



NETWORKING NEWSLETTER



SPECIAL FLOOD EDITION – 21 FEBRUARY 2012

Third 'record breaking' flood hits south west Queensland



RAAF Hercules evacuated Warrabee Aged Care Service's residents on 5 February

For the third time in three years, south west Queensland communities Roma, Mitchell, St George and surrounding areas have been impacted by the worst floods in the region's history.

Warrabee Aged Care Service St George residents were evacuated on Sunday 5 February to the Gold Coast, where all 34 residents have now settled into host aged care services: the majority being cared for by Churches of Christ Care aged care services.

Luckily the Roma Church of Christ escaped flood damage, unlike much of the town. The church community has rallied to support the people of Roma providing flood relief/recovery efforts.

Our pastoral care team are on the ground in the flood-affected communities providing support and comfort to people who have to, once again, heal after suffering the loss of their homes, belongings and for many, their livelihoods.

In this special flood edition

- Record flood hits south west Queensland again
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Bringing the light of Christ into communities





Chief Executive Officer's update



For the people of south west Queensland, the last three years have been trying - physically and emotionally. Many have had to see their homes and personal effects ruined by water again and again ... and now for the third time, they have to pick up and start over.

It is hard to imagine, sitting safely in our dry homes, the impact of living through disaster after disaster has on a person, their family and their community. It can be disempowering, wanting to help those in need but not being sure how. We have launched the 2012 Queensland Flood Appeal to aid those touched by the recent floods. While we may not be able to go to Roma, Mitchell, St George and the other areas flooded to physically clean up, we can do our little bit. Funds raised through our appeal will go directly to the people who need it - to help them get back on their feet and replace some of the things they have lost. I urge you to help once more.

The damage at Warrawee Aged Care Service St George is extensive and as you can see by the story on page three, it's likely to be up to six months before our residents are able to return home. This separation from family, friends and their community will have a big impact on them and I ask you to join with me in praying for them during this stressful time. The extensive repair time also impacts on our staff in St George. We are investigating different options including

working in other Churches of Christ services, dedicating time to training and other up-skilling opportunities. Options will be discussed and a plan worked out with each person.

I want to thank everyone involved, and to particularly acknowledge those who went above and beyond the call of duty throughout this entire crisis. People like Julie Crawford, Warrawee's service manager, and Steve McNamara, area manager for the far west region, who, right from the moment they knew Warrawee had to be evacuated, sprang into action packing residents' belongings, rallying staff to lift furniture and working tirelessly to protect the facility. Thank you to the people of Dalby and Toowoomba who opened their homes and hearts to give comfort and assistance to evacuees as they were forced to leave their homes.

Thanks to Wayne Lester, Toowoomba's aged care service manager, who was on site in St George as soon as receding flood waters would allow, to assess the damage, and kick start the recovery process. We are grateful to Pam Kerr and her husband for providing us with photos and reports as the water crept towards Warrawee. Thanks also to all of our Head Office staff who've looked after support services during the crisis (supplies, phones, communications, IT, insurance, property issues, etc) and the other aged care services that accommodated our evacuated residents.

We will keep you updated with news on our residents, the communities affected and the progress of repairs over the coming months.

Best regards to you all,

Dean Phelan, Chief Executive Officer

2012 Queensland Flood Appeal

Funds from the Care Community Foundation 2012 Queensland Flood Appeal will support Roma, Mitchell, St George and surrounding areas in Queensland's south west.

These communities face weeks, if not months, of recovery and testing times as they come to grips with the devastation left by flood waters.

Your support and generosity is especially needed. Churches of Christ has set up the 2012 Queensland Flood Appeal to help families and individuals who need assistance to recover from this devastation.

This flood disaster has left many people in need of immediate support. Your donation will go directly towards helping families affected and will be distributed through a grants process managed by local Church of Christ churches.

To donate online go to www.everydayhero.com.au/event/ccffloodappeal or call 1800 600 900.





Damage to Warrawee Aged Care Service St George significant Churches of Christ Care Warrawee Aged Care Service St George is facing months of repairs and refurbishment after flood waters inundated the facility.

Despite a levee being built to protect the town, the aged care facility suffered significant damage.

Churches of Christ in Queensland CEO Dean Phelan said staff have now been able to access the site after flood waters receded late last week.

“Unfortunately Warrawee had approximately half a metre of water through the facility. We are grateful water levels were not higher but even at this level, it means our 34 residents will not be able to come home for some time,” Dean said.

“There is a lot of work to be done; we have to replace all the gyprock 600 mm from the floor and ensure electricity supply is safe because many of the power points were submerged.

“Luckily most of the residents’ personal belongings escaped damage and have been moved to storage.”

Dean said the organisation is concerned about the impact on displaced residents. “The 34 people who call Warrawee home will be separated from their families, local community and support networks for an extended period,” he said.

Churches of Christ Care is an integral part of St George. Dean said many of the staff live and work in town. “We will do our best to continue providing support to them and this community,” he said.

“We have reopened our Early Childhood Centre so parents can focus on the task of cleaning up the town without worrying about their children.

“We have quickly cleaned up our flooded Family Day Care service and Mobile Children’s Service, which should be operational very soon; and our Community Aged Care programs are running again.”





Residents make the most of Gold Coast evacuation

While the reason for the trip to the Gold Coast may not be ideal, many of Warrawee Aged Care Service’s residents are making the most of their impromptu stay.

The residents staying at Southport Nursing Home were treated to an afternoon of sailing.

For 95-year-old Leonie Reeves, the trip gave her the opportunity to visit with relatives. She said when Warrawee was evacuated last year, she had the chance to meet nephews and nieces she would have never met.

“And now I will get to see them again; it is just wonderful. I love life and God has been wonderful to me,” she said.

“I have also had my grandchildren and great grandchildren come to visit me.”



Left: Gordon Phelps enjoys a day out on the water, Right: Leonie Reeves (in chair) with Marie Wippell (photo courtesy of Gold Coast Bulletin)

Thank you

The Australian Defence Force Emergency Support Force personnel were an integral part of the clean-up operation in Roma, Mitchell and St George.

Over 70 members of the Australian Defence Force helped Churches of Christ Warrawee Aged Care Service clean up the flood damaged facility. In little over one day, they had totally cleaned out the facility, and removed the ruined furniture.

Churches of Christ Care would like to thank everyone who helped in the clean-up process.



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