

ORIGIN
STORIES

St Paul's

*Celebrating our shared
foundations and future*



Lutheran
Services

There for you



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 St Paul's Origin Story owes its existence to the generous support and contributions from members of the Caboolture community and beyond.

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

This booklet is an abridged version of the St Paul's Origin Story. See the full version and other Origin Stories here:



Building the St Paul's Lutheran Aged Care Village

In the 1980s, the St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture parish purchased a property on Smiths Road in Caboolture, Queensland, to develop a school and a new church. This is the site of St Paul's Lutheran Primary School and St Paul's Lutheran Church today. An aged care village was also part of the vision for the site. However, it soon became clear that more land and a grander plan would be required to accommodate the growing needs of a region proving increasingly popular with retirees.

The St Paul's congregation formed a Steering Committee to drive and guide the development of the aged care village. After much scouting for suitable land in the area, a property on Tomlinson Road in Caboolture became available. The St Paul's parish purchased the Tomlinson Road property in the early 1990s.

A Welfare Committee was established to support the development and its community of residents. Along with the Steering Committee, it was up and running well before the aged care village opened. The Welfare Committee was spearheaded by Margaret Knopke, whose husband Reg was Chair of the Church Council and on the Steering Committee.

A key protagonist in the development of the St Paul's Lutheran Aged Care Village was Ron Behrens – a member of the local community and St Paul's congregation who was passionate about building an aged care service for the area. Many contributors to this origin story fondly recall Ron lobbying his fellow congregation and community members long and hard. Fittingly, Ron was among the first residents of the hostel when it opened in January 1994.

Once the St Paul's Lutheran Aged Care Village was up and running, a Management Committee was established to guide and support administration. Many within the St Paul's congregation and Caboolture region community supported and contributed to activities and events to raise funds, from street stalls to public concerts.

Residents and volunteers collaborated to create Sam's Place—a social space and barbecue area for the village residents. The Welfare Committee contributed funding. A sign was made by the residents and volunteers. Sam's Place was named after Sam Langford—a lively retirement living resident and enthusiastic volunteer.

Since 2018, St Paul's Aged Care has participated in quarterly ministry meetings with St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture. Driven by the church congregation to strengthen connections between the church, aged care and school, the meetings continue to provide a rewarding focus for collaboration.

Major renovations were completed throughout the late 2010s and early 2020s. A new Community Hall was built on the site of Sam's Place. The original sign now hangs there. The worship space and activities area were reimaged—in close collaboration with the St Paul's congregation, emphasising the importance of worship for the resident community.

The overall layout and capacity of the residential aged care community remain the same—five lodges accommodating a total of some 60 residents around a central administration and services block. This smaller house model is a fundamental part of residential aged care planning and design today—and a big part of what makes St Paul's Aged Care so warm and welcoming.

But the biggest part of what makes St Paul's so special is of course the people—those who helped build the place and community, those who have worked there, and those who have called it home. In the following pages, you can read the recollections and reflections of some of the many people who have helped shape St Paul's—then and now.



St Paul's Retirement Living during construction.

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 St Paul's.

Having worked so hard and with such devotion to build the St Paul's Aged Care Village, 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, was the St Paul's welcome and spirit.

St Paul's today, part of the family

Lutheran Community Care was renamed Lutheran Services in 2017. As the operator of St Paul's Aged Care 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 the many residents, clients and staff of St Paul's today.

Lutheran Services was established to ensure the ministry of care envisaged and established by our 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 St Paul's Aged Care and continue to make it such a special place.

In the 2020s, more than 30 years on, St Paul's is home to 61 aged care residents and a lively community of retirement living residents in 37 cottages. St Paul's provides home care and support services to households throughout the Moreton Bay region. It's also a great place to work and a respected and valued employer of around 100 staff.

