



Tabee1

*Celebrating our shared
foundations and future*

**This story is dedicated
to the many faithful men and
women who came together to
meet local needs and serve their
region and community. The dreams
and hard work of our founding
congregations have made us
who we are today.**

Lutheran Services draws on the fundamental Lutheran tradition of care for the individual, family and community. Together with the congregations that founded us, we have served the people and communities of Queensland since 1935. The diversity, vitality and significant contribution of Lutheran Services today is thanks to these origins and this foundation.

To celebrate and commemorate these beginnings, Lutheran Services is conducting an 'Origin Stories' project—to explore, document and share the proud histories and inspirational stories behind our many services and sites.

The project is a collaboration between staff from Lutheran Services and the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Tabeel Origin Story owes its existence to the generous support and contributions from members of the Laidley community.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who made this possible. Thank you for sharing your memories, stories, poems, pictures and prayers. This remarkable history and story has been written by you.

EXPLORE OUR ORIGINS

You can find this story
and other Origin Stories here:





Building the "Laidley Lutheran Old Folks' Home"

There was neither running water nor electricity in Laidley in 1928 when Pastor Ernst Otto Frederick Eckert, his wife Hedwig Hilda Agnes and their children Marie, John and Helen arrived and made their home in the unfurnished Lutheran Parsonage.

The Eckerts had a remarkable impact on the local community — and not only by having another six children in Laidley! They would also play an important part in the growth of Lutheran Church initiatives in Queensland.

After the war, Pastor and Mrs Eckert embarked on an ambitious endeavour to provide care and accommodation for local senior citizens: "To ensure that the elderly of the district could be cared for in body, mind and spirit for the rest of their lives". And so a plan was formulated for what came to be affectionately known as the "Laidley Lutheran Old Folks' Home".

Realising Pastor Eckert's vision demanded the dedication and hard work of many, the Laidley Lutheran congregation and community — and many other local congregations and communities — rallied their troops to raise funds and build the dream.

The Lutheran Rest Home in Laidley welcomed its first resident on 1 August 1954 (it would be another 25 years before "Tabeel" was added to the name). The role of Matron was initially filled by Mrs Eckert, who remained in the role until 1966.

In the 1970s, plans commenced to build a nursing wing, "intensive care infirmary" and further hostel accommodation. The new nursing home opened in 1979.

The name was changed to "Tabeel Lutheran Home Laidley" — reflecting the growing capability and drawing on a Hebrew name meaning "God is good".





The transition to Lutheran Community Care

In the late 1990s, increasingly complex funding and regulation requirements saw the Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District establish an umbrella organisation — Lutheran Community Care — to manage the district's community services and aged care operations, including Tabeel.

Having worked so hard and with such devotion for more than 50 years to build the Laidley Lutheran Old Folks' Home, many in the management committee, congregation, staff, volunteer and supporter network found this transition difficult. With the benefit of hindsight, we now see many aspects of this transition could have been better handled, resourced and supported.

What didn't change however were the Tabeel name, welcome and spirit.

Tabeel plays a part

The groundwork of building Lutheran Community Care had commenced several years earlier in the early 1990s — and Tabeel personnel played an important role.

The founding Coordinator of Lutheran Community Care was Milton Eckermann. Milton had gained a valuable induction as Tabeel's Administrator in the early 1990s. He had been recruited by Tabeel Committee Chair, Pastor Eric Liebelt.

Over the coming years, Pastor Liebelt and Milton would play central roles in shaping and building Lutheran Community Care — the forerunner of today's Lutheran Services.

Pastor Liebelt was elected as the founding Chair of Lutheran Community Care (LCC).

Milton single-handedly took on the formidable task of coordinating and centralising many LCAQD community initiatives. He remained in the role for some 10 years as LCC grew in scale and scope.



