

A photograph of a stone well in a garden. A blue bucket is tilted, pouring water into the well. The well is made of stacked stones and has a metal rim. The background shows green foliage and pink flowers. A large, semi-transparent blue diamond shape is overlaid on the image, framing the text.

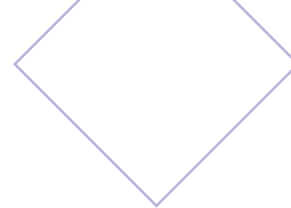
Wellsprings for Women

Celebrating 25 Years
of women at the well

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Foreword

This anniversary publication documents the journey of people who have shared in twenty five years of Wellsprings for Women; the embodiment of Ann Halpin's dream of a welcoming and supportive place for women to gather, offer hope and healing, build confidence and provide pathways to lifelong learning and wellbeing.

My involvement with Wellsprings began in 1993 as a volunteer at informal Friday morning meetings where we planned the opening of a Drop-In Centre. In 2010 I became a Board member and joined the Fundraising Committee.

In a humble house, at 79 Langhorne Street, Dandenong, lived many Presentation sisters, who over the years taught and worked in local schools and parishes around Dandenong, Doveton and Endeavour Hills.

When the Presentation Sisters withdrew from teaching in schools in the 1980s, opportunities arose to respond in new ways to emerging community needs. Concerns for isolated women in the community led Ann Halpin and Margaret Bellesini to investigate the causes. After consultation with local services they decided to set up a place which would meet the needs not offered by existing agencies.

City of Greater Dandenong Cr Christine Ware officially opened Wellsprings on July 22nd in 1994 – a house offering a friendly, welcoming environment in which women could gather and be empowered. Originally operating as a Drop-In Centre, the increasing numbers of participants led to the development of more holistic programs to address

the physical, emotional, spiritual, recreational, educational and skill-based needs of women.

Over the last twenty-five years, significant changes in migration patterns led to Dandenong becoming the most culturally diverse city in Australia, and home to a large number of women from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. The settlement process resulted in women experiencing not only geographical but cultural displacement. They often required help integrating into a new community. This demographic change created new needs and Wellsprings continued to respond through the development and implementation of new and creative programs. Ann would be delighted that the Home Visitation program delivered by trained volunteers, continues to operate and grow.

Volunteers have played a critical role in the development and delivery of programs at Wellsprings and “chance encounters” have often resulted in the formation of lifelong connections to Wellsprings. It is also the efforts of volunteers that have made this publication possible. Thank you to Sandra Hanke, Rachel Chew and Minh Nguyen for embarking on this project. Thank you also to past volunteers, staff, participants and supporters for agreeing to talk to our project team and making this historical memento publication possible.

Joanne Rosewall

Deputy Chairperson



Ann Halpin 15/04/1939 – 10/12/2009

Sister Ann Halpin devoted her life to helping and giving to others. A Presentation Sister, Ann taught in many schools and was a much loved Principal of St Mary's Primary School in Dandenong. Ann's focus shifted from teaching to parish and pastoral work and through this community work, she became aware of the isolation and loneliness experienced by women in the region, often the result of poverty, family violence, social isolation, lack of English skills or mental illness. Determined to address the needs of these vulnerable women, her dream was to create a supportive, welcoming environment which she did in 1994 when Ann founded Wellsprings for Women.

Wellsprings for Women was initially conceived as a Drop-In Centre, welcoming women from all walks of life. It provided isolated women with a safe space to gain confidence and learn new skills, and steadily grew into the gathering place Ann Halpin envisioned. Wellsprings for Women is the living embodiment of the Presentation Sisters' vision of bringing individuals together to form peaceful relationships and to help each person live a full life. Ann led by example, treating everyone with respect and dignity, honouring her belief that each person has a story worthy of being told and heard.

As increasing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers began arriving in Dandenong, Ann responded by ensuring

Wellsprings offered a welcoming and peaceful space to learn, connect and experience a sense of belonging. Ann embodied and inspired in others acceptance and inclusion of all people regardless of faith, culture or life experience. She emphasised the importance of celebrating events such as International Women's Day and World Refugee Day; occasions that brought the community together to celebrate both our uniqueness and shared humanity. Ann's vision for Wellsprings in facilitating personal growth and community spirit is evidenced in the number of participants who continue to return to Wellsprings as volunteers.

