



Junee breaks new ground

Junee Correctional Centre (JCC) will be breaking new ground when it combines with Habitat for Humanity, TAFE NSW Riverina Institute and Junee Shire Council in Australia's first 'Prison Build' project.

As a result of this unique collaboration, inmates will build a house at JCC for relocation to a block of land in Junee. The house will be allocated to a low-income family in need.

The Prison Build initiative follows the centre introducing a building and construction certificate course through TAFE NSW Riverina Institute last year. Since then inmates have built two new buildings and are currently constructing the new Learning Resource Centre at JCC.

One of the buildings, a multi purpose centre, is being used to deliver a more extensive array of satellite programs and education services to inmates.

General manager of JCC Andy Walker said combining the TAFE course with construction projects allowed inmates to develop practical skills that will help them gain employment upon release.

"The prisoners are very proud of the construction work they have completed and are looking forward to the important role they will play in the Prison Build project," he said.

Early next year inmates will begin prefabricating a house in the new TAFE training area at the centre. Different sections will then be pieced together in an area adjoining the staff car park. Inmates with appropriate approval will combine with community organisations, local businesses and the family receiving the home in this stage of construction.

The house will then be transported in two halves to land in Junee where construction will be completed. Inmates will also assist with landscaping.

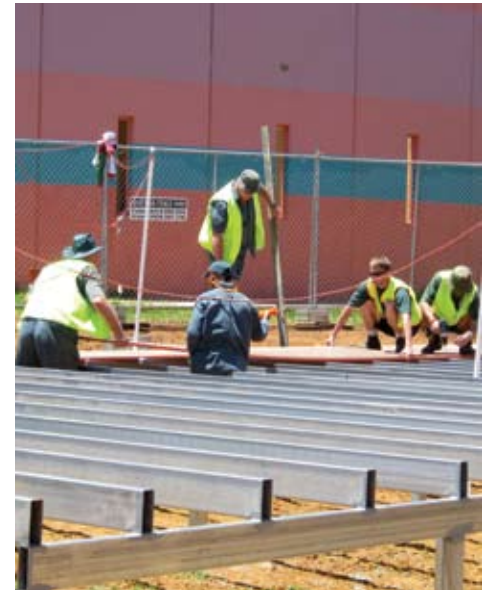
The family receiving the home agrees to work more than 500 hours on the construction. In return

they are provided with an interest-free mortgage with repayments that are never more than 25 per cent of their gross household income.

It is proposed that following the construction of the first home in Junee similar projects could be undertaken throughout the Riverina area.

Habitat for Humanity builds simple, decent and affordable homes in partnership with low-income families in need. The organisation has built nearly 300,000 houses around the world, providing more than 1.5 million people in more than 3000 communities with shelter.

Habitat for Humanity Australia was established in 1988 and has constructed more than 80 homes in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. The local organisation's operations are expanding rapidly and it has more than 50 projects in the pipeline.



••• Inmates are learning construction skills at Junee Correctional Centre.



••• At the launch of the Junee Prison Build project was (back from left) executive director Habitat for Humanity NSW James Allardice, patron and deputy chairman of the Habitat for Humanity Riverina branch Brian Kahlefeldt, Junee Shire Council general manager Greg Campbell, (front from left) chairperson TAFE NSW Riverina Institute Susan Cann, TAFE NSW Riverina Institute representative Peter Nell, JCC inmate services manager Col Caskie and JCC general manager Andy Walker. (Photo courtesy of the Wagga Daily Advertiser).



MD's Desk

I'll start with the very disappointing news that we were not successful in our tender for the operation of the ACRP/Mount Eden Prison in Auckland, New Zealand.

We put forward a high quality offering, one that did not compromise on security and the safety of staff and prisoners, and naturally are seeking clarification on the outcome. We will take these lessons into the next New Zealand tender which is underway.

On a positive note, two recent reports demonstrate the quality of our services.