Tabeel today part of the Lutheran Services family

Lutheran Community Care was renamed Lutheran Services in 2017. As the operator of Tabeel today, Lutheran Services recognises the considerable achievements and challenges of the past. We thank the many congregation and committee members, volunteers and supporters for their grace, devotion and hard work. Their efforts and endeavours continue to benefit Tabeel's many residents, clients and staff today.

Lutheran Services was established to ensure the ministry of care envisaged and established by Tabeel's founders would continue to thrive, so more people could experience Christ's love through their services. We hope this Origin Story project will help to record, share and celebrate the incredible journey and spirit that built Tabeel and continue to make it such a special place.

Lutheran Services There for you

As managers of Tabeel and many other aged care and community services today, Lutheran Services is a leading not-for-profit provider of human services in Queensland. As a department of the Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District, Lutheran Services seeks to draw from, express and add to the life and mission of the Church. The organisation has grown out of the dreams and hard work of its founding Lutheran congregations. This Origin Story is another wonderful example.

Lutheran Services draws on the rich Lutheran tradition of care for the individual, family and community. It provides quality, contemporary support for older people, young people and their carers, people living with disability or mental illness, and families experiencing domestic violence and hardship. The organisation serves many metropolitan, regional and rural communities from more than 25 sites throughout Queensland – from the Gold Coast to Rockhampton.

While these sites and services are very different in where they are and what they do, they all have one thing in common: they began with a local congregation working together to meet a need and serve their region and community. These endeavours were often the first services of their kind in their region. Some were the first of their kind in Queensland. Today, they are integral and highly respected contributors to their communities and industries, providing vital care, support, employment and leadership.



Reflections

Rev Noel Burton
Chaplain, Tabeel

My parents Lorna and Ray served on the fundraising committee at one time, which also helped organise the fete. They also worshipped at the Lutheran church in Laidley with Pastor Eckert in the early days of Tabeel. We lived on a farm outside Laidley, and Rosewood before that.

It was wonderful foresight of Pastor Eckert to build this place. It wouldn't have happened without the support of the congregations and community. Pastor Eckert engaged people. Tabeel still does that today. There's always been a strong sense of ownership and connection with the local community and congregations in the Lockyer Valley and surrounding areas. It's their home. It's part of the community. It's more than just buildings — it's the environment, culture and people. It's inviting and welcoming. It has a strong reputation.

Tabeel has always attracted great management and staff who appreciate and nurture its place in the community. Many people have a long history with Tabeel. There are staff who have worked here for a long time. There are church people who have served Tabeel for a long time. People tell me their parents or grandparents lived here, and this is where they want to be, if and when their time comes. My own Mum spent her last months at Tabeel receiving wonderful care from the staff.

Chaplaincy is a vital and greatly valued part of Tabeel. My role as chaplain is to be here for everyone. It's about being present.

I have a collection of Bible verses on a sticky note on my computer desktop. One is Mark 10:43–45: “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

“
We are serving people in our community at Tabeel. What I love about my work in aged care and at Lutheran Services is that I get to be chaplain for everyone, regardless of who they are, what they believe or how they have lived. And everyone is happy to have a chat!”
”



Suzanne Bosworth
Tabeel Manager 2022 – 2024

Tabeel has an important role to play within our community and region. Many of our residents have longstanding connections with Tabeel in one way or another, as volunteers, staff, family and friends. Being a small community, many of our team were born and raised in Laidley or surrounding areas. Often, they have known the people they now care for a long time. These community connections continue within Tabeel today. Tabeel, our residents and staff are part of the local community. To this day we embody the values of the Lutheran Church and welcome all into our home.

I have worked with other providers in the Somerset region. Some residents I have cared for before in the community — so we've shared that Tabeel journey together. Our community holds us in high esteem. Everyone knows us. Everyone has some connection with Tabeel.

We are a major employer in the region. We provide opportunities for growth and development. Many of our staff have been with Tabeel for many years. Many have progressed from volunteer to personal carer to registered nurse.

