

# ECHO



East Grampians  
Health Service

## EAST GRAMPIANS HEALTH SERVICE



**“Wall of Health Service Memorabilia”**  
Full story on page 3



### CE Report

Welcome to the April edition of the Echo.

We are into Autumn. The new intake of our registrars, interns, and graduate nurses are settling into their roles, alongside the 2025 intake of Deakin Ararat first-year medical students and Federation University Diploma of Nursing students.

The development of the practical laboratory is well underway, with local builder Eastick Homes undertaking construction. It is pleasing to see many of the tradespeople who have strong connections to the health service working on the building. This sees a significant investment of the Victorian Government in the local community. A considerable benefit for us is attention to detail; the local tradespeople must ensure a good result is delivered. The builders and local trades don't want our staff members to point out to them poor building quality.

We are very thankful to the Victorian Department of Health, which funded this development to train our current and future medical officers, allied health professionals and nurses. We are hopeful the good fortune continues with a \$2.8 million Rural Health Infrastructure submission being put in to commence stage one of the redevelopment of Willaura Hospital.

As I highlighted in the previous ECHO, the 2024 People Matter Survey results have been received. We have specific areas that we need to work on, and the Director of

Human Resources, Ros Bloomfield, will be out and about, implementing strategies to improve the experience our staff have while at work.

I continue to receive a significant number of patient feedback forms from patients who have received care or support. It is undoubtedly one of the most enjoyable parts of this role. When your name is highlighted, I will write a handwritten note to you.

**CE Report cont. page 2**

**CE Report cont.**

The Federal election has been called, and it is a wonderful thing about democracy. We, the Australian people, will elect a Government to represent us. This is one of the best things about being Australian: our strong democracy requires everyone to vote to have their say.

I hope this election lead-up can be one of new ideas and an articulated vision for a better and improved Australia. I, for one, am tired of the political point-scoring. I find it genuinely uplifting when we have bipartisan support for well-thought-out policies. This makes my job significantly more straightforward, allowing us to move forward with greater clarity.

We recently had the new Australian Aged Care Act pass in the Australian Parliament. This Act received bipartisan support. This was in response to the Royal Commission, which found that residential aged care needs to improve for all Australians receiving this care and that community aged care, such as Aged Care Packages, needs more substantial governance arrangements. It is a great piece of legislation.

With the upcoming election and the great atmosphere of the Grampians area over Easter, I am looking forward to attending the Stawell Easter Gift to see Gout Gout the young sprinting sensation run in the time-honoured Stawell Easter Gift. I was on hand to witness the best sporting performance I have ever seen, with Cathy Freeman winning the women's 400 metres off an impossible back mark in 1996.

**CELEBRATING 25 YEARS** **FAREWELL LAURI!**

EGHS Aged Care Admission Officer Fiona Miller celebrated 25 years with the health service recently.

Director of Clinical Services Peter Armstrong was on hand to present Fiona with flowers and cupcakes to mark the occasion.

Second floor and Human Relations staff recently farewelled Lauri Williamson as she went on maternity leave....and....it was a boy! Congratulations!

Lauri is pictured here with HR staff Ros Bloomfield, Angela Nagpal and Tarnya Mair.





# WALL OF HEALTH SERVICE MEMORABILIA

**JODIE HOLWELL  
COMMUNITY LIAISON**

East Grampians Health Service has recently constructed a Memorabilia Wall, displaying the many plaques presented over the years and originally hung across various areas of the health service, dating back to the 1930s.

Through the many renovations and redevelopments across the health service, the plaques were removed and placed in safe storage by Director of Support Services Stuart Kerr, who had always wanted to display them again in a prominent place.

"These plaques date back many decades and were erected to acknowledge generous donations from past and current members of the community, as well as acknowledging past medical and nursing staff, and we wanted to make sure that our history didn't remain in boxes in storage, but was displayed for all to see," Mr Kerr said.

"We also made sure we safely removed and stored the old Ararat and District Hospital signage that was originally on the

front of the hospital, with the idea of displaying it again one day."

Following extensive renovations, the EGHS Support Services and Education teams have moved into the old Ballarat Psychiatric Services building at the rear of the hospital and the walkway at the side of this building, between the hospital and the back of 70 Lowe Street, offered the perfect place to display the signage and plaques.