Firstly, the Victorian Ombudsman's annual report has again shown that Fulham has the lowest rate of prisoner complaints (by a considerable margin) of all secure prisons in Victoria. As these complaints are made independent of the correctional centre, the result shows what a great job the team at Fulham is doing.

Secondly, audit reports from Queensland Corrective Services on security and safety measures have shown that Arthur Gorrie can claim to be one of the securest prisons in the state. These achievements are even more impressive given the challenging role Arthur Gorrie plays in the Queensland correctional system.

October 31 saw the one year anniversary of our operation of Parklea. It seems like yesterday that we were gathered outside the prison at 5am ready to step into the unknown. The anniversary was celebrated in fine style and the changes at Parklea over the past 12 months have been truly remarkable.

There are plenty of good news stories from our centres in this newsletter.

June's exceptional record on community engagement continues with its Habitat for Humanity Prison Build project in partnership with NSW TAFE Riverina Institute and June Shire Council.

Fulham has launched its 'Stay Out' comic, which will be used to communicate strong messages to indigenous youth about the consequences of offending. Fulham has also won a Corrections Victoria Community Work Partnership Award for its Pups in Prison program.

Arthur Gorrie has scooped another award — this time from the Queensland Government for the centre's environmental initiatives.

These achievements show a business in good health, one that is innovating and continually improving, and one that is setting standards for others to follow.

Lastly, I wish you and your loved ones a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Pieter Bezuidenhout
Managing Director

Comic delivers serious message

The humble comic book is to be used to deliver a serious message to indigenous youth on the ramifications of engaging in criminal activity and spending time in prison.

With the assistance of indigenous inmates, who were keen to offer guidance and help keep Aboriginal youth out of trouble, the Fulham Correctional Centre has played a key role in the development of this unique comic book.

'Stay Out' highlights that drugs, offending behaviour and spending time in prison all severely affect and limit life opportunities.

With the characters speaking indigenous 'street cred lingo' the comic book is specifically aimed at indigenous youth.

It was launched at a meeting of the Aboriginal Justice Forum in the Gippsland city of Morwell recently. Penny Armytage, secretary of the Department of Justice, attended the event, as did Fulham's manager of offender development Jeremy Parker.

More than 3000 copies of the comic book will be distributed throughout Gippsland, indigenous community groups in Victoria and through GEO correctional centres across Australia.

"We have found that comics are the most effective way to raise important social messages with the younger population," said Parker.

"We were excited to have Inception Strategies and a group of Fulham inmates develop this comic book that will go some of the way to help indigenous youth make better decisions in their lives."

Inception Strategies produces social comics with various health and education messages with a



• • • A panel from the comic book 'Stay Out'.

particular focus on young people from indigenous and non-English speaking backgrounds.

The comic story-lines are developed through workshops with members of the community that the comic is targeting.

'Stay Out' highlights how 17-year-old Noel becomes involved in a gang, drug taking, car theft and robbery. The comic follows Noel's crimes, capture, sentencing and life at Fulham Correctional Centre.

It also tracks how his mates Briggsy and Brad join him in prison through drug taking that leads to a range of small crimes which escalate into more serious crimes and jail terms. It costs one the love of his family and the other his girlfriend.



• • • From left: FCC acting Aboriginal liaison officer Daniel Skipper, Inception Strategies chief executive Damian Amamoo and FCC offender development manager Jeremy Parker at the launch of 'Stay Out'.
(Photo courtesy of the Latrobe Valley Express).

Community partnership success

Fulham Correctional Centre's Pups in Prison program has won the 'Most Outstanding Location Based Project' award at the 2010 Corrections Victoria Community Work Partnership Awards.

Run in partnership with Assistance Dogs Australia and Corrections Victoria, the project sees prisoners help train labrador pups to eventually work in the community assisting people with physical disabilities achieve a greater level of independence.

"Over 14 months, eight prisoners worked as dog handlers on a daily basis teaching the animals a range of skills including obedience and commands," said Corrections Victoria commissioner Bob Hastings at the awards presentation.