It can be challenging work. Whenever there's an issue the entire team pulls together. They get in, help out and support each other. They're here for the residents.

You can tell our people love what they do. They're passionate about the service and care we provide. They're at the heart of how we do what we do. It's more than a job — it's not just their workplace — it's their life.

One of our Registered Nurses, who has been at Tabeel for more than 20 years, said to me, "Suzanne, I've put Tabeel before everything else — before my children!" She is so passionate about what she does and delivering that care for our residents.

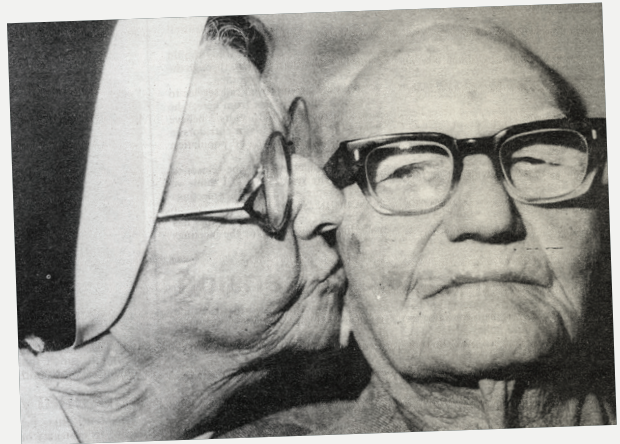
People say they feel welcome at Tabeel. It's a warm environment. I like to say it has heart. You can feel it the moment you walk in the door.

It's an honour to lead this remarkable team and place. I have honestly never worked anywhere like this before.

Cheryl Steinhardt
Member, Council for Lutheran Services

As a lifelong local and community member, I see Tabeel as a reverent and proud participant and care provider for individuals and families in our region.

Through the loyalty and hard work of its many staff and supporters, it has excelled time and time again. Tabeel has produced remarkable leaders and innovators, who have been a blessing to residents — and an asset to Lutheran Services and the aged care sector.



CROSS ORIGIN STORIES





Judy Bannerman

Tabeel Manager 2014 – 2019

Tabeel is well supported by the congregations and the broader community — its good reputation being built over many years and successive generations. These generations of local people have made Tabeel what it is today. There is the strong sense that Tabeel is theirs — it belongs to the community.

Being a valued provider of care and support for senior citizens and their families — as well as a major employer for the region — Tabeel is central to the local community. It has a very strong support base. When there was an event, like the annual fete, the community not only participated, but also supported the whole process and worked together to make it happen.

Tabeel is richer for that strong connection with the community and congregations. I'm thankful to have been raised in the Lutheran faith, with my parents and grandparents also Lutheran. Our purpose and values in the way we live and serve are shaped by the Lutheran ethos.

Many staff have been with Tabeel for a long time and value their work and the relationships and friendships they build. These warm relationships continue

beyond life at Tabeel, long after they leave or retire. We need and greatly value those dedicated, caring, compassionate, loving people. At Tabeel everyone is respected, cared for and appreciated.

I was warmly welcomed and well supported when I started as the new manager at Tabeel. I'm retired now, but I still feel part of that community that was such a big part my life. As well as Tabeel, I also worked at Salem in Toowoomba for many years. I remember those years with great fondness.

“I'm so grateful to have been able to work with Lutheran Services at wonderful places like Tabeel and Salem for such a long time.”

Shirley Klinge

Director of Nursing 1985–1995

Relief Chaplain

Lutheran Women of Queensland/West Moreton President

Lutheran Nurses Association of Australia Life Member

Tabeel Retirement Living Resident

Redeemer Lutheran Church Laidley

I came to Tabeel as Director of Nursing in 1985 and stayed in that role for 10 years. My husband David served on the board and committee of service. I later took up the role of Chaplain for a couple of years. Today I still work and volunteer as relief Chaplain and pastoral care nurse.