We remember Ann Halpin as an authentic individual with a big heart, who was unstinting in her faith and belief in the goodness of all. With her boundless energy and ideas, she inspired others and embraced everybody. Over the course of many years working in the area, Ann developed a deep love and understanding of Dandenong and its people. She embraced people of all faiths, ethnicities, health, status and socio-economic status, and worked across multi-faith networks in the Dandenong area.

In 2009 Ann Halpin was awarded the City of Greater Dandenong Citizen of the Year, and in 2010, posthumously awarded a Holt Australia Day Award. In 2014 then Mayor Angela Long launched Halpin Way in Dandenong.



“Ann Halpin had a dream, and if we could all make a tiny bit of that dream come true, make the lives of women better... the women were broken, so they came to Wellsprings and they were made whole. Without that dream, that wouldn't have happened for these women; in that little house on Langhorne Street. I think that however long I shall be on this earth, Ann Halpin and Wellsprings will always be with me.”

Mayor, Cr Roz Blades AM, 2019



Presentation Sisters in Victoria

Nano Nagle founded the Presentation Sisters in Cork, Ireland in 1775. She believed in education as a path to independence and self-worth through the teaching of the Catholic faith and practical skills. Known as the Lady of the Lantern, she walked the streets of Cork at all hours, placing herself at risk to help those most in need. Following Nano Nagle's death, the Presentation Sisters spread out across the world, including to Australia, to continue her work. Like many Australian arrivals the Presentation Sisters began their new life in Australia with a long ship passage. Summoned by Fr.J.F. Corbett, parish priest of St. Mary's, St.Kilda East, the Sisters left Ireland and set up their first community in Victoria in 1873.

The Presentation Sisters' foundations are based on Nano Nagle's passionate belief in God's love for all, the dignity of every person and a desire to provide support to those who live with disadvantage. Education was the means by which the Presentation Sisters served their communities, based on Nano Nagle's belief that education liberated people and transformed society.

The work of the Presentation Sisters began in Dandenong in 1912 where they settled to teach. At the time Dandenong was a dairy and grazing hub, considered as the gateway to Gippsland.

The post war boom saw Dandenong experience redevelopment as new manufacturers established themselves locally, and the South East expanded as a residential area. An increase in jobs and the settlement of migrants in the South East meant increasing student numbers in the schools in the Dandenong region.

In the 1970's and beyond the Presentation Sisters' role evolved to meet wider community needs that emerged with these changes. The Sisters began to minister in diverse ways to meet the needs in parish and pastoral work, various chaplaincies, welfare and counselling, support of the sick and aged, adult and family education, spiritual direction, ecological justice and spirituality, and actions for justice and Aboriginal reconciliation. During this period of expansion, Presentation Sisters established Wellsprings for Women.

To ensure the vision of Presentation ministries continues into the future, a decision to transfer to a new governing body, Kildare Ministries, was made in the last decade.

This decision has at its heart the desire for the Presentation spirit to live on in our world.



Nano Nagle

Founding Wellsprings for Women – 1994

Conceived as a place run by women for women; Wellsprings was officially launched on 22 July, 1994 and was established on community development principles including empowerment, participation and giving voice to vulnerable women. Ann Halpin was the most dynamic, untiring and relentless force driving Wellsprings in the foundational and growth years. Inspired by the age-old practice of a gathering of women around a well, to talk and share stories. Ann Halpin's vision of a place where women could come together, learn, share and empower each other to reach their potential was coming to fruition. The powerful symbolism of water: sustenance, resilience and life-giving force were the qualities that Ann wanted to nurture in all women who contributed in the realisation of Wellsprings – be they participants, volunteers or staff.

In the late 1980s, with Yvonne Sherwin, Joyce Rebeiro and Veronica Hassett, Ann Halpin would regularly meet at 79 Langhorne Street to discuss her dream of establishing a centre for isolated women. They called themselves 'The Dreaming Group' and worked to overcome the obstacles and challenges in realising Ann Halpin's dream of a welcoming place. By the early 1990s their vision had progressed and Ann Halpin and Margaret Bellesini met with Joanne Rosewall, Betty Atkinson, Patricia Donovan, Anita Ferguson, Gay Bourke and Anna Doyle to begin planning how a Drop-In centre would operate. The wheels were well in motion for a dream to become reality.