Apprentice carpenter Arie Cavanagh, together with maintenance worker Lauchie Stewart, worked on the Memorabilia Wall, which has already attracted great interest from Board Directors, staff, volunteers and visitors to the hospital.

"Arie and Lauchie did a fantastic job in erecting the Memorabilia Wall and it is great that the history of our health service is now on display for all to see and enjoy," Mr Kerr said.



**EGHS Director of Support Services Stuart Kerr, apprentice carpenter Arie Cavanagh and maintenance worker Lachie Stewart with the old hospital signage now on display**



**Some of the historic plaques on the Memorabilia Wall**



# HAPPY MOUTHS, HAPPY MINDS

'A Happy Mouth is... A Happy Mind'. This year World Oral Health Day focused on the connection between oral health and mental well-being.

EGHS Oral Health Therapists Lauren Milloy and Sydney Findlay (pictured) are a part of the Smile Squad dental van which provides free dental care and education to students to achieve better oral health outcomes through early intervention.



Staff Celebration Committee in partnership with Halls Gap Zoo

## ANIMAL NAMING COMPETITION



Name the newest baby monkey  
Competition open from Friday March 21st at 9:00am  
Entries close Monday 21st April at 5:00pm

Aim for an EGHS dedicated name

During the month of May the Halls Gap Zoo will be offering all staff from East Grampians Health Service a free bag of animal food upon entry when you show your staff ID badge.  
Offer available 1/5/25 - 31/5/25.

To enter your name suggestions please email bianca.roche@eghs.net.au  
Winners announced Tuesday 22nd April

\$5 Cafe Pyrenees voucher will be awarded to the winner



Raising funds for aged care at East Grampians Health Service

Thursday May 15



## Astor Cinema Ararat

6.30pm: Wine and Savouries  
7.30pm: Movie

Tickets: \$25 includes wine and savouries

Tickets: CAS Couture  
Barkly Street Ararat

Enquiries:  
Lyn: 0408 248 852  
Marlene: 0419 117 279

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

**JODIE HOLWELL**  
**COMMUNITY LIAISON**

Amanda Cranstoun has recently completed her Graduate Diploma of Midwifery.

Amanda received a scholarship from Epworth Health to complete her Diploma, which she studied at Federation University.

Prior to receiving the scholarship, Amanda was working in the Education Department as a clinical support nurse, associate nurse unit manager in the Inpatient Unit and a registered nurse in the Urgent Care Centre.

Amanda is currently working as midwife and associate nurse unit manager in the Inpatient Unit and a clinical support educator with the Education Department.

"Receiving the scholarship was a significant opportunity that allowed me to advance my career in midwifery while continuing to contribute to patient care and education," Amanda said.

"It provided financial support, enabling me to focus on my studies without the stress of financial burden. The Epworth scholarship also reinforced my commitment to both clinical practice and education, allowing me to transition into my current role as a midwife, associate nurse unit manager and clinical support educator.

Amanda said the Epworth scholarship empowered her to enhance patient care, support colleagues, and mentor future healthcare professionals, ultimately making a meaningful impact in both midwifery and nursing education.

"Working as a midwife allows me to be a part of some of the most transformative moments in patients' lives, offering compassionate care and support during childbirth," Amanda said.

"The scholarship has given me flexibility and resources to grow in these roles while continuously improving the standard of care I provide.

"Overall, the scholarship has been instrumental in my career progression, enabling me to contribute to both clinical excellence and education, two areas I am deeply passionate about."





# How easy is it for you to talk with health workers, like doctors and nurses?

We would like to hear from people about their experiences of talking with health workers, and how this could be improved.



- Aged over 18 years and living in a rural area?
- Have a long-term illness (like diabetes or heart problems) or care for someone who does?