I've seen a lot of development and improvement at Tabeel over the years — the redevelopment of the hostel and nursing home, the development of the retirement living units, the wonderful addition of the Hatton Vale church hall. Not to mention the equipment and amenities — we had zilch back in the 1980s!

A big part of my role when I came in 1985 was to implement the new aged care standards of the day. Delivering that took a lot of hard work, time and investment. And that came from the staff, volunteers, local congregations and the local community. Our operational budget at the time simply didn't cover it all.

The garden parties or fetes had been going for many years when I arrived. The community supported them big time. They would make about \$6,000 in the 1980s. My last fete in 1995 raised \$13,500. These were good sums at the time. The staff had what they called a trading table, where you'd take stuff like cooking, second hand clothes, books. The girls worked very hard for that.

We held a bingo night and a dinner dance where 300 people turned up. Everyone had a ball! Each year for many years our occupational therapist put on a concert involving residents, families and staff. We registered nurses did the cancan one year. I dressed up as a koala another. Wardsmen sang. Any money we raised went into an account to buy equipment for Tabeel — things like adjustable beds, shower chairs, wheelchairs — anything the residents needed and we didn't have.

The Tabeel staff have always been excellent in the way they serve residents in mind, body and soul. They are holistic in their care for residents and families. And, in my book, care has to be holistic. Tabeel is a wonderful demonstration and celebration of the Lutheran ethos and faith — and the importance of chaplaincy. This is what distinguishes Lutheran Services and all of its sites. I greatly value my work as chaplain in ministering to those at the end of life. Especially for those who have no one. I know my presence as chaplain is greatly valued. Chaplaincy plays a vital role in holistic care.



Tabeel was in the midst of a big building project when the floods of 1988 hit. I remember us staff in our gumboots ferrying meal trays along planks over the mud and flooded grounds to get to the residents. Staff camped out and worked long shifts to maintain care for the residents. It was a difficult time, but we had laughter and fun. We turned a disaster into a time of fellowship. ”

There have been many more floods over the years, but in all that time I think we've only dropped one tray of food! The staff, congregation and community have always risen to a challenge. Even during the pandemic, we upheld the Lutheran ethos and Tabeel spirit.

Tabeel is a wonderful place and community. David and I are residents of the Tabeel retirement village today. We enjoy the Tabeel community. There's no place we'd rather be.

Beverly Asbury

Director of Nursing 1995–2005

I saw a lot of positive change in my 10 years at Tabeel. We needed to change to meet the new accreditation requirements. Under Roland Weier's direction, we implemented the Eden Program, which was a major undertaking for a service of our size and a big step forward in shaping and defining the Tabeel model of care. We couldn't do it overnight — it took several years.

We needed to formalise training for our staff — everyone would complete education and training in aged care nursing and earn a certificate to work at Tabeel. We all participated — even those who had been there 20-plus years. Nola Nolan was elected to work on our documentation, policy and procedure manual and staff training. Roland and Nola were great at getting everyone on board.

We worked closely with residents, families and staff in guiding the successful implementation of the program. We worked together to provide a more homelike environment and more personalised care and support to ensure residents were happy and their needs and wishes were being met. Roland totally refurbished the

nursing home and hostel. It was lovely and homely, very welcoming. When a new resident arrived, I would talk to the family and explain life at Tabeel and what they could expect.

We were very progressive. We delivered some quite innovative changes in how we would support and care for residents. It was very successful. There was lots of positive feedback from residents and families. Many of our residents were from the country. They appreciated being part of a community — that family feel and personal touch, the warm welcome and individual care. The accreditation teams that came to Tabeel were always very impressed. We passed every item with flying colours every time, which was wonderful.

We delivered lots of education and training for staff. They were brilliant. They really were. The added education really put them on the right track. After 10 years, I left feeling very satisfied with what Nola, Roland and I achieved. It was a successful process, for all involved.