Lutheran Services There for you

As managers of St Paul's Aged Care and many other aged and community services today, Lutheran Services is one of Queensland's longest established and most diverse not-for-profit providers of human services. As part of the Lutheran Church of Australia Queensland District, we draw from, express and add to the life and mission of the Church. We have grown out of the dreams and hard work of our 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. We provide services, support and accommodation for older people, young people, families, people living with disability or mental health concerns, and people experiencing domestic and family violence. We serve metropolitan, regional and rural communities from some 25 sites throughout Queensland—from Tallegbudgera to Biloela.

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.



Marion Roberts tending the gardens at Cassia Lodge.



St Paul's Retirement Living villas.



Our first three residents, from left—Bill Jeffers, Dorothy Buhr and Christina Scott.



Timeline

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Late 1980s

- Aged Care Village Steering Committee established
- Welfare Committee established

1991

- Tomlinson Road property purchased
- Building Committee established
- Commonwealth Government grant secured
- LCAQD assumed financial responsibility

1992

- Works commenced

2004

- Retirement Living Stage Two opened
- 37 retirement living units

Late 1990s

- Sam's Place opened
- Annual fair commenced
- Lutheran Community Care established

1994

- St Paul's Lutheran Aged Care Village opened
- 61 aged care residents
- 25 retirement living units
- 30 staff

2012

- Aged Care gets a significant refurbishment

2014

- St Paul's 20th anniversary
- Original resident Evelyn Vonhoff and foundation staff member Onoria Tellan in attendance

2017

- Home Care services commenced
- Lutheran Community Care rebranded Lutheran Services

2018

- Caboolture Lutheran ministry meetings commenced

2019

- Community Hall opened

2024

- 61 aged care residents
- 37 retirement living units
- Home Care clients throughout the Moreton Bay region
- Around 100 staff



St Paul's Aged Care entrance soon after completion.



St Paul's Retirement Living villas.



Val Siegle, Peter and Leigh Ashworth



Aileen Schneider and Juanita Hansen in the library.

Reflections

From some of the many people who helped shape St Paul's

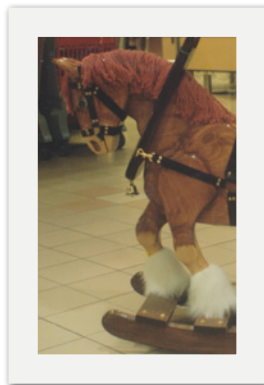
Margaret Knopke

*St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation
Welfare Committee Member (late 1980s–early 2000s)*

My husband Reg and I were part of St Paul's Aged Care from the very beginning—when it was just an idea being talked about. Reg was Chair of the Church Council for some time and then on the original Steering Committee. Reg and I, along with a few other members of the congregation, then started the Welfare Committee. Both were well established by the time the Aged Care Village opened in 1994.

We valued the work of the church and we appreciated the importance of aged care for the community. The St Paul's Welfare Committee was a lot of work but very enjoyable. There were a number of ladies who would sew, knit, crochet and cook for our charity days and street stalls. We also held theatre restaurant nights and concerts.

Reg once came upon a rocking horse (pictured) through his work and suggested we buy it and raffle it to raise money. The owner ended up donating it—it was valued at over \$300! I think we raffled three rocking horses over the years. Our fundraising helped buy the original bus and fit it with a lift.



The Welfare Committee eventually wrapped up, but the money we had left was used to build Sam's Place, which was a social space and barbecue area for the village residents. Sam and Edna Langford were early residents of the retirement village. Sam was a keen supporter of the St Paul's community, and appreciated everything the Welfare Committee did for the village.

My uncle Ron Behrens was one of the first residents at St Paul's Aged Care. Some say he was the first, but I believe he was second after architect Keith Buhr's mother. Ron had long been telling the Church Council they should build a nursing home, which led to them establishing the Steering Committee. He was thinking ahead for his future and the future of the congregation and community. Whilst Uncle Ron's calls to build an aged care service were often dismissed, when my husband Reg became Council Chair, he agreed that it had to be looked into. The parish ended up buying the land at Tomlinson Road, and the rest is history.

My mum Olive Hall also was a resident of St Paul's Aged Care for about seven years. She really liked the staff. I always said you couldn't fault the care at St Paul's.