**Join us for a one-hour group discussion**

**Wednesday 30th April 9.30–10.30am**

For more information or to register contact

**East Grampians Health Service  
Research Team**



[Celina.Day@eghs.net.au](mailto:Celina.Day@eghs.net.au)  
03 5352 9426



This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee, Monash Health



# WELCOME NEW EGHS STAFF

ROS BLOOMFIELD, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

**DANAH BURTON**  
**CATERING ASSISTANT**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL Team | **Essendon**

Favourite Food | **Chicken Delight from Blue Duck**

Interests | **Horse riding**

One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel to a different country**



**TAYLOR EL HOUT**  
**CLINICAL SUPPORT NURSE/EDUCATOR**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL | **Collingwood**

Favourite Food | **Lebanese food**

Favourite Music | **Country and Taylor Swift**

Interests | **Gardening and spending time with my dogs**

One thing I'm good at | **Growing my own vegetables**

One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel Europe with my partner**



**KANISHK GUPTA**  
**SOCIAL WORKER**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL Team | **Carlton**

Food | **Red Lentil**

Favourite Music | **Taylor Swift**

Interests | **Travelling**

One thing I'm good at | **Communication**

One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel the World**



**SOPHIE KOWARZIK**  
**WARD CLERK - ACUTE SERVICES**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL Team | **St Kilda**

Favourite Food | **Pastries**

Favourite Music | **Hip Hop, Pop and Country**

Interests | **Baking and rock climbing**

One thing I'm good at | **Cooking and Baking**



# WELCOME NEW EGHS STAFF

ROS BLOOMFIELD, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

**CLAIRE LEGGETT**  
**TRAINEE REGISTERED NURSE**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL Team | **Essendon**

Favourite Food | **Chinese**

Favourite Music | **Country**

Interests | **Dancing, Musicals, Music**

One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel the world**



**NARDINE MACONACHIE**  
**HOME CARE**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL Team | **Melbourne**

Favourite Food | **Pasta**

Favourite Music | **Country**

Interests | **Sport, gardening, spending time with friends and family**

One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Win Tattsлото**



**ROSLYN QUIXLEY**  
**CATERING ASSISTANT**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL Team | **North Melbourne**

Favourite Food | **Anything with chicken in it**

Favourite Music | **Pop/Rock**

Interests | **Reading, exercise, walks, travel**

One thing I'm good at | **Being the friend you can rely on**

One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel the world**



**FAITH SAUNDERS**  
**TRAINEE ENROLLED NURSE**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

Favourite AFL Team | **Geelong Cats**

Favourite Food | **Pasta**

Favourite Music | **Pop**

Interests | **Outdoor activities, nursing**

One thing I'm good at | **Social interaction**

One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Become a RN**





# WELCOME NEW EGHS STAFF

ROS BLOOMFIELD, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

**BROOKE TURNER**  
**TRAINEE ENROLLED NURSE**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

- Favourite AFL Team | **Melbourne Demons**
- Favourite Food | **Anything caramel**
- Favourite Music | **Country or pop**
- Interests | **Reading, jigsaws, watching my kids play various sports**
- One thing I'm good at | **Caring for others**
- One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Achieve my dream of becoming a nurse**



**ALEX VAN OPSTAL**  
**WARD CLERK**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

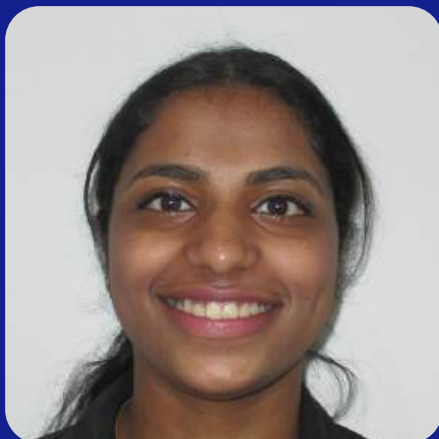
- Favourite AFL Team | **Hawthorn**
- Favourite Food | **Zambreros**
- Favourite Music | **Interpol/Radiohead**
- Interests | **Sports**
- One thing I'm good at | **Sleeping**
- One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Travel to Japan**



**ANISHA VARGHESE**  
**GRADUATE REGISTERED NURSE**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

- Favourite AFL Team | **Geelong Cats**
- Favourite Food | **Biryani**
- Favourite Music | **Indian Music**
- Interests | **Dance**
- One thing I'm good at | **Talking**
- One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **Bungee Jumping**



**BILLI WILLIAMS**  
**HEALTH CARE WORKER**

**ALL ABOUT ME...**

- Favourite AFL Team | **Carlton**
- Favourite Food | **Anything with pasta**
- Favourite Music | **Pop and Country**
- Interests | **Camping, netball and fishing**
- One thing I'm good at | **Supporting my friends**
- One thing I want to do in this lifetime | **See a moose in Canada**



# NEW ARRIVALS AT EGHS

Shae Hannett and Jesse Eckel have welcomed their second child, a daughter, Heidi Gwen Eckel.