ORIGIN
STORIES

David Klinge

*Former Chair of Board/Committee of Service
Tabeel Retirement Living Resident
Redeemer Lutheran Church Laidley*

My wife Shirley and I turned up here in 1985 and we've been volunteering for Tabeel ever since. I was on the Tabeel board, which became a committee of service.

God was really powerful in developing this place. I was Chair of the Board in the late 1990s when Tabeel's manager Roland Weier said to me, "We need to build a retirement village. Could you scout around and see if you can find a suitable site?"

I checked out four or five properties for sale around town. The one I liked was virtually in the centre of town – a former soccer ground of about 12 acres. I checked with the real estate agent who told me they wanted something astronomical – \$200,000 or \$300,000 at the time. I thanked him but said we didn't have that sort of money.

A few months later, it hadn't sold and an auction notice appeared in the paper. The real estate agent contacted me and I joined them at the auction on-site. There were three of us there – the auctioneer, me and a cockatoo. The auctioneer started rattling off figures around \$200,000 trying to get me to bid. I did nothing. The cockatoo squawked. It didn't sell. The auctioneer was pretty frustrated. I said, "We're keen but it's a bit dear."

Anyway, we all went our separate ways. Then a few weeks later, the agent rang me said, "You can have it for \$12,000." I just about burnt rubber in the car on the way to Roland's office! His face lit up when I told him. He said, "\$12,000?! We can take that out of petty cash!" So we bought the land and that's where we are now. Shirley and I are very happy to live there today.

Roland was amazing. A quietly spoken big achiever. His vision for Tabeel is still evident today in the buildings, gardens and grounds. The residents and local community appreciate the quality and atmosphere of Tabeel. The members of the Lutheran Church in the region have a strong sense of ownership and connection with Tabeel. And of course that extends to the broader community. Whenever we had a fete, 15 to 20 volunteers would turn up before dawn to set up the stalls and everything. We had no trouble getting people on committees in support of special projects. Donations were easily sought and achieved as they were required.

I'd like to pay tribute to our forebears who had the vision to establish an "old folks' home" in Laidley – local Lutheran congregations and many churches in the region came together to raise the money to buy the land and build the place. As Christians we need to be bold in declaring our faith.

“

The Lutheran Church and Lutheran Services do a great job today. We're encouraged as local communities and congregations to build on that. We're here to serve. ”

Tabeel residents are here by choice. They've had a good look around. They tell us they love it here. They wouldn't be anywhere else. They appreciate the gardens and grounds, the atmosphere of the place, the philosophy of a faith-based, not-for-profit organisation, the dedication of the staff. We feel the same. We've thoroughly enjoyed being part of Tabeel's story and we enjoy being part of the retirement village community today.



Milton Eckermann

*Former Tabeel Administrator
Founding Coordinator of Lutheran
Community Care*

Pastor Eric Liebelt, Chair of the Tabeel Committee, invited me to consider a new role as the coordinator of all LCAQD services in Queensland. At the time, Pastor Kevin Fischer was assisting a District Committee to coordinate these many services.

Pastor Liebelt and I agreed that before taking on such a role I needed to gain experience and understanding first-hand by working in the actual services. It was decided that Tabeel's longstanding Administrator, Arthur Fry, would assist me in gaining experience into aged care management, as well as introduce me to all the services throughout the state.

After 12 months, Arthur returned to the role of Administrator at Tabeel and I got into a seat at the LCAQD offices at Milton – to commence as the founding Coordinator of what came to be known as Lutheran Community Care. (Milton at Milton still causes confusion to this day!) The task began with the support of a part-time secretary two days a week.

The vision for Lutheran Community Care was to bring all the LCAQD services together – to efficiently manage their administration and ultimately better provide for those who call on our support or call our services home. In doing so, we had to struggle to make the most of the limited human and financial resources available to ensure our continued operation and growth.

I could tell many a story of all the highs and lows that occurred over the years!