The Welfare Committee and Aged Care Village always had good support from the St Paul's congregation. There was a sense that this was something important for the community and congregation—many are residents there now. The aged care and retirement village have helped a lot of people.



Having a dance and a laugh,
Dorothy Buhr and Marj Ross.

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I maintained contact with Ronnie. I was guaranteed to see him every week at church and later at the village. He was a good man. I remember him fondly. St Paul's Aged Care and Retirement Living today is a wonderful legacy for Ronnie Behrens. ”

Graham Schrodter

Graham Schrodter

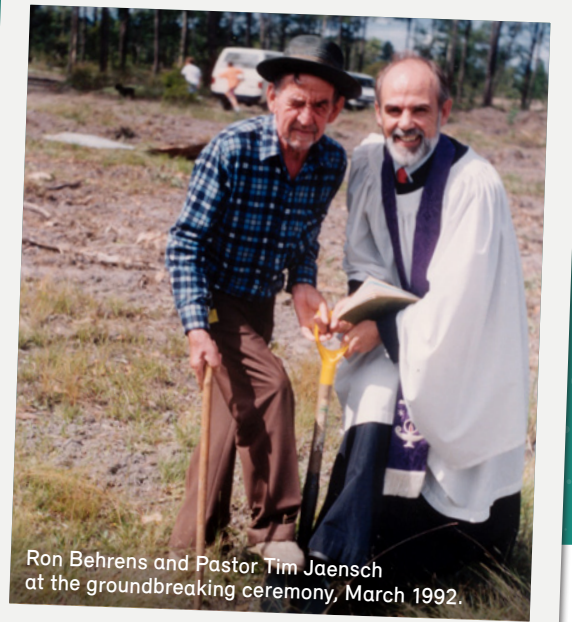
*St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation
Former Church Council Member and Chair*

I'm a descendant of one of the first Lutheran families in the region. I've been a member of the St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation all my life. I've been involved with the Church Council and various committees since the mid 1970s. I served as Council Chairman for many years until I retired in 2020.

In the early 1980s, the congregation purchased land on Smiths Road and a new church and a school were built. The growing number of people retiring to the region emphasised the need for an aged care village. A masterplan was drawn up. We needed more land.

A large block at Tomlinson Road came up. The owners sold it to us for a very reasonable price on the provision that it be put towards an aged care home. There was a lot of work securing government grants, engaging architects and builders and so on. The Lutheran Church Queensland District ultimately assumed financial responsibility for the project, but it was the congregation and Steering Committee that got it off the ground and made it happen.

I was involved as Council Chairman in early meetings about the aged care village development, which was driven by the very capable Steering Committee with Pastor Tim Jaensch, Glen and Eunice Hinz, Reg Knopke, Arthur Hall and several others. My main involvement with the aged care village once it was



Ron Behrens and Pastor Tim Jaensch
at the groundbreaking ceremony, March 1992.

open was as a lay reader. It was challenging at first but very enjoyable. I remember once reading to five retired Lutheran ministers—no pressure!

I must mention the involvement of Ron Behrens. None of this would have even begun without Ronnie. I knew him from the time I was a child. Like my family, the Behrens were among the first Lutheran families in Caboolture. Ronnie's passion was the aged care village. He was always reminding the Council of the importance of the project for the community and eager to learn about our progress.

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It was fitting that Ronnie became one of the first residents of the St Paul's Aged Care Village. Sadly he passed away after six months or so, but it was wonderful that he was able to enjoy the care and support he had worked for so long to create. I've always felt sorry Ronnie didn't have longer, but I'm happy the aged care village was built in time and he made it there. ”

Graham Suthers

St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation
Church Council Member and Chair
Steering Committee Member
Building Committee Member
Management Committee Member and Chair

I was on the St Paul's Aged Care Village Steering, Building and Management Committees.

The aged care village project had been driven by the original Steering Committee and the hard work of people such as Pastor Tim Jaensch, Glen and Eunice Hinz, Judy Grimbergen, Arthur Hall, Clara Zimmerman and Ron Behrens.