Baby Heidi was born at East Grampians Health Service on January 8 2025 weighing 3650 grams.

Heidi has a big brother Max, aged two.

"Thank you so much to all the staff at EGHS for their wonderful care. Special thanks to Lauren, Carol, Amanda and Sarah for their amazing care and support," Shae Hannett and Jesse Eckel.

Three-year-old Lenny Jeffery was excited to welcome a new baby sister, Lacey May Jeffery, into the family.

Baby Lacey is the daughter of Georgia and Jack Jeffery and was born at East Grampians Health Service on March 6 2025 weighing 3469 grams.

"Thank you to all the staff at EGHS for making our stay here as comfortable and enjoyable as possible," Georgia and Jack Jeffery.

Stacey Roche and Luke Walker have welcomed their second child, a daughter, Phoebe Elizabeth Walker.

Baby Phoebe has a big brother Benji, and was born at East Grampians Health Service on March 14 2025, weighing 3401 grams.

"I would like to thank Dr Helper and Dr Bardsley on the safe delivery of our little girl. Special thanks to Amanda, Carol, Anita, Marnie, Maggie and Lucy for taking extra special care of us during our stay," Stacey Roche.



## THANKFUL THURSDAY

"I am very thankful to be able to return to such a wonderful organisation. I have felt extremely welcomed and supported since starting my new role in theatre. A big shout out to Kirsten Carr for being such an approachable and accommodating manager, day in and day out."

MARNIE SKILLER  
REGISTERED NURSE - ACUTE SERVICES



# PARKLAND PURSUITS

**MICHELLE MASLEN, PAM WHEELER AND JOSIE HICKEY**  
LIFESTYLE COORDINATORS

Our Lifestyle team was busy this March and has an exciting program for April.

We have had a lot of fun hosting the Lake Bolac College students. They had car racing set up, boat racing, balloon propelled straws and afternoon tea. They are a dedicated young group catching the Vline bus to Willaura and then home again, sixteen of them.

We had a great trip to the Pastoral Museum in Hamilton, an outing to the Moyston Sheep Dog Trials, and an outing to the RSL for lunch after shopping,

Armchair travel to South Africa and a trip to see the vintage cars in Lake Bolac was fascinating.

As we have three Activities' staff, the program is full of different activities.

Pam is the decorating queen, Josie the games person and Michelle the cooking and exercise person just to name a few of their skills.

In April, we have a visit from the Willaura Kindergarten, Willaura Primary School, an outing to the Trash and Treasure Market, country music and armchair travel to Norfolk Island.

We will have another barbecue while the weather holds out, a trip to the Ansett Museum in Hamilton, fishing in the Hopkins for the men and ladies' pampering.

Our residents and staff also had a lovely time decorating for Easter. Hard to believe it's almost that time of year again. Lorraine and Kath got very creative making a couple of Easter wreaths to hang in the dining room. Loving the pretty colours. What a great achievement from the team.



Easter craft



Easter craft



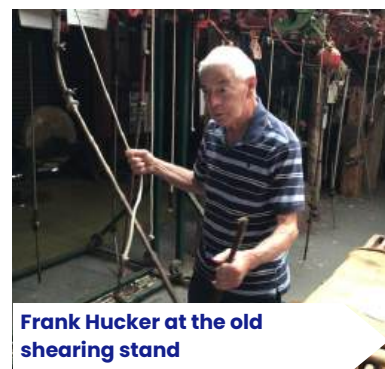
Racing balloon powered straws on string



Willaura residents on St Patricks Day bowling with potatoes



Easter craft



Frank Hucker at the old shearing stand



Lake Bolac students



Kindergarten children playing ball with residents



Derick Watson in the old cottage at the Pastoral Museum



Josie and Frank blowing with all their might to shift the boats



## ALISON CELEBRATES 70<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

Parkland House Hostel hosted a special 70th birthday for resident Alison Holmes recently.