The group met at a building owned by the four Catholic parishes located in Dandenong (St Mary's Parish, St Gerard's Parish, St Anthony's Parish and Holy Family

Parish). Operating on Friday mornings the group attracted women from the Dandenong area and commenced with opportunities for women to connect and socialise. As the group evolved, Wellsprings coordinators were keen to develop a more structured and responsive approach to meeting womens' needs.

Sister Joan Power met Ann as a member of the Presentation Sisters and became one of her close friends. Through Ann's vision and heart, as with many others, Joan gave her support to the dreaming of Wellsprings which Ann was able to gather so many people around. Joan was involved in Wellsprings in its early years, where she provided massages and eventually set up an interest free loan scheme for the women, who were often in need of white-goods. Joan also helped to create the locally famous Christmas cakes fundraiser which was named Mother Meg's Christmas Cakes from Wellsprings Kitchens. On her friendship with Ann, Joan recalls a holiday trip to Uluru she shared with Ann where Ann had insisted on staying up for the lively camp dinners, which Joan believes speaks to Ann's passion for life and people. Both Joan and Ann regularly attended a small group called Seeds where faith and life were shared, which served as a source of strength and comfort for Ann. For Joan, Wellsprings was intended and continues to be a gathering place for women to empower one another. Joan currently is the Care Coordinator within the Presentation Sisters Leadership Group, and has continued her support for Wellsprings and their mission to provide a home for all women.



Growing Wellsprings 1995 - 2008

By 1996, Melbourne's urban development had resulted in a greatly expanded city with a population of 3.3 million and a physical breadth of around 90 kilometres. With a population of approximately 126,000 people – 49.9% of whom were born overseas – the City of Greater Dandenong (CGD) was evolving as a vibrant multicultural hub. By the 2006 census, 51.1% of CGD residents were born overseas, with the top five countries of birth being Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India and China.

The Presentation Sisters were Ann Halpin's key supporters in the foundational years with Sisters Joan Powers, Margaret Bellessini and Nola Vanderfeen, actively working with Ann. Supporting the Sisters were their broader networks of friends, families and colleagues all who brought a vibrancy and excitement to Wellsprings. At the governance level, the Board included representation of Wellsprings staff and volunteers, along with professionals from local services. Yvonne Sherwin led the Board until 1992 and Gail Van Der Heyden took over until 2008.

Throughout the growth and expansion years between 2002-2007, an actively engaged Wellsprings Board continued to strengthen governance: Board members included Vera Hardiman (solicitor), Margaret Clausen (social researcher), Norma Seip (counsellor), Judith Cary, Rosemary Gaetjens and others hailing from the community and social services sectors. This local level involvement in governance aligned with the community development principles of Wellsprings continues to underpin and strengthen Wellsprings' approach to its work.

At the time of incorporation, Wellsprings became a member of the network of neighbourhood houses and learning centres in southern Melbourne. By 1986, the

Victorian state government provided recurrent funding for coordination of activities, and by the early 1990s, many houses also became eligible for Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) funding. In 2004-2005, the Board endorsed the Strategic Plan and Policy Framework and subsequently secured 3-year funding from the City of Greater Dandenong.

By 2000 Wellsprings had established its core services which included Home Visitation, Arts & Craft, Health & Wellbeing, English Language; Community Education and special Projects scheme. The NILS (no-interest loan program) was also a key program at Wellsprings in this early period. 'Celebrations' were an ongoing feature of Wellsprings as a gathering place for participants and volunteers – an opportunity for the community to come together, learn and interact in joyful ways. A Wellsprings tradition that became an annual institution was the Balnarring Family Weekend offering a cultural and recreational retreat for families.

Student placements are an important offering at Wellsprings and significantly contribute to Wellsprings capacity via ongoing volunteering and employment opportunities. Patricia Donovan and Paula Carr began their careers at Wellsprings as students on placement, and both made invaluable contributions to the professionalisation of the service during their time.