"The prisoners were also responsible for feeding, grooming and socialising the dogs. Three labrador dogs trained at Fulham successfully graduated into the intensive training program at the National Training Centre for Assistance Dogs Australia in New South Wales."

Mr Hastings said programs such as this allowed prisoners to make a positive contribution to the community while learning new skills to assist them to find employment on release and therefore reduce their risk of re-offending.

Fulham submitted three entries into this year's



••• From left: Esther Dekkers (FCC), Assistance Dogs Australia (ADA) CEO Richard Lord, Irene Perkins (FCC), community volunteer Mavis Weymouth, Troy Ittensohn (FCC), ADA Pups in Prison program manager Jenny Reid and Jeremy Parker (FCC) at the awards ceremony.

Community Work Partnership Awards, which attracted 64 nominations from across the state.

In partnership with the Australian Landscape Trust, Fulham was also successful in two other categories with its 'Five Acre Garden' project. The project won a 'Best in Region' (Gippsland) award and was runner-up for the 'Environmental Sustainability Project' award.

Fulham has a very productive horticultural program and has been supporting local

government and Landcare groups in their carbon neutral programs for the last two years. Over 20,000 trees and shrubs have been grown at the centre and planted in the local community by work crews.

The Community Work Partnership Awards were established in 1999 to recognise the many projects that Corrections Victoria undertakes every year to benefit the community. Almost 400 people attended this year's awards presentation.

Minister's Award for AGCC

Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre (AGCC) has received a prestigious Minister's Award for Excellence in Community Safety 2010.

The Queensland Government's Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services, Neil Roberts, presented the award at a ceremony at Parliament House.

AGCC entered the awards in the 'green' category, nominating its Environmental Management Strategy for consideration by the panel of six judges.

The submission highlighted the excellent work of AGCC finance and administration manager Lisa Boase in developing and implementing green initiatives for the benefit of employees, offenders, centre stakeholders and the broader community.

One of the major environmental initiatives at AGCC has been the ongoing support of Brisbane City Council's '2 Million Trees' project — which aims to plant two million trees in the city by 2012.

The centre has also established a partnership with Habitat Brisbane, another Brisbane City Council program, which sees volunteer bushcare groups

restoring local creeks, waterways and parks.

AGCC has built a greenhouse at the centre that is used for the propagation of native grass seedlings for planting in the bushland care areas. By the end of March, over 5000 seedlings had been propagated in the greenhouse.

AGCC staff and family members have also been actively involved in the project, participating in a 'Plant a Tree' day in November last year and then in March, planting 1000 native grass seedlings propagated by AGCC prisoners.

AGCC's nomination for the Minister's Award also highlighted the centre's work in planting 500 eucalyptus trees within the prison to provide fodder for koalas at the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary, recycling projects and the ongoing education of prisoners on environmental sustainability.

The GEO Group Australia managing director Pieter Bezuidenhout praised AGCC employees and prisoners for their efforts that contributed to the award.

"AGCC general manager Greg Howden and his team have done exceptionally well to be recognised with this award," he said.



••• Queensland Corrective Services commissioner Kelvin Anderson with AGCC's Lisa Boase.

"Lisa Boase, the leader of AGCC's environmental efforts and strategies, deserves a special mention for her enthusiasm and proactive approach to environmental sustainability."

IN BRIEF



- • • A Fulham inmate collects information at the employment expo.

Expo leads to jobs

Fulham Correctional Centre has held a Trade and Careers Expo to provide employment, training and further education information to prisoners.

The expo was part of the successful Industry Skill Centre (ISC) program, initiated by Corrections Victoria and piloted by Fulham. The program focuses on nationally accredited workplace training and employability skills. The expo connected ISC participants with community agencies and industry leaders.

During the event 16 exhibitors and 32 advisers offered information to more than 80 prisoners. At the end of the day — to the delight of the organisers — two civil construction companies offered four prisoners the opportunity of employment upon release.