A Building Committee was established in the early 1990s. Pastor Tim was Chair, Glen the Vice-Chair and Eunice the Secretary. We engaged project managers to oversee the development.

Once St Paul's Lutheran Aged Care Village was operational, Francis Profke was co-opted from Zion Aged Care in Nundah to manage the service. A Management Committee was established with Glen as Chair. I took over as Chair when Glen retired. Pat Landers took over as the Service Manager in the early 2000s, shortly after the transition to Lutheran Community Care.

“**Reg and Margaret Knopke established a Welfare Committee to support the aged care village and community. One of their first projects was getting the bus. Francis applied for a grant through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. The Welfare Committee raised the rest.**”

Ron Behrens became one of the first residents of the hostel. Clara Zimmermann was one of the first cottage residents. Ronnie did a lot of volunteer work for the church over the years and left a bequest, which built the administration area, guest facilities, kitchen and bathrooms at the church today.

When Lutheran Community Care took over the management and administration of St Paul's Aged Care, the Management Committee became a Committee of Service. There was a sense of loss, disappointment and confusion among the committee members. Why have they taken this away from us? I thought we were doing a good job.

We've been part of the St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation since 1990. I served on the Church Council, including 10 years as Chair. Our son went to St Paul's Primary School from grade one, so I was also on the School Council and Chair for a time.



Clara Zimmermann and Emily Staatz enjoying a celebration and each other's company.

Keryn Suthers

St Paul's Lutheran Church
Caboolture congregation
Volunteer

My parents Shirley and Fritz Kasper were residents in the retirement village for about 12 years. They knew everyone and became good friends with many. We got to know most of them too. It's a great community. There's a real community spirit there.

I took art and craft classes at the retirement village, and we had a tuckshop and coffee shop in the early days of the hostel, where I would volunteer.

Mum ended up going into the Acacia Lodge then Cassia. The nursing home bent over backwards for us. The staff were brilliant and always very accommodating and supportive of Mum. We would often have a picnic with Mum under the shady poinciana trees out the front of reception.



May Young and Pat Gilchrist feeding the kangaroos.



Santa presenting Renee Symonds with a gift at the Christmas party.

Stephanie Wilson

Regional Manager,
Aged Care Services, Lutheran Services
Service Manager/Care Manager,
St Paul's Aged Care (2015–2023)

I love what I do in my role of Regional Manager, however I loved my time at St Paul's even more. My time spent at St Paul's is where I grew both personally and professionally in my role as Service Manager. The experiences I had and the connections I made opened up a world of opportunities—to learn new things and develop new skills.

Being able to look after the St Paul's village and be part of that community was so important to me. It's one of the highlights of my career.

When I go back to St Paul's today, it feels like home. Knowing that our staff value their work and that our residents feel at home are paramount for me.

Many St Paul's staff have been there for a long time—they value the place and their work. St Paul's is respected by the local community—many local families have a connection with St Paul's. It enjoys a strong reputation with the health sector and long relationships with health care providers.

The smaller house model that St Paul's was designed around is central to how we think about building residential aged care today. This is the model that St Paul's has always had. It's a big part of what makes the place and community unique. It builds connectedness and a warm welcome for everyone who comes into our space.

St Paul's Aged Care and Retirement Living has a strong connection with the wider Lutheran community, local congregation and care ethos. There is a richness in that connectedness, our history, congregational origins and long working relationships. We are all one.



Anne Stewart, Claudette Taylor and Betty Hall on an outing.



Eileen Swain, Dot Neil and Marj Ross say 'Cheers!'

Arthur Hall

Steering Committee Member

Bus driver

Volunteer

I was involved with the Steering Committee in the mid 1980s. Along with Pastor Tim Jaensch, Reg Knopke, Glen Hinz, Clara Zimmerman and some of the older members of the congregation, I felt there was a great need for another aged care village in the Caboolture area. The community was growing. More people were retiring to the area. My parents were living nearby at Wamuran.