By 2004, 352 women from 54 countries participated in Wellsprings programs, and considerable program expansion continued over the next two years. Around this time, a new wave of refugee settlement in the Dandenong area saw East African and Afghan women accessing the service. Their journey to Australia involved long periods

in refugee camps across Sudan, Liberia, the Congo and Ghana. These pre-arrival experiences resulted in women requiring considerable support to settle effectively in Australia. Similarly, Afghan women and children were arriving to join husbands on temporary protection visas and living in a constant state of uncertainty. These emerging communities faced considerable challenges settling in the south-east region. Social isolation and a breadth of barriers to participation (some the result of policy settings) impacted in significant ways. Wellsprings responded proactively, reaching out to connect and developing programs focused on health, wellbeing, self-confidence, social connections and skills such as business/financial literacy, computer skills and job-readiness.

Ann Halpin and her staff were regular contributors in regional and professional networks ensuring they raised issues and proposed solutions at the local level. This advocacy brought Wellsprings to the attention of other service providers, enabled effective referral pathways for participants, and innovative partnerships to deliver targeted programs. Organisational and service strengthening led to improvements in practice and program design that were responsive to the needs of women. Resulting initiatives included Internet classes; Polish and Oromo Women's Support Groups; Respite Care Program; Story Writing; Wellbeing and Wisdom. Professional training and staff development, including improved volunteer training and management practices were some key works in the early years. This ensured Wellsprings was well placed to demonstrate capacity to deliver on outcomes for women and advocate for funding and program expansion.

By 2002, Wellsprings had 26 staff (including sessional) and 53 volunteers. It was during this period that key staff who supported Ann Halpin: Patricia Donovan (Community Support Worker), Betty Wilderman (NILS Coordinator) and Liz Flood (Secretary) implemented policies, processes and practices that supported Wellsprings' rapid growth. Sessional staff, including Ann Pan (English language tutor), June O'Doherty (Art and Creative Writing) began at Wellsprings around this time and consistently continue their service in both paid and volunteer capacities. Similarly, long-standing volunteers including Yvonne Sherwin, Jill Baskett, Josephine Pellisier commenced at this time and continued their regular commitment to this day. Yvonne Sherwin, Joanne Rosewall, Helen Sanders, Joyce Rebeiro and Vona Beiers were volunteers who started with Wellsprings from the beginning, working along Ann Halpin and the Sisters to establish and build the service. Other long-term volunteers who commenced during the period of growth included Crenagh Kelly, Susan Labattlas, Lisby Lapierre, Daniella Hardouin, Kaylene Taylor, Kathy West and Antoinette Gargano. Many volunteers brought their own networks of supporters and helpers to Wellsprings; connections that resulted in additional resources and financial benefits. By 2007, Wellsprings had over 66 volunteers and 29 staff (including sessional), with 8 staff also contributing their time voluntarily.

Transition Years 2007 - 2008

With Ann Halpin's retirement, the main concern for the Board was to maintain the relationship between Wellsprings, the Sisters and the Deanery who owned 79 Langhorne Street. Gail Van Der Heyden remained on the Board one year after Ann's retirement to ensure a smooth transition of governance and operational arrangements. These 12-18 months highlighted how critical the in-kind contribution had been from the Church as the Board now had to grapple with finding adequate financial resources to cover the role of the Manager, and potentially rents for the premises. The search for a new service Manager was undertaken by the Future Directions Sub-committee spearheaded by Margaret Clausen, and a new Strategic Plan (2008-2010) was launched to ensure ongoing sustainability and good governance and for Wellsprings to continue to operate according to the principles of social justice and community development. In 2008, Ann Halpin and the Presentation Sisters' legacy was further

cemented by an agreement between Wellsprings and the Presentation Congregation to auspice the organisation for at least the next three years. Other governance strengthening work in this transition period included a review of the Constitution undertaken by Virginia Bourke and coupled with professional development activities supported by the City of Greater Dandenong.

The Board was looking forward to a new and exciting phase in Wellsprings services to the community with Veronica Hassett appointed as Manager. Veronica had been Home Visitation Program Coordinator since 2004, and had been instrumental in giving more structure to the program. Veronica was an integral part of the management team at Wellsprings and was well placed to continue Ann Halpin's legacy. Following Veronica's appointment, Gail Van Der Heyden retired from the Board in 2009 and Ann Astin took over the position of Board Chair.