Family members attended to join residents and staff in the celebration, with Colin Holmes pictured cutting the cake for Alison, along with daughters Briony and Jane, and good friend Heather Fleming.



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

EGHS staff Peta Barrie, Bec Peters, Maree Fraser and Jodie Holwell (pictured) celebrated International Women's Day at a morning tea hosted by Mayor Jo Armstrong.

A highlight of the event was guest speakers photographer Martina Gemmola, Lauren Walker of Ararat Wellness and Katrina Beer of Federation University, who shared inspirational stories of their career journeys, challenges and advice for the next generation.





# 70 LOWE STREET

WENDY DUMESNY  
RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Always looking for interesting and exotic recipes, Lowe St residents thought what better way to celebrate St Patricks day than with Guinness Cake topped with Irish cream frosting. The cake was very dark in colour but everyone agreed it was delicious, or as they say in Ireland 'blasta'. Gary tried the Guinness but didn't describe it as 'blasta'.



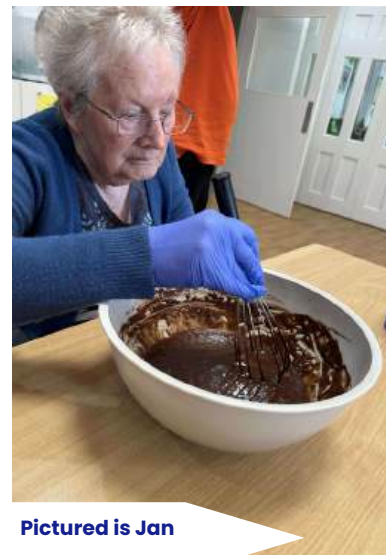
Pictured is Gary



Pictured is Rhonda



Pictured is Nancy



Pictured is Jan

# HINCHEY HIGHLIGHTS

NICHOLAS BETSON  
ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT - PATRICIA HINCHEY CENTRE

"You might think that the Patricia Hinchey Centre is pretty magical most of the time but this March it was Magical March!

Consumers started the month off by decorating a Fairies Garden to have on display. St Patricks Day came and went and marked with a session of Clover themed craft and some delicious lime spiders (which were scooped down quick smart). The Hatters Tea Party was a resounding success with fairy bread and festive cupcakes shared among all. Some of the consumers were able to get down to the Begonia Festival this year in Ballarat. It was a perfect day, for perfect blooms in perfect weather. Thanks to all the volunteers who help us every day making PHC the place to be!"





# ST PAT'S DAY FUN AT LOWE STREET

To be sure, to be sure, it was fun and games at 70 Lowe Street for St Patrick's Day. Clients from Pinnacle joined residents at 70 Lowe Street for some Irish fun, including Leprechaun races and afternoon tea, as well as enduring plenty of Irish limericks and jokes



## EGHS STAFF FITNESS

### KELLY RYAN - EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST

Join us every Tuesday from 5:15 PM – 6:15 PM for staff fitness! This weekly session is free and welcomes all fitness levels and is a great way to improve your health and well-being. Some weeks, we'll mix it up with modified sports, including:

- Indoor activities at the Ararat Fitness Centre (during winter months)
- Outdoor activities like Pilates (in warmer months)

**Why Join?**  
Exercise boosts your health by strengthening muscles and bones, reducing the risk of chronic conditions, and enhancing mood and cognitive function.

We create a warm and inviting atmosphere for all staff to feel comfortable and have fun.

Stay updated on activities and last-minute changes by joining our EGHS Staff Fitness Facebook group.

CHC gym = Community Health Centre Gym  
Ararat Fitness Centre: 61-73 High Street, Ararat

Please click the link to join:  
[Ararat Fitness Centre : 61-73 High Street, Ararat](https://www.facebook.com/groups/272393883425954)

Please click the link to join:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/272393883425954>



APRIL		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Full Body Circuit	CHC
8 <sup>th</sup>	Cardio	CHC
15 <sup>th</sup>	Boxing	CHC
22 <sup>nd</sup>	*Cancelled due to Easter	
29 <sup>th</sup>	Bootcamp	CHC



# FRIDAY MORNING NAPS!

With lots of left overs from a recent second floor farewell, staff took the remainders down to the deck the following day for morning tea, and given it was a Friday, decided a nap was in order after a big week!