There was a lot of sweat and tears—even before the bricks and mortar were eventually put into place. It was an exciting time.

My dear mother, Betty Hall, was one of the first to move into the cottages—number seven—in 1995. She enjoyed her time there very much. They would go over to the lodges to visit the residents and help with the activities. They went on bus trips. She was very happy there.

I was volunteering at the time to take the cottage residents to various hymn festivals around the place in the bus. Then in 2001, my employment fell apart with the demise of Ansett. The Lord led me here and the manager Pat Landers gave me a casual position as the bus driver.

We started doing shopping runs a few times a week, mostly with the cottage residents. Then we did social outings with the aged care residents. It grew and grew. We'd encourage folk who weren't getting out to join us. We'd have a full bus. Everyone had a great time. We covered a lot of country. I got a 'Happy Wanderer' sticker made up and stuck it on the bus.

“

I certainly had a lot of respect for the management and staff—people like Pat Landers, and Angela Snowden who was head of nursing. Sometimes if they were short of staff, I'd go down to a lodge to help out and maybe run the meal trolleys around. ”

I took my last trip with the residents in 2016 when we moved up to the Sunshine Coast. Through my relationships with the staff and the residents of both the aged care lodges and the retirement cottages, the Lord let me have a really great experience here.

Lois Schultz

St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation

St Paul's Retirement Living resident

We were crop farmers and cattle breeders before we retired to Hervey Bay. My husband Ivan had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and I have low vision, so we had many trips to Brisbane to see specialists. We would always visit friends at Caboolture on the way.

We moved to the retirement village at St Paul's in 2009. Our home here was the last one built. It's simple, but I just think it's marvellous. I'm very happy here.

Ivan had a fall in 2013. He spent a few days in hospital but then needed ongoing attention. Fortunately the manager at St Paul's Aged Care had a room available. Part of the reason we moved to St Paul's was to have access to support and care.

I was able to walk over and visit Ivan and have lunch with him. I did that every day for five years, so I got to know the aged care part of St Paul's pretty well too. I still go up to the hall for lunch some days.

One of the highlights of the community are our monthly bus trips. We go to different places. Ivan and I went until he had to go into care, and I still go today. We also have a weekly shopping trip, and that's just a blessing for those of us who can't drive. They are lovely outings because when you don't drive, you don't get out and about. It's just good to have a trip and be in the countryside and get to know your neighbours better.

Worship has always been a focal part of my life. Ivan and I were originally members of a Lutheran youth group and the congregation at Dalby—we were married in that church. We relocated to different areas to farm and were members of at least five church congregations before we came to Caboolture and our cottage at St Paul's.

I'm happy to continue living here. I'm thankful for the community. I know we're all in God's care. I know lots of the residents. They're a lovely group of people.

Mavis and Peter Thamm

St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation

St Paul's Retirement Living residents

We moved to Wamuran around 2003, after Peter retired as a Lutheran Pastor, and we joined the St Paul's Caboolture Lutheran Church congregation. It's been a very happy association with the congregation and also with St Paul's generally.

Through the church, we met a lot of residents from the retirement village at St Paul's. Many are part of the congregation. There's a service held onsite at St Paul's that Peter would occasionally take too, along with some hospital and home chaplaincy when the minister was away.

We moved into the St Paul's retirement village in 2021. We love the village and the cottage we live in. We enjoy the community. Mavis and a few of the other ladies put on a luncheon in the hall every month for the whole village. The people are very caring and it's very welcoming. We just feel as though it's part and parcel of the place.

We never really looked at any other retirement villages. We enjoy the open spaces here and the nice country feel. It's well laid out and easy to get around.

From the beginning, we felt right at home. We already knew people who lived here thanks to our association with the congregation. So, we felt as though we were coming to a familiar community.

It's a good community and a lovely place.



Ken Luckcock enjoying the Christmas party with his mate.



Personal Carer Rina Tellan and Stella show off a smile at the party.



Personal Carer Rina Tellan and Bridget Jenkins pose for a photo.