Legacy Years 2009 - 2015

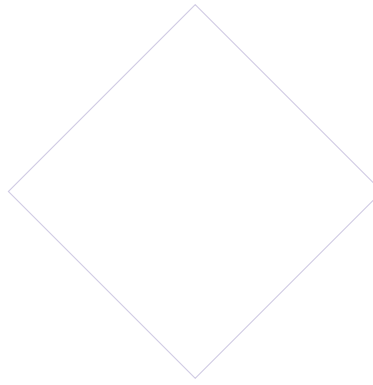
This was a time of constant change for Wellsprings. Following Veronica Hassett's appointment as Manager for Wellsprings, Ann Halpin gave her support and handed over the reins to the new leadership team. The extent of Ann Halpin's time and energy to Wellsprings were being felt. The after-hours and week-end work had to now be squeezed into the 30 hours allocated to the Manager. Workload, priorities, administrative arrangements were all shifted and shared – roles that had previously simply been 'done' by Ann Halpin.

Unbeknown to many at Wellsprings, Ann Halpin was gravely ill in the year of her retirement, and after a short illness, passed away on December 10, 2009. When Ann retired, she did so to make room for Wellsprings to grow and begin a new journey. The grief over Ann's death was immense and deeply felt for its unexpected and untimely nature. Yet, there was a determination that her legacy was to be protected and nurtured. Stakeholders were determined that what had started as a 2 hour a week Drop-In Centre would continue to function as a beacon of hope for isolated and vulnerable women. This was a time of strengthening governance and management, for organisational growth and sustainability. It became imperative to all involved that Wellsprings would live on and continue Anne's legacy well into the future. The steady and ongoing support of the Presentation Sisters provided the anchor that moored Wellsprings to Ann's legacy, keeping true to her vision that women find safety, strength and solace within its walls and beyond.

Funding was a perennial challenge, but by this stage, Wellsprings' reputation had demonstrated that a genuine need in the community was being addressed.

Volunteers and the support of the local churches were significant social capital that was effectively leveraged with funding to achieve performance and impact. Anne Astin and Veronica Hassett spent considerable time strengthening the relationship between Wellsprings and the City of Greater Dandenong, and managed to continue to secure three-year funding. Councillors from the Cities of Greater Dandenong (notably Roz Blades and Angela Long) were vocal and steadfast supporters of Wellsprings due to their connection with Ann Halpin over the years. With the support of The City of Casey and the Catholic Parishes of the Dandenong Deanery and the provision of peppercorn rent of the premises, Wellsprings could focus on diversifying income streams. Consequently, Wellsprings established various programs and projects supported by state and federal governments, philanthropies, trusts and local clubs. Obtaining Deductible Gift Recipient status was an additional milestone achieved during this period, enabling Wellsprings to apply for funding from philanthropic trusts.

Broader changes in the sector, changing settlement demographic and rapid population growth led to a service sector struggling to keep up with demand. In particular, changing funding arrangements such as competitive tendering, evidence-based programming and outcomes measures were posing challenges for a community sector that relied heavily on a volunteer workforce. However, as a result of the professionalisation, governance and management strengthening up to this point, programs were in a position to be more responsive and focused on building capacities and longer-term impact. Focusing on work-readiness, civic participation, settlement and social



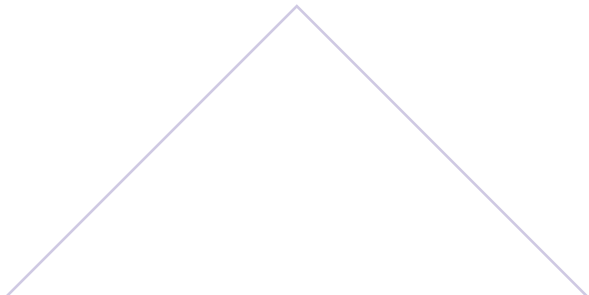
Legacy Years 2009 - 2015 Continued

connectedness, programs such as Living and Learning Together (funded over 3 years by Scanlon Foundation); Learning to Live in Australia (funded by Bennelong and RE Ross Trust) and Productive Learning in Australia (funded by the Adult and Community Further Education Capacity and Innovation Fund) were initiated during this period and continue in various forms to this day. Home Visitation – the cornerstone Wellsprings program – was vigorously protected, and as a result had variously been funded by the City of Greater Dandenong, Presentation Sisters, Southern Health, St. Vincent de Paul, Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation and Grocon.

