

Reflections on 50 Years



From left to right: Joanne & Lynda Stephens, Karl Kaltenbach, Craig Green, Richard Martin, Stephen Donaldson, Kevin Kendall, Fiona Embery, Chris Rolnik, Robert Semler, Ann Leighton, Hannelor Kaltenbach

You will find here some of the milestones of Warrah's evolution, but of course the more important part of Warrah's story is the very many people who have been, or are still part of Warrah, whatever role they have played.

In the 1960's Karl and Hannelor Kaltenbach brought the healing impulse of Rudolf Steiner's Curative Education and Social Therapy to a beautiful bush block in Dural, with a vision to start a community. A brave act of pioneering, it has lived on, touching many people along the way.

In the earliest days, the task was to create and grow the fledgling Warrah community. People with disability, families, co-workers, friends and supporters gathered together. In those founding times, creating community was no mere act of reflection: Warrah asked for dedication, love of the task, and hard physical yakka! Out of this generosity of spirit, Warrah was created and it grew, gathering many friends along the way.

Warrah's beautiful bushland campus still provides healing and inspiration to us all. Today we are a large, extended and diverse community of people, with and without disability, spread across Sydney's North West. Despite the shifting landscape over 50 years, our task remains fundamentally the same: to accompany those who need support to stand in the world.

***'The healthy social life is found when in the mirror of each human soul,
The whole community finds its reflection
And when in the community the strength of each one is living.'***
- Rudolf Steiner

MILESTONES 1965 - 1979

- 1965** A small group of people came together and formed the Warrah Trust, and Karl & Hannelor Kaltenbach began to prepare the programs at Warrah, starting with a biodynamic garden. Warrah Trust was formed. The seven original members were: Mac Bumpstead, Gerald Engel, Kyra Pohl, Irene Speight, Darcy Jackson, Karl and Hannelor Kaltenbach.
- 1969** Warrah was incorporated as a public company and Warrah School Society was formed. A capital grant was received from State & Federal governments, and Waratah was completed housing 15 children, 6 adults and 10 co-workers. It was built by Darcy Jackson with architect Mr. Nemes. Mac Bumpstead was Warrah's Chairman from 1969 until 1971. The Foundation Stone was laid at Waratah (now Banksia Community Centre) on 23 March.
- 1970** Warrah's first school building was donated, later becoming the founding Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Centre with Clive and Carol Robbins.
- 1971** Additional land was rented from neighbour Mr. Tony Burnett, which contained a tiny cottage and a large shed. Hans Cooke became Warrah's first Farmer. John Shaw became Warrah's second Chairman, from 1971 until 1982.
- 1973** The Arts and Craft Centre was built, now used as Warrah's main Office. The Fountain (at Banksia) was built, designed by Karl Kaltenbach. A Music Therapy program started with Enid Rowe. Patrick McDonald started work at Warrah Farm, soon becoming a House Father. The Association for Curative Education and Social Therapy in Australia started a 3 year training course for co-workers from Inala, Miroma and Warrah.
- 1974** An additional 11 acres was acquired from Mac Bumpstead, adjacent to the original property.
- 1975** An exhibition was held at the Opera House showcasing Inala, Miroma & Warrah, celebrating 50 years of Curative Education & Social Therapy world-wide, opened by Margaret Whitlam. Dick Pruys became Warrah's Farmer.
- 1976** Waaia Cottage became a group home for residents.
- 1977** A building for a Thrift Shop in Redfern was purchased. Madge Mills was the first Manager.
- 1978** Six more acres of land was purchased, eventually for Orana and Wattle Tree cottages. Red Gum Cottage was built, designed by Warrah parent and architect Reuben Lane. 15 men from Marsden Hospital in Parramatta began coming to work daily at Warrah Farm.
- 1979** Walumeda building was constructed as a staff cottage, later used as a therapy centre. Frances Prior started work at the office. Barbara Stannard started work as a physiotherapist, and later taught music.
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MILESTONES 1980 - 1999

