Officer in Burnie but it seemed that there would be no future for an unqualified Social Worker so we moved to Hobart to study part-time at University. “In 1974 and 1975 I had the extraordinary privilege of being seconded to attend the first Social Work course at TCAE Mt Nelson with Adam Jamrozic.”

After graduating, Ben became Superintendent of Ashley and later supervised residential and community youth services in the Department for Community Welfare during a period of de-institutionalization. During a brief period as Director of Intellectual Disability Services, he was involved in the downsizing of Willow Court before eventually becoming the Director of Corrective Services from 1990 to 1995.

The era of Ben’s watch over the corrective system was both an exciting and a challenging time for him. He wanted to move the prison system on from its tradition as a large, authoritarian, custodial warehouse to become a number of smaller units providing more constructive and less demeaning care and custody. He believes that we should invest real resources into more community based and constructive management of offenders and so reduce the number of people warehoused in prison.

Ben retired from the Corrective Services Department in 1995, after which he became involved in Palliative Care, becoming President of the Hospice Care Association of Southern Tasmania and other health and community organizations such as Arthritis Tasmania and the Haemochromatosis Society.

The OAM is in recognition of his services to the community through health, charitable and palliative care organizations.

These days will find Ben pursuing, what could be termed, the second love of his life, sailing and racing on the D’Entrecasteaux Channel and the waters of southern Tasmania in his 73 year old ketch, ‘Saona’.



Book review

***Social Work Practice in Mental Health* by Robert Bland, Noel Renouf and Ann Tullgren. (Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2009)**

Social Work Practice in Mental Health, modestly subtitled 'An Introduction', is a comprehensive work, soundly based in research and practice. Its primary audience is the one in six social workers who identify themselves as practising in the mental health field, making up 10% of the mental health workforce.

The book will have wide appeal and value far beyond that primary readership. Anyone who is engaged in the mental health field will gain much from it; and the rest of Australia's 13,000 social workers will find the book practical and helpful in their work in human services, where contact with people with mental health problems is almost inevitable.

Social Work Practice in Mental Health argues strongly for the vital and unique role of social workers in a holistic mental health setting and urges 'a broader agenda in mental health, beyond narrow clinical concepts of illness and treatment'. Specifically, it identifies three domains for social work in mental health: social context, social consequences and social justice. These domains, the authors demonstrate, are both the environment unique to social workers, and are integral to the total well-being of persons with a mental illness.

Two key themes permeate the book: the importance of the lived experience of mental illness; and the importance of relationships as a basis for change.

The authors readily concede that engaging with the lived experience of consumers and carers can be seen as time-consuming and messy. Yet, they say, 'It is a foundational thesis of this book that attention to the lived experience of mental illness should always be the starting point for professional practice'. In a recovery-oriented mental health system, narrow treatment strategies are insufficient on their own. The vital role of relationships means that consumers, carers and the wide range of professionals need one another's unique contribution.

The book critically examines the concepts and issues in current mental health practice, which shape the way services are delivered: evidence-based practice, a focus on recovery and hope, participation ('Nothing about me without me'), social inclusion, stigma and spirituality. There is a generally favourable overview of mental health law and policy, with the rider that 'significant issues remain in the translation of policy into practice'.

A very useful chapter for those not specifically trained is an overview of major mental disorders; another deals with concepts of assessment, as distinct from mere diagnosis, where social workers have a particular role in determining the consumer's strengths, as well as needs, in relation to their social context and the social consequences of their illness.

The authors examine issues surrounding case management, including the complications of working with involuntary clients. They deal at some length with the inter-relationship between mental health and other life issues: 'The experience of mental illness will often colour and complicate other human problems, including poverty, housing, physical health, and family and relationship difficulties'.

The book concludes with chapters on working with families, and with communities and groups. The authors ask, are families seen by professionals as 'a risk to be managed' or as primary caregivers? Families, they conclude, provide 'the primary supportive relationships in which illness is experienced, treatment provided and recovery pursued', and thus have a right to participate in every aspect of service development. Apart from any other role, 'families are open all hours, and they're there on the weekend'! The section on working with communities stresses the social context of mental illness and presents examples of groups offering preventive strategies, mutual support and social action.

Social Work Practice in Mental Health is a scholarly but very accessible book, enlivened by a wealth of case studies and the salutary lived experience of co-author Ann Tullgren, both a Social Worker and a person with mental illness.

Understanding mental health is basic to all social work practice, and the unique focus of social workers is essential to the practice of mental health.

Dr Chris Jones,
CEO Anglicare

Advertising Rates in Tasmanian Social Worker Newsletter — 2009_2010

The Newsletter is a Quarterly publication, produced electronically and as an A5 booklet, saddle stapled.

\$50 for a half page advertisement (11 cm long x 12 cm wide)

\$90 for a full page advertisement (18cm x 12 cm)

A4 size originals

Graphics should be in JPEG or TIFF format

Please send any advertisements which need to be placed within the text of the Newsletter to

aaswtas@asw.asn.au

by the end of the last week of February, May, August and November.