Bernie Muller

*LCAQD Archives Liaison Officer
Redeemer Lutheran Church Laidley*

I've been a member of the local community and congregation for a long time. I was on a roster giving reading services at Tabeel on Sundays for several years from the 1990s. I was also involved with the garden party.

My mother and my wife's mother were both residents of Tabeel. They both felt very well looked after. As a family, we greatly appreciated the Tabeel care and support.

Tabeel has always been an important part of the local community and congregation – and it's here today thanks to their dedication and hard work. It's valued greatly and has a good reputation.

Tabeel has benefited from strong leadership and committed staff – many working there for many years. People like Roland Weier, Shirley Klinge, Bev Asbury, Wendy Phoenix and Narelle Kimlin – to name a few – are central to the Tabeel story.

My wife and I still see some of the nursing staff who cared for our mums. You form a strong connection and lifelong friendships. Tabeel is a special place.



Debbie Elliot

Service Coordinator – Tabeel Aged Care

Retirement Village Manager – Tabeel and Teviot Villas

Before Tabeel, I worked for an agricultural firm. Aged care was a bit of a culture shock for me. I remember thinking, “If I last three months I’ll be doing really well!” Twenty-six years later, I clearly enjoy the work and people! The residents and staff really become part of your extended family.

Tabeel obviously means a lot to the local community. It’s always been very well respected. Most of our residents and staff are from the local area. Everyone has some connection with Tabeel. We have a couple who farmed in this area and then moved to the Sunshine Coast to retire. They were there for over 20 years, but they’ve just moved back into one of our retirement village units.

I’ve seen lots of changes and growth along the way. When we first bought the retirement village land, it was known as Coates Street, then Thomas Street and now Alfred Street. All of those streets surround it, but for a long time, nobody really knew what it was, where it was or its actual address! People still wonder why, at our Ambrose Street site where we have independent living units, we don’t have a Unit 1. When I first started here there was a little cottage that was Unit 1 that was removed to make way for the serviced apartments or what we now refer to as Fern Lodge.

We have a lot of long-term staff. We have carers who started as volunteers; registered nurses who started as personal carers. We have a nurse practitioner who is doing a PhD. We’ve hosted resident holidays to the Gold and Sunshine Coasts, and all the staff who came along actually volunteered their time. That says a lot.

We build relationships with schools. We’ve had school-based trainees — one worked here for 10 years. We have bursaries for community-minded local students. We have schools and day care centres that bring children in to interact with our residents.

Tabeel won a business award from the Lockyer Valley Regional Council. Our Bloomers Café initiative was a finalist in the HESTA Awards, which recognise the extraordinary things being done in health and community services across Australia. Bloomers Café was a regular morning tea bringing together residents’ families and staff to share knowledge and experiences in a warm, social environment. They were very well received. We’d talk about difficult topics like enduring power of attorney, death and dying.

“

For staff, it’s more than a job, and for residents, it’s their home. Everybody here respects that. So we work hard to make it meaningful and welcoming. Tabeel goes above and beyond.”

Wendy Phoenix

Assistant in Nursing

I have been a staff member at Tabeel for a large part of my life. Working at Tabeel has always been about the people you connect with — the staff, the residents and their families. It is about being part of a community. It was a different way of life when I first started. The older ladies, like my age now, showed us how to care for people. They were great role models; not just in how to care for someone, but in life.

When I started at Tabeel, nursing staff were addressed by their titles and surnames. The Registered Nurse at the time was “Sister Monty” and I was always addressed as “Nurse Phoenix”. When Mrs Klinge became the Director of Nursing she never wanted to be called “Matron”. She wanted to be called “Mrs Klinge”. She encouraged all staff to be addressed by their Christian names after their titles. This created a respectful team working environment. I still have a lot of contact with Mrs Klinge today, but I still can’t call her Shirley!