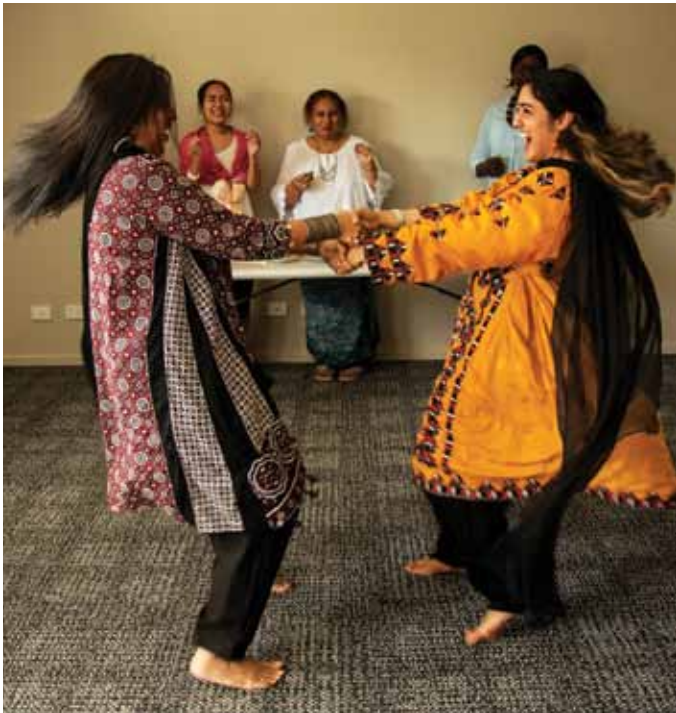
Core programs continued to be offered, refined and augmented depending on participants’ needs. New programs, such as Creative Connections Through Craft was led by Holly Gordon who provided a gentle and creative entry into education for refugee and asylum seeker women. The influx of Afghan refugees into Dandenong, led Wellsprings to offering Literacy Program in Dari for Afghan women. A Choir commenced and continues to this day, as did the Holiday Program – piloted with funding from the Grace & Emilio Foundation. Projects such as Support and Pathways System Project was led by Monira Tahery and Rose Elias and provided one-on-one education

pathways and case management to deliver knowledge of education options and step by step planning for education. As the diversity of participants grew and needs evolved, a focus on employability skills, work readiness and pre-training emerged. Ancillary services were offered to ensure women could participate at Wellsprings, and from 2009, programs such as children’s activities (led by Najila Paykar, then Medgee Gontran) were introduced and are ongoing in various forms. Other areas of focus that have become the mainstay of Wellsprings programs and were further consolidated during this period included health and wellbeing, physical activity, mental health, self-care and connecting across cultures.

As an organisation, an exciting development was the growing cultural diversity among volunteers and staff, and the employment of bi-cultural workers across programs supporting refugees and newly arrived migrant women. At the governance level, a skills-based board ably supported the transition: with Gerard Daly, qualified accountant acting as Treasurer followed by Sunita Kasu, and Virginia Bourke, a solicitor; along with volunteers Joanne Rosewall, Joyce Rebeiro and Ann Dalton and Presentation Sister Judy Bellisini.