Rina Tellan

Personal Carer, St Paul's Aged Care

I was among the first staff at St Paul's when it opened in January 1994. I was there from the day dot until I retired in 2014! There was a steady flow of residents coming in from the time we opened, and we were full mid-year.

As I recall, Ronnie Behrens was the first resident. I remember he was in room four in Banksia. Then we had Dennis, Bill and Dorothy—a lovely lady and the mother of the architect who designed the village.

I remember many residents over the years. Robert the school teacher—a beautiful man. Marion who would leave a bit of food on her plate for her kitten! She was a most friendly little lady. She visited all the residents and encouraged them to get knitting!

We learnt a lot from these lovely people. Some of the residents were alone when they were dying. If I was there, I would quietly go in and be with them. All the carers had their own special way of farewelling the residents.

I valued helping vulnerable people. They depend on our care. I loved being part of their world. The more you got to know them, the better you became.

I've been a local resident for many years. I'll be out shopping and someone will tap me on the shoulder and say, "Hello, I remember you—you cared for my dad!" It's lovely to reconnect like that.

Francis was the first Manager, then Pat and Rory. Maureen was our first Director of Nursing, then Jan, Jill, Joan, Anne, Elaine, Angela, Maggie—a little Irish lady who would always call out "thank you" when we were leaving—and Jean, who was there when I left.

We had amazing kitchen staff—Merle, Val and Sondra—who worked very hard to meet the residents' needs. Sondra was very festive, donning fairy lights and flashing earrings during the Christmas season. Our first gardener was Eric, then Brian—his wife Ann was a carer—and then Chris, who was there for 25 years.

“Many St Paul's staff have been there for a long time. I'm still in touch with many, which is lovely. We still talk about our days at St Paul's! I loved the place and the people—both the residents and staff.”

Tracy Pfingst

Personal Carer, St Paul's Aged Care

My first day at St Paul's was in February 2000. I've now worked in this field for going on 40 years.

I obviously made the right choice coming to work at St Paul's. It has a good reputation and strong ties with the local community. Many local people have a connection with St Paul's. I care for a gentleman today whose parents I cared for about 20 years ago. That's quite humbling.

I've learned so much from the residents. I value the relationships we build. They really touch our hearts. We are privileged to be here at such an important stage of their life. To treat our residents with compassion and kindness is perhaps the simplest and most valuable thing we do. This is their home and they've earned the right to feel comfortable and well cared for.

My colleagues are amazing. My peers are my friends. They are just beautiful people. Almost everyone I work with has been here for more than 10 years. It's testament to St Paul's that we've got so many long-term staff.

St Paul's has been a huge part of my life—and hopefully it will continue to be for a few more years yet! It's like my second home. It's more like a family than a workplace.

Judy Daly

Personal Carer, St Paul's Aged Care

I started at St Paul's in 2000. My very first shift was a night shift. I worked with a registered nurse and we worked across all of the lodges. That's changed now—staff work in specific areas. I've worked in all the lodges over the years.

I've seen a lot of change in my time. The residential aged care is still based around the same five lodges, though how they're used has evolved. The retirement village has expanded with new villas and a new hall.

I've always been happy at St Paul's. The staff are lovely. There's a strong sense of belonging. Several of us have been here for a long time—like Dee who is a registered nurse. We started about the same time. It's nice to share that history and connection.

I enjoy the place and the people. That's what's kept me here for so long.

David Goldhardt

St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation

In the 1990s and early 2000s, my wife Linda and I delivered medications and Webster packs to aged care and retirement villages for a local pharmacy. We would also visit doctors' surgeries collecting prescriptions to take back to the pharmacy. Each week we could travel from Caboolture down to Redcliffe and up to Kilcoy. We started delivering to the St Paul's Aged Care Village as well.

We did these deliveries for about 14 years. We got to know a lot of aged care services in that time. St Paul's is one of the most well recognised. It's well respected within the region and community—by families, doctors and the health profession.