I have enjoyed helping and caring for others and knowing that what I did mattered. Mrs Klinge instilled in staff a strong sense of who we could be and what we needed to do to carry out God’s work. She built a strong culture of caring and supporting each other. She showed us that it wasn’t about what we could get, but what we could do for others. Over the years, other leaders have continued this culture. ”

Throughout the years, staff and the community raised a lot of money to support Tabeel to grow. It was always a big achievement when we could buy new equipment to help care for the residents. Tabeel didn’t have high-low beds or lifters when I first started. It was hard work! Life was about giving to the community and being part of the Church family. Many Church congregations in the region supported Tabeel. The Lutheran Ladies’ Guild would fundraise regularly or come in and work in the gardens. I remember the Pastor from the Gatton parish would bring a ute load of donated vegetables from farmers in the region. Some staff members at the time would give back part of their pay to help. Anything the local congregations could do to help, they would.

Building relationships and having empathy are so important — not only with the people in your care, but also for their families. You meet people you would never otherwise meet. They share things with you and that is a privilege. Many of these connections encouraged family members to come to Tabeel. There is a strong connection when you’ve cared for someone so closely. Some residents may not have had any family or visitors, so Tabeel became their family.

I am happy being an AIN (Assistant in Nursing). I enjoy being hands-on, helping and spending time with residents. You can brighten someone’s day just by doing a little something for them, and you learn a lot in return. The friends I’ve made and the experiences I’ve had at Tabeel have made me a better person. For me, it’s like family and I value that. It’s more than a job. Tabeel has been a big part of my life.



Narelle Kimlin
Assistant in Nursing

I started at Tabeel in 1980, so I've been here for a long time! I was very close to my grandparents, so working in aged care was something I felt drawn to.

In the mid 1980s, Shirley Klinge was Director of Nursing and Pastor Liebelt from Gatton was Chairman. Shirley was a driving force and a good leader. She brought all the nurses up to a high standard, so we were setting the benchmark for others. She left us with a strong sense of who we were, and where we were expected to go. Pastor Liebelt had the vision and plan for the future. Shirley and Pastor Liebelt were really instrumental in getting Tabeel to where it is today.

In the late 80s, they started replacing the old army huts and modernising Tabeel. I remember people from the community bringing their tractors to try to lift C-Block! People just pitched in and helped. The garden party or fete was more of a social event than a fundraiser to begin with. The Ladies' Guilds from all around came and brought cakes to have afternoon tea with the residents. That grew into the fete.

Tabeel is very much a community home. Those of us who have been here a long time have looked after two generations of locals. You build a rapport with families. People value Tabeel because of that familiarity and those connections. Back when I started, some residents were here for 20 years, so you really got to know them. They're definitely part of your life, and you're part of theirs. They're like family.

“

I just want to look after people and treat them like I'd want my grandparents to be treated. I really value the human connection and the quality time spent with residents. ”





Daphne Hauser

Redeemer Lutheran Church Laidley

My connection with Tabeel and the rest home goes back to my childhood. My parents were very dedicated volunteer workers with the home for many years. Dad helped with maintenance and gardening. He would spend half the weekend there. Mum helped with cooking and laundry.

My sister Valerie and I would help Pastor Eckert after school and on weekends with little jobs — like printing out church papers on the spirit duplicator. I can still remember the smell! My sister worked at Tabeel — initially as a cleaner and later, after her studies, as a carer.

My mum and my husband Ken's mum were among the first residents in the retirement village. Ken's dad was in the nursing home for the last 10 months of his life.

So our family has always been involved with Tabeel in one way or another. We've been so very grateful to have Tabeel in our community — we couldn't have done without it. As much as we helped when and where we could, Tabeel has given back much more.

“

Building and supporting Tabeel has been a wonderful achievement for the congregation and community. ”



Val Dodd

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church Ropeley

I've been involved with Tabeel for a long time. My husband, Stan, helped dig the post holes for the original buildings. They were old army huts that came from the Gatton Agricultural College. Three or four residents lived in each — they brought their own bed, wardrobe and a comfy chair with them, along with plates and cutlery.