For further enquiries, please contact AASW, Tasmania on 6224 5833 Email aaswtas@asw.asn.au

AASW, Tasmania PO Box 20

SOUTH HOBART TAS 7004

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the AASW, Tasmania.

Acceptance of any advertising does not necessarily include endorsement of advertised products.

Ethics Interest Group

On Thursday the 16th of July, the Tasmanian Branch Ethics Group (BEG) held its first meeting. The session was attended by twelve AASW members, with eight apologies. The use of technology reduced the need for travel, with video conferencing connecting members in Hobart, Burnie and Melbourne.

Our guest speaker Kym Daly the National Ethics Officer based in Melbourne, provided information on the structure, role and activities at a National and State level, as well as responding to members questions. The session also included an activity on ethical case studies, where some invigorating discussion occurred around confidentiality/privacy/disclosure and organisational ethics.

The final part of the session was spent on planning, discussing areas of interest, structure of meetings and future activities. The group decided to meet three times a year, alternating Thursday/Wednesday, for two hours at 3.30pm. It appears that video conferencing is seen as a valuable resource in providing the opportunity for members to participate State wide.

The group felt that future meetings could offer a valuable environment for critical reflection, support and consultation on ethical dilemmas that arise in practice. An ongoing connection with the National Association for input into policy and access to information was identified as important. Accessing de-identifiable material on complaints, for example, issues or trends in field, with the view to develop practice knowledge, was also identified as important. The group also would like to have one major ethics CPE event a year.

If you would like to participate in this group, please contact our Tas Branch Administration Officer at aaswtas@asw.asn.au or phone 6224 5833 and leave a message.



The Community Achievement Awards have been launched. Nominations are now open in the following categories:

Volunteering Tasmania Volunteering Award

MAIB Disability Achievement Award

Angove Family Winemakers Primary Industries & Agricultural Award

Kleenheat Gas Community of the Year Award

Nominations close Friday 21st August 2009. For more information or if you have any questions call the Awards office on 1300 556 265 email: caa@awardsaustralia.com or via http://www.awardsaustralia.com/CAA_tas.html



Anna Lovitt who earned her Master of Social Work Practice in 2008.

Below is an abstract of her thesis

Beyond the Clinic Door:

What is the potential for community development to address depression?

Author: Anna Lovitt

Minor thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Master of Social Work Practice by coursework degree in the School of Sociology and Social Work, University of Tasmania, 4th November, 2008.

Abstract

This paper examines literature relating to the topics of depression, community development and health promotion, to uncover ways to bridge the conceptual divide between the approaches of individual treatment and health promotion.

Our Australian health system has largely been concerned with individual treatment, that is, resources are directed at the end result, rather than the causes of ill health (Wass 2001, p.24).

Depression is a major social and economic concern and, in our health system, is usually treated on an individual basis, as a private trouble removed from the context of people's lives. This can exclude possible access to personal, relational and material resources and privatise what may also be public issues affecting others in the community.

Community development offers a way of working from micro to macro level, building social capacity, resilience and increasing the protective and recovery factors embedded in 'every day' interpersonal and material resources; the social determinants of health. This process has the potential to address depression along with other issues of physical and mental health and well being.



Tasmania Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 31 October 2009

1:30 pm – 4 pm

Launceston

Watch for our Spring edition of 'Tasmania Social Worker' for further details

& check out our web site at <http://www.aasw.asn.au/>



Rural/Remote Social Work Group



The 22nd of July 2009 saw the inaugural meeting of the Rural/Remote Social Work Group in Campbell Town. The group members talked about their interest in the group and experience of rural practice. Discussion around the future activity and group structure provided an opportunity to explore a number of areas in which members were interested. For example, support, networking, supervision, consultation, CPE, policy and advocacy.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday the 21st of October 11am – 2pm at the Campbell Town Health and Community Service Centre, located at 70 High Street.

Fiona Jennings



Fiona who earned her Master of Social Work Practice in 2008. Below is an abstract of her thesis

Title: Critical Reflection: Social Workers' Practice Experiences

A qualitative study

Thesis: Master of Social Work Course - University of Tasmania 2008

Abstract

This qualitative study explored social workers' experience of the use of critical reflection in practice. This study aimed to increase the knowledge and understanding of social work practitioners' experiences in using a critical reflective approach to practice. Within these experiences, the study endeavoured to identify the opportunities for critical reflection, explore the environmental conditions and the relevance for social work.

Twelve social work practitioners from Tasmania, working in the fields of child protection, community health, hospital, non-government sector, mental health, education and Commonwealth government, volunteered to participate in this study. Data was collected from two group interviews each lasting 1.5 hours. Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, and the transcripts analysed and interpreted, looking for emerging themes, patterns, similarities, differences, and common understandings in the exploration of participants' experiences of using critical reflection in practice.

The study identified that critical reflection was perceived as a valuable process for social work practice. This was evident in some of the innovative practice responses by participants. The meaning and process of critical reflection can present some challenges when implementing in the field of practice. The opportunities for using critical reflection in the field also presented some challenges in the structural context. Finally, the conditions that promote an environment that meets the psychological and safety wellbeing needs of practitioners is critical in the process of talking about experience and using the critical reflective approach.

Fiona Jennings November 2008