We've been in the St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation since the late 1990s. I wrote the 80th anniversary history booklet in 2006 and I'm now working on the centenary publication.

The St Paul's Aged Care Village was built by the St Paul's Caboolture congregation. Several members of the congregation formed a Steering Committee. They found the land, planned the village and made it happen.

So the congregation played a vital role in building St Paul's Aged Care in the 1990s, and St Paul's Aged Care plays a vital role for the local region and community today.

David Goldhardt is the author of "Celebrating God's blessing in Caboolture since 1873: On the occasion of the 80th Anniversary of St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture 1926–2006". David is currently updating and expanding this publication for the Church's centenary in 2026.



Best friends Marj Dwyer and May Cadogan.

David Williams

Chaplain, St Paul's Aged Care (2016–2023)
St Paul's Lutheran Church Caboolture congregation
Volunteer

My mother, Helen Williams, was the first (non-volunteer) chaplain at St Paul's Aged Care. This was her last job in a long career. Mum worked until she died. She was really missed by staff and residents, and they talked about her long afterwards.

I was employed as a chaplain at St Paul's Aged Care for seven years until I was diagnosed with cancer and retired in 2023. I was a volunteer for several years prior to that and I'm still connected to the place today and go as frequently as I can on Sundays.

I began conducting Bible study classes, alternating with Arthur Hall, whom I knew from the St Paul's congregation, and who introduced me to the aged care community. I introduced hymn singing sessions—the residents loved singing. I also led the Sunday worship services. Of course, I got to know many residents through these activities and just being there.



I started when Mum was still chaplain. We worked together: offering the option of male or female chaplain to the residents. Mum would often call in and participate in activities I was running.

Chaplaincy is a distinguishing feature of Lutheran Services Aged Care and places like St Paul's. I was trained as a hospital chaplain. Aged care is very different. I loved it. Older people have a wonderful sense of calm and such wisdom. The residents really value our presence—the continuity of care and companionship.

One of our retired Lutheran pastors, Rev Colin Sheer, summed it up when he said, *"David, you know me better than I know myself!"* Which is testament to the aged care chaplain and what I treasure about the role.

As a chaplain, you meet a remarkable mix of people with such extraordinary lives and so many fascinating stories to share. They may be hard of hearing. They may not have much English. But you connect. You have wonderful conversations. Doorways open. We also perform memorial services so residents and staff can come together to reflect, share memories and say goodbye.

There's a lot of cooperation in the St Paul's Lutheran community in Caboolture. All Caboolture Lutheran branches come together regularly—schools, youth services, aged care and church—to share what's happening and explore opportunities for collaboration.

The level of care at St Paul's Aged Care really shows. We hear that over and over again. There are now quite a few other facilities in the area. Families will visit all of them, and when they get to St Paul's they'll say, *"This is the place—it feels like home."* The carers and staff know the residents and their families well. Nothing is too much trouble. They're great people.



St Paul's Aged Care and Retirement Living hall looking great on a sunny day.



Fred Schulz with his two new mates from St Paul's Lutheran Primary School.

Gwen Horsfield

St Paul's Lutheran Church
Caboolture congregation
St Paul's Retirement Living resident
Volunteer

I used to work in nursing in northern New South Wales. I moved to Burpengary in 2006 after I retired. Once I was settled in, I started volunteering at St Paul's Aged Care. One of the staff suggested I visit people who didn't get visitors. So I did and met some wonderful people. In 2007, my toddler granddaughter, Fiona, started coming with me. I got permission to bring her along and they made her a little volunteer badge with her name on it!

Fiona would come with me to visit the residents every Friday. One of them was a lady called Dorothy. She was one of the first residents. She was in her mid-90s when I was visiting her. Dorothy and Fiona hit it off right from the beginning. Fiona would come in and do a little dance for her and sit on her knee. Another resident, Bev, would lock herself in her room. But the minute she heard Fiona's voice, she would open the door and welcome us in! She related really well to Fiona.