In the early days, there were only 25 or so residents, and the Women's Guilds helped cook for them. We'd take a meal down once a month. We also used to clean the windows of the dormitory. As women were generally at home more in those days, we had more time to help.

We also used to take 10 to 12 musicians and singers when we went to visit, to entertain the residents. I was a musician — I used to play the violin, organ and button accordion to accompany the singers. People would come from the units to listen and sometimes sing along. My sister-in-law Sarah Dodd and I used to take it in turns playing the organ on Sunday. I'd also play during the week, and still play for services at Ropeley.

We all pitched in to help. I crocheted Tabeel's altar cloth, which is still there today. It took 16 balls of yarn! I had to buy it all at once to make sure it was the same shade! I made one for Ropeley too.

We used to have a yearly fete at the rest home, and a "country and western" afternoon once a month at the hall with afternoon tea. We could make \$1000 for the home in just one afternoon!

“

The thing I liked most was that Tabeel was like a home. It had a good feel.

They always used the best china and the best doilies — it was like being at home. People really took pride in that.”

Everyone in the area had a link to Tabeel. It was certainly needed in our community. You'd be thinking to yourself "I wonder where so and so has gone?" — and you'd find them at Tabeel!

Ken Hauser

Redeemer Lutheran Church Laidley

When I was a teenager, my brother, cousin and I had to paint the Sunday school hall on our school holidays. Pastor and Mrs Eckert lived just down the street.

We were there busily painting away and this cat kept bothering us, rubbing itself up against our legs. We tried to shoo it away but it kept coming back, day after day. So on about the third day when the cat came back, my cousin dipped his brush in the paint and gave it a racing stripe from head to tail! Next thing Pastor Eckert turns up and says, "Which one of you boys painted my neighbour's cat?!"

I remember the Eckerts well. Pastor Eckert baptised my mother, me and my wife Daphne. Mrs Eckert could turn her hand to anything. She was Matron for a long time. She loved her gardens and was an avid gardener. The Tabeel tradition and reputation for wonderful gardens began with Mrs Eckert.

She had planted geraniums up against a wall we were painting. So of course we couldn't paint the wall without stepping on the geraniums. She would come over and say, "Now you boys make sure you don't do any damage to my garden — it's looking so nice." Unfortunately, by the time we had two or three coats on the wall, the geraniums were looking a bit flat!

My father served on the rest home committee for many years — as a member, treasurer and ultimately administrator in the late 1970s. He would take a few days off each week to work at the rest home.

When they started planning the retirement village, my parents put their names down — in case they ever gave up working! Sadly, Dad had cancer and didn't live to see the retirement village. He spent the last 10 months of his life at the nursing home in 2005. We were all very grateful to have that support.

Mum later moved into the retirement village, as did Daphne's mother. They were two of the first residents. They absolutely loved it there. It's a great community. We are very grateful Tabeel is there. That's where I hope I end up!

Noel Huf

Grace Lutheran Church Redcliffe

In the early 1960s, my mother Gladys Huf was on the Laidley Rest Home Committee. She used her persuasive power on me to round up a few carloads of the Dalby Lutheran League members (of which I was President at the time) to go and help with general maintenance and gardening at the Laidley home.

The part that I remember well involves a palm tree that had some dead branches that needed to be removed. Now this tree was tall — it was a long way up to those branches. So yours truly went up a ladder to remove these, but I was immediately greeted by a nest of wasps who showed me no mercy. Following a rapid retreat, I don't think those branches got removed during that working bee.

It was Mrs Eckert who convinced me I would eventually recover. Those were the days where working bees got things done.



ORIGIN STORIES



**Can you add to the Tabeel
Origin Story?**

We'd love to hear from you!

contact@lutheranservices.org.au