Transformation and Transition to Kildare Ministries 2016 to the Present

On Friday 17 August, 2018 Wellsprings transitioned from Presentation Sisters to Kildare Ministries (KM). This journey commenced in 2011 when the Presentation Sisters reviewed their governance structure and began the process of succession planning for their schools and community works. Comprised of the educational and community works formerly governed by the New South Wales Province of the Brigidine Congregation, the Victorian Province of the Brigidine Congregation and the Presentation Congregation of Victoria, Kildare Ministries was officially launched in Melbourne on 18 March 2014, and in Sydney on 31st March 2014. KM offers secondary school education and community services across Australia. Underpinned by social justice and principles of inclusion, Kildare Ministries believes that 'the dignity of each individual, characterised by personal integrity and compassion, informs thinking and action and enables all to take their rightful place in Church and society.' Significantly, Kildare Ministries' new structure involves lay people at all levels of governance. Consequently, Anne Astin was appointed one of the Trustees of Kildare Ministries, ensuring there is continued understanding of the role of community works such as Wellsprings in achieving the vision and mission of Kildare Ministries. Under Anne Astin's leadership, Wellsprings and the Presentation Sisters, particularly Sisters Nola Vanderfeen and Bernadette Keating, worked to ensure that Wellsprings Board was informed at every step of the transition process to Kildare Ministries. An inclusive process, the Presentation Sisters ensured that the transition was

stepped through very carefully. Meetings were held with the Board and staff, and Sister Bernadette Keating visited Wellsprings to reassure all concerned that there would be minimal disruption to programs and services. Part of the transition discussion involved a process of transferring ownership of 79 Langhorne Street to the Presentation Sisters ahead of the merger to Kildare Ministries. Another issue was to ensure that Wellsprings was financially viable, an assessment that required the Board to demonstrate a business case going forward. Virginia Bourke was instrumental in drafting and modelling the business case. Following Ann Astin's resignation from the Board in 2015, Janet Cribbes was appointed Chair and further integrated Wellsprings into the Kildare Ministries structure. In 2016, the transition to Kildare Ministries was finalised, and Wellsprings 2017-2022 Strategic Plan was endorsed. The commitment to social justice and women's empowerment was translated into three pillars within the new strategic plan that included: increasing service delivery and the range of programs on offer; developing a strong advocacy platform and establishing financial literacy to empower women to form micro businesses. Part of this transformation and restructure was the introduction of the position of Chief Executive Officer, culminating in the appointment of Dr Dalal Smiley in March 2017. Wellsprings was well equipped to enter the transformative phase of expanding their service footprint, actively engaging in systemic advocacy and social change, and positioning itself as a viable competitor in the community and social services sector.

Taking a New Turn

With Janet Cribbes as Chair of the Board of Management, a clear direction emerged, and Wellsprings gained the confidence to pursue a growth agenda that focused on women in Dandenong and surrounding municipalities. Ann Halpin's legacy of welcoming, caring and empowering women was upheld, and by incorporating Kildare Ministries' values of Justice, Compassion, Hope, Hospitality and Courage, Wellsprings enthusiastically launched into the Formation work with Kildare Ministries. On Friday 17th August 2018, Wellsprings for Women was entrusted to Kildare Ministries.

Under Janet Cribbes and Dalal Smiley's leadership, a new era of renewal was ushered in with the adoption of a refreshed logo, new website and professionally designed collateral and publications.

Wellsprings continues the legacy of a welcoming, caring and nurturing place for women while working within a community development framework that – in the words of Dalal Smiley 'continues to be a place that supports and strengthens women through education, networking, information, advocacy, building skills and capacity, creating pathways and opportunities, building better, more just and more environmentally sustainable futures.'

In this new phase of Wellsprings' growth, the Home Visitation program was reviewed, revamped and redesigned through intensive training and new policies and procedures. A range of wrap-around services were introduced to contribute to the state and federal governments' goals of eliminating violence against women and promoting gender equality.

Opportunities to engage and communicate more widely with the community, led Wellsprings to establish social media accounts on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter,

Youtube, Instagram and Wellsprings webpage. This has broadened Wellsprings' service footprint and enabled more agile digital marketing, service and program promotion. New and faster enrolments, connectivity and responsiveness brought new groups of women and volunteers to Wellsprings. Growing organisational capacity to deliver programs saw the rapid growth of student placements from 1 in 2017 to 24 in 2018. Students took on a range of tasks from assisting with classes, conducting research or evaluation, analysing data, assisting with program design, administration and hospitality to child minding. Similarly, the number of active volunteers ballooned from 66 to 92 within the same period, thanks to the assured guidance of Robyn Erwin. Long-standing staff including Jasmine Robbins, Helen Sanders, Rose Elias, Monira Tahery, Holly Gordon and Medgee Gontran, along with the volunteers, provided continuity and stability in this new era. Through the unstinting dynamism, drive and enthusiasm of Dalal Smiley who has breathed new life across all levels of the organisation, Wellsprings has successfully managed transformational change over the past three years.