- • • From left: Sidd Mehta (organising committee), John Philpott, Debbie Butt and Wil Drotzky.

Car rally fund-raiser

Junee Correctional Centre (JCC) inmates with experience in mechanics, spray painting and panel beating have again contributed to a Cystic Fibrosis Australia charity car rally.

The team prepared a 1984 Holden VK Commodore for The Great Escape and in the process played a critical role in GEO's contribution of \$15,000. JCC secured tremendous support from inmates, employees, local community members and many small businesses.

The vehicle did not miss a beat on the 4000 kilometre journey from the Victorian town of Echuca to Kangaroo Island in South Australia and back to Batemans Bay on the NSW South Coast.

Junee's John Philpott, Debbie Butt and Wil Drotzky had the honour of taking the aptly named 'In-carceration' over the finish line in this year's rally.

Social responsibility projects

Prisoners in the Drug Education Unit at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre have donated and covered more than 400 school books destined for children from deprived or abusive backgrounds. The activity was undertaken on behalf of child welfare group Project: Love and Care.

Inmates have also been building ergonomic stools for nurses at Canossa Private Hospital as part of the centre's social responsibility program.

In another initiative, prisoners donated organically grown vegetables to the Pindari Men's Hostel in Brisbane. The shelter provides accommodation and services for up to 120 homeless men.

The vegetables were grown in a horticulture program designed to promote environmental sustainability and provide offenders with skills that will help them find employment following their release.



- • • Pauline Moran (left) from Project: Love and Care with Arthur Gorrie's Di Holt and inmates.

Sale school says thanks

It was smiles all round at the Sale Specialist School recently when a morning tea was held to acknowledge the commitment of local companies and thank them for donations to the school's sustainability and marketing programs.

Fulham Correctional Centre donated labour and materials to transform a shipping container into a palatial henhouse. Local producer Maroubra Eggs donated six laying hens and 20 dozen eggs, some of which were used by the students to produce the delicious morning tea.



- • • Fulham's Troy Ittensohn with Sarah Boyle from the Sale Specialist School representative council.

Raising funds for cancer research

After two family members were diagnosed with cancer, Fulham Correctional Centre administration support officer Colleen Bell decided to get actively involved in the many fund-raising events Cancer Council Australia promotes each year.

Over the past three years Colleen has encouraged Fulham management and staff to support events such as Pink Ribbon Day, Biggest Morning Tea and Daffodil Day. Her efforts have generated more than \$13,000 for cancer research. The most successful event, the annual Girls Night In, was held recently and raised a massive \$5000.



- • • Colleen Bell.

Inmates aid dementia patients

Inmates from Junee Correctional Centre are building a sensory garden for dementia patients at Wagga Wagga Base Hospital's Yathong Lodge under the guidance of Riverina Institute of TAFE horticultural teacher Warwick Grant.

Yathong Lodge is a 16-bed dementia assessment unit for people aged over 65. Nursing unit manager Gaye Ramsay said the therapeutic benefits of sensory gardens were well documented.

"Sensory gardens stimulate the senses and help bring memories back," she said. "We are very appreciative of this arrangement with Junee Correctional Centre as without its help this innovation would never have eventuated."

The landscaped garden will include gazebos, covered walkways and planter boxes and will incorporate different fragrances, textures, colours and shapes.

Parklea celebrates one year

Parklea Correctional Centre has celebrated its first anniversary as a GEO facility with a day of fun activities and charity fund-raising. Staged on 2 November — Melbourne Cup Day — the festivities included the 'Parklea Cup' during which the management team took on the role of horses and jockeys.

A total of \$6300 was raised from 'bookmaker' takings, raffles, auctions and donations from inmates, Parklea employees and Justice Health staff. The significant sum, which included \$2430 generated by inmates, was donated to The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

In other Parklea news, the centre welcomed 31 correctional officer graduates at a special pre-service celebration in October.