Pictured are Tarnya Mair, Angela Nagpal, Maree Fraser and Jane Miller

# CLANCY VISITS LOWE STREET

Margie Hyde recently brought Clancy the Bernese Mountain Dog to 70 Lowe Street to visit her parents, and everyone enjoyed meeting him, including staff member Helen Ferguson (pictured).





# BOWLS NIGHT FINAL MURRAY TO MOYNE FUNDRAISER

The EGHS Cranks and Defibrillators' final Murray to Moyne fundraiser was a Jack Attack bowls night at the Ararat Bowls Club, which attracted more than 50 keen bowlers for the 'barefoot bowls' style event and raised \$500.

Big thanks to the Ararat Bowls Club for providing the venue, hosting the event and members for their instruction on the night, and sponsors, Pyrenees Premium Cuts and House of Nai Asian Grocery.









# COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE WINS TRIVIA NIGHT

The EGHS Murray to Moyne Cycle Relay team held a successful Trivia Night fundraiser, with Quiz Master Charlie Reid testing the brain power of 100 people, and first prize going to the EGHS Community Health Centre team.

The Trivia Night raised \$3,200, with funds raised this year going towards the new Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Hub at the EGHS Community Health Centre, to be used to purchase equipment and furnishings for the new clinic.

Big thanks to the team for organising the event, and major sponsors of the Trivia Night, Ararat RSL, Cyclescape, Fosters Mensland and Ararat Dental.









# STAFF CELEBRATE

Staff Celebration events are taking on a new format this year, with a number of smaller events across the year aiming to reach more staff.

Staff Celebrations are held to thank East Grampians Health Service staff for their ongoing work across the year and are great for camaraderie and morale.

The focus of the Staff Celebration Committee this year will be to engage with local/regional providers to deliver a variety of events for staff.

Staff recently enjoyed delicious food from Valhalla BBQ, The Hippy Whippy ice-creams and gelati and the Willaura Bakery with rolls, pastries and slices.

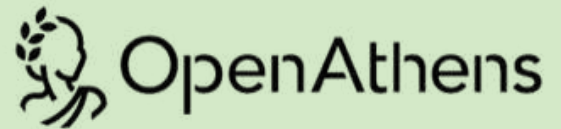






**ACCESS TO GRAMPIANS HEALTH LIBRARY OFFSITE**

What is OpenAthens? OpenAthens is an authentication tool that helps you to access Grampians Health Library resources, such as journal articles and eBooks when you are not on site.



How do I get an account? If you've not already signed up with OpenAthens before, you will need to begin your registration on a work computer, Register Here. Alternatively, visit our home page and follow the instructions in the "Offsite Access" section on the right of the webpage.

When offsite, search for "Grampians Health Library" via Google or other major search engines to find us online. Use your personal OpenAthens details to login so you can access full text articles and databases.

For more information, please contact the library on 5320 4455 or send us an email with your query to Library@gh.org.au.

The modification will allow for adequate circulation space within the bathroom for staff to utilise equipment safely.



## MEET YOUR EDUCATORS AT LET'S GO FAMILY DAY CARE

### NIKITA SCOTT

I am a mum to a 9-year-old boy Max.  
I am diploma qualified and currently studying my Graduate Diploma.  
I have 8 years' experience working in various childcare services.  
I have a passion for holistic teaching and watching children grow.  
I love camping, fishing and water skiing.  
Photography and scrapbooking are my hobbies.



### JULIA WINTER

I am a mature aged Early Childhood Educator, with over 35 years' experience and really love my role in children's development.  
I strive for equity and inclusion in my program but also listen to the children's voices.  
I have been very lucky in choosing such a rewarding career.



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The Echo is published on the 4th Friday of the month. The deadline for submissions of articles is the Tuesday prior. The ECHO Editor is Lisa Nolen. Information can be sent through, preferably by email, to [lisa.nolen@eghs.net.au](mailto:lisa.nolen@eghs.net.au). Printed copies of the ECHO are distributed to IPU, Theatre, 70 Lowe Street, GVC, Day Centre and the Cafeteria. The ECHO is sent via email to all staff, Board of Management, Ararat Medical Centre, Ararat Psych Services as well as the staff at the Ararat Ambulance Station.