At the governance level, a skills-based board, drawing women from diverse backgrounds, professions and lived experiences ensures the strategic plan and direction is kept on track. While board members are not involved in the operations of the organisation, Joanne Rosewall, Deputy-Chair provides the continuity and connection to Wellsprings volunteers through her involvement with Wellsprings from inception. In 2018, Wellsprings announced Jo Stanley as the Inaugural Patron of the organisation, bringing new avenues for Wellsprings to explore and new opportunities for building support and accessing networks.

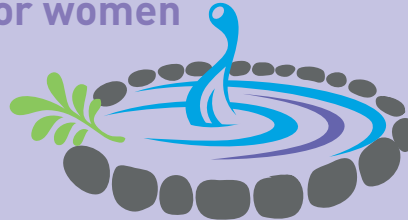


TIMELINE

- 1993** – scoping of services, survey of women in and around Dandenong by Ann Halpin and Margaret Bellisini
- 1994** – Wellsprings opens as 2-hour Drop-In Centre
- 1998** – Ann Halpin, Living Treasure of City of Greater Dandenong
- 1999** – Technology Plan for Wellsprings
- 2002** – Board Development and Education for effective governance; Wellsprings passed the ACFE and NHV audits; Refugee Women Support Group
- 2003** – Ann Halpin and Patricia Donovan were awarded the Centenary Medal for Services to Women in Dandenong; Journey to Peace Book of Reflections launched; Drifting and Dreaming Peace Quilt
- 2004** – Literacy Class for South Sudanese, Sudanese Women’s Group, Sudanese Sewing Group
- 2005** – 3-year grants secured from City of Greater Dandenong; Strategic Plan 2006-2009 and Policy Framework
- 2006** – Live the Dream Project, Yarn It Up
- 2007** – Threads to Freedom Project, book launched on International Women’s Day
- 2008** – Ann Halpin retires. Citizenship Program for Afghan Women
- 2009** – Veronica Hassett appointed Manager. Ann Halpin, Citizen of the Year, City of Greater Dandenong; Sudanese Leadership Program; Living and Learning Together
- 2010** – Ann Halpin, Victorian Honour Roll for Women; Australia Day Award, Holt Electorate (Jan); Strategic Plan 2010-2014; Literacy Program in Dari for Afghan Women
- 2011** – Presentation Sisters reviewed governance structure; 9/11 Day of Healing for Muslim Women; Choir
- 2012** – Learning to Live in Australia; Support & Pathways Systems Project

- 2013** – Deductible Gift Recipient status
- 2014** – Presentation Sisters purchase 79 Langhorne Street; Creative Connections Thru Art
- 2014** – Halpin Way opened; Holiday Program Pilot; Volunteer Service Awards introduced annually; Launch of Kildare Ministries & commissioning of trustees
- 2015** – Productive Learning in Australia; Wellsprings Mentoring Program; Holiday Program; Top Three Community Training Providers of the year, Victorian Training Awards; Rose Elias represent Wellsprings at the 60th Commission on the Status of Women Conference (CSW60), United Nations
- 2016** – Transition to Kildare Ministries finalised; Strategic Plan 2017-2021 launched; Wellsprings on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Instagram); Wellsprings restructures for growth and expansion
- 2017** – Dr Dalal Smiley appointed Chief Executive Officer
- 2017** – New Website, New Logo, professionally designed and produced publications
- 2018** – Special Recognition Award: June O’Doherty; Wellsprings transition from Presentation Sisters to Kildare Ministries; Jo Stanley, Inaugural Patron of Wellsprings for Women, Women’s Health and Safety Program, Child Minding dedicated room, Casey-based programs and playgroups, Public Speaking Course, Introduction to Working in the Community, Wellsprings Ambassadors
- 2019** – Wellsprings finalist for the inaugural Fiona Richardson Gender Equality Award for Learn Locals, Making a Difference Program, Opening of Rose Room, Wellsprings for Women finalist in three categories in Learn Local Awards

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