- 1980** Warrah's first community group home, Willow Cottage, was established in Kenthurst, initially managed by Peter and Rosemarie Glasby.
Dick & Eileen Pruys developed a wholesale business for bio-dynamic and organic fruit and vegetables, supplying shops as far as the Blue Mountains and Canberra.
An Activity Therapy Centre was started in Kenthurst, managed by Janis Ryan.
- 1981** Mac's Cottage (named after Mac Bumpstead) was opened, designed by Reuben Lane
The current School building, including the Nordoff Hall was opened, designed by Reuben Lane and funded by the Commonwealth.
Patrick McDonald became Education Director of Warrah School; Liz Hamilton Head Teacher.
Maroota started as a community group home, gifted by Dr Stanley Martin, Warrah's doctor who cared for Warrah's clients from 1969 to 1999.
- 1982** Warrah parents Freddy and Toni Everill built and later donated Glenny Cottage to Warrah.
Norman Connellan became Warrah's Chairman, from 1982 until 1988.
Karl Kaltenbach received the Order of Australia for his work establishing Warrah & founding the Association for Rudolf Steiner Curative Education & Social Therapy in Australia.
- 1983** Two classrooms were added to the school with the help of architect Nielsen Warren.
- 1984** Semler Cottage was opened in Thornleigh, named after the late Stephen Semler, early Warrah family and Board member, fundraiser and great supporter of Warrah.
Greenway Cottage in Cherrybrook was purchased.
- 1985** Warrah Enterprises opened on 24 November 1985 in Castle Hill, in a modern industrial park, with production of candles and packing of soap, shampoo, etc. First Manager was Norm Webster.
- 1986** Reiby Drive Cottage opened at Baulkham Hills (later replaced by Emily Cottage); Torrs Street Cottage opened at Baulkham Hills.
- 1987** New swimming pool was opened by Olympian Michael Delany, designed by Reuben Lane.
- 1988** Opening of Orana & Wattle Tree Cottages, funded by (Com) Department of Education.
Parent Tony Molloy became Warrah's Chairman from 1988 until 1992.
- 1989** New Farm Shed & Shop was built. Improved kit home built as the farmer's house. (Later became Merriwa for Post-School Options Program with Manager Megan Fletcher.)
- 1992** Cliff Pain became Chairperson, from 1992 until 1995.
- 1993** A major fundraiser called "Artists Save Warrah" was launched with Arthur Boyd, David Boyd, John Olsen and other artists donating their works to raise funds.
Warrah Farm achieved biodynamic certification.
- 1994** Enterprise Agreement negotiated between Warrah School Society and Residential staff.
- 1995** The sewerage treatment plant was built.
Tony Molloy became Chairperson, from 1995 until 2004.
- 1996** Karl Kaltenbach retired. Patrick McDonald was appointed Warrah's CEO.
- 1999** Hannelor Kaltenbach retired.

MILESTONES 2000 - 2019

- 2000** Merriwa Day Services moved to a rented site on Old Northern Road.
- 2001** Warrah's Redfern Thrift Shop was sold.
- 2003** Property Person of the Year (PPOY) event was established with Urban Taskforce to benefit Warrah. Significant funds were raised, and it continues today.
- 2004** Pat Tierney became Chairperson, from 2004 until 2010.
- 2006** Hannelor Kaltenbach was awarded Order of Australia Medal for services to children and adults with disabilities, particularly at Warrah School.
Warrah School commenced the transition of students out of residential care at Warrah.
- 2009** Warrah's Therapy Centre renovated with a Schools BER Grant; Spiral Garden was established.
- 2010** Following the illness of Pat Tierney, Tony Molloy became Chairperson, from 2010 until 2014.
- 2012** Patrick Mc Donald retired; Georgina Michaelis was appointed CEO.
- 2013** Foundations of Curative Education training course was started at Warrah and delivered by Barbara Baldwin 2013-2015.
Farmer Rob Greatholder started.
Property Person of the Year (PPOY) Ross McDiven donated the Brookfield Multiplex Bathroom Blitz renovating 17 bathrooms across Warrah's homes.
- 2014** Discovery program started at Walumeda, focussed on addressing the transition to adult life
Semler Cottage sold; Annual Warrah Community Spring Fair started.
Community Education Courses & Workshops commenced.
Steve Mitchell became Chairperson, from 2014 until 2018.
- 2015** FaCS completed a new house in Castle Hill for Waratah residents; designed by Mark Baxter.
Land purchased in Jasper Road Baulkham Hills to build two new houses.
- 2016** The old Waratah building was renovated and repurposed as Banksia Community Centre. Old Northern Road Day Programs were relocated to the Centre.
Warrah became an approved provider with the new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the transition to the new scheme commenced. New services started including Short Stays, In Home and After School. Warrah was approved as a Housing Provider for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA).
- 2017** Property Person of The Year (PPOY) Iwan Sunito of Crown Group donated 3 complete kitchen replacements at Mac's, Red Gum and Wattle Tree cottages.
Warrah Farm shop was expanded and extended; DA was approved for Saturday trading.
- 2018** David Ghannoum became Chairperson.
2 new purpose designed and built houses opened in Jasper Road designed by Mark Baxter; Residents of Semler and Torrs cottages relocated to the new Jacaranda and Tallowood.
A new group of 5 young adults moved into the Torrs Street cottage in Baulkham Hills.
DA lodged for major additions to Walumeda for better accessibility for Discovery & Short Stay services; project donated by Property Person of the Year Sarkis Nassif of Holdmark.
- 2019** Steve Malin became Chairperson.
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