Sometimes the residents would sit in a circle for their exercises or activities. So Fiona would get into the centre of the group and play her Wiggles guitar! She would have everyone stomping their feet and clapping their hands. Then, before we left, she'd go around and shake hands with everyone. They just delighted in her. Later, her younger sister, Jenny, started coming with us too, as soon as she was able.

The residents really loved my company, but the girls were an even bigger hit! Unfortunately, our visits came to an end. We were all very sad!

I moved in to the St Paul's retirement community early in 2024. A friend lived there and was very happy. She was always telling me how wonderful it was—and best of all how you didn't need to do any yard work!

I already had a strong connection to St Paul's, and I knew a lot of other residents through the women's fellowship and from church. I've probably had more social activity since I moved in here than in the 18 years I was at Burpengary!

Trevor Winderlich

School Principal—St Paul's Lutheran
Primary School (1995–2004)
Living Faith Lutheran Church Murrumba
Downs congregation

One of our year three teachers arranged for some of the St Paul's Aged Care residents to visit her class. They arrived at the school amid an air of excitement. So began my experiences over the following 10 years drawing together the youngest and oldest members of our community—one group with all the questions; the other with the rich experiences gathered over the decades.

The children would excitedly show their work, ask questions, draw pictures and share reading. The encouragement they received from their new-found friends was invaluable. They sang songs for each other and finished with a morning tea.

Then it was our turn to visit these "grandparents" at their place. Other classes joined in. As we developed instrumental lessons, we took our newly acquired musical skills with us to share. This gave us performance skills and confidence. I would sometimes walk with the class to be part of this wonderful time of sharing. We would wait as residents arrived from their rooms, and so the interchange began.



Many of the children did not have a grandparent or one near enough to visit. They loved these times where they could sit with a resident and share a talk time. The relationships flowed freely. There was often a little hug and an encouraging word that made the walk so worthwhile. After a biscuit and a drink, we were all ready to return to school routine.



Our Best Hat winner—Nancy Kellher: "What a great hat!".



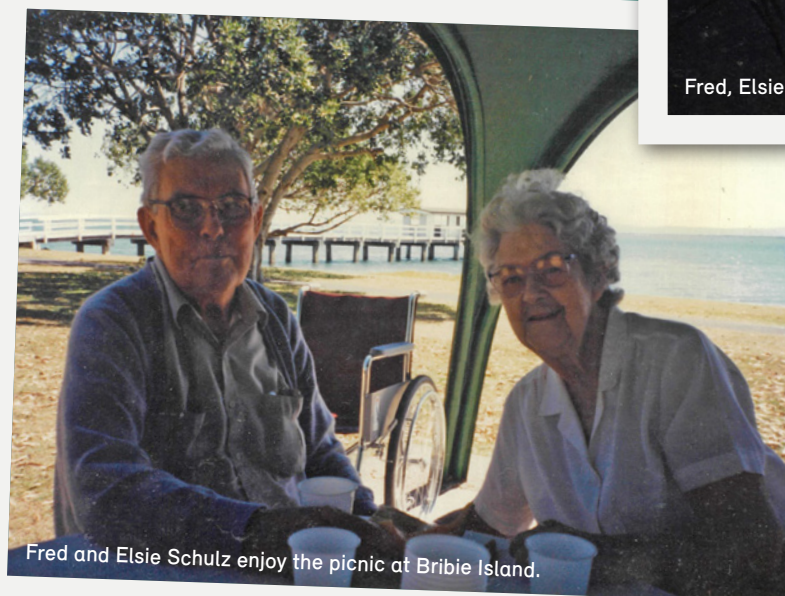
Claire Lamas with four students.



Our Best Dressed (female) Rebecca Martin looking great and enjoying the afternoon.



Fred, Elsie and Bev singing a song.



Fred and Elsie Schulz enjoy the picnic at Bribie Island.

Can you add to the St Paul's
Origin Story?

We'd love to hear from you!

contact@lutheranservices.org.au



Explore our origins

This booklet is an abridged version of the St Paul's Origin Story.

See the full version and other Origin Stories here.