

# Helping to mend broken family ties



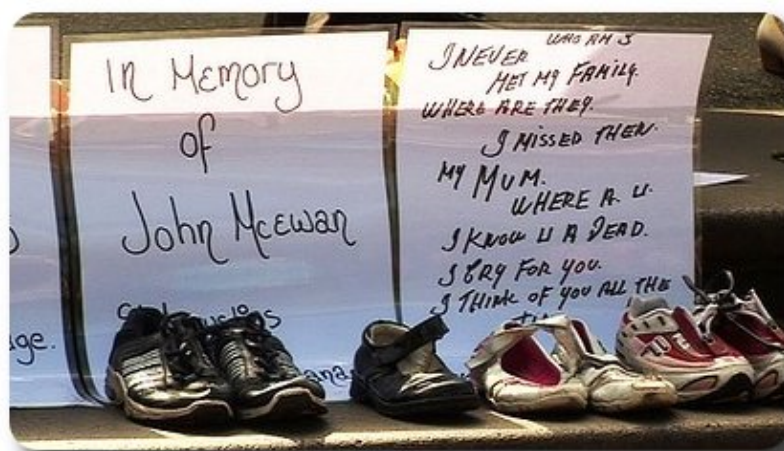
Jenny Fawcett at home in her research library. Her research skills have helped to mend broken family ties.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] E  
[ /dropcap]arlier this year, we [revealed the full story behind the “Granny” of Granny’s Grave](#), in Warrnambool, with the help of volunteer researcher **Jenny Fawcett**.

What we didn’t tell you at the time, but have kept up our sleeve, is that Jenny has also used her substantial research skills to help some of the people affected by forced adoptions – or other family separation – to piece back together their family history.

In November 2009, then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and

Opposition Leader Malcolm Turnbull delivered a bi-partisan national apology to the more than half a million children – the so-called Forgotten Australians – who were raised in institutions, foster homes and orphanages where, more often than not, they suffered mental, physical or sexual abuse. Many of these children were forced child migrants from the UK who were told they were orphans, when in fact their parents were still alive.



A poignant symbol of the effects of the forced adoption policy and the agony of not knowing. Image: The Age.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] A  
[ /dropcap]nd in March 2013, the then Prime Minister Julia Gillard issued another, equally emotional, national apology to the parents and children at the centre of the nation's forced adoption policies from the 1950s to the late 1970s. It is estimated up to 150,000 children were forcibly removed from their (usually single) mothers during this time.

Together, these two historical wrongs equate to a lot of hurt...and a lot of not knowing the truth.

And this is where Jenny comes in. Some of those affected by

either of these wrongs have asked Jenny, of Warrnambool, for help in tracking their past.

While Jenny can't personally track every family history, she has provided guidance on where to look for information and records, and how to interpret documents that can lead to more clues: this is the art of the researcher.

It is such important, healing work and, for this, Jenny is our very deserving Quiet Hero.

[box] Jenny will receive a pack of four coffee vouchers from [The Pavilion Café](#) in Warrnambool. Thankyou to owners Mary- Ellen and Jon Watson for supporting this week's Quiet Hero.[/box]



*Meet more of our Quiet Heroes...*

[Lost history finds loyal following: Lost Warrnambool](#)

[Giving comes naturally: Virginia Marshall](#)

[Australia Day awards – did we forget someone? Vicki Jellie](#)

[Oh Possum, you're a hero in the heat: Nalini Scarfe](#)

[Walking with strength and purpose: Susie Alexander](#)

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# Oh possum, you are a hero in the heat

The recent heatwave from hell may have lifted, but the work never stops for wildlife carers who are at the frontline when it comes to caring for distressed native animals, like this week's Quiet Hero.

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## Our quiet heroes: the Drylies



Tony and Claire Drylie with some of the St Joseph's Primary School display boxes...and the huge display board!

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[/dropcap]hat we love about our quiet hero section is that we get to celebrate people doing things that might not always make the news: the small things, the little things that often go unnoticed or happen without much fuss.

This week our quiet heroes are **Claire** and **Tony Drylie**, who are well-known around Warrnambool for their kindness, their cheerfulness and, in recent years, their involvement in the grassroots arts scene.

While Claire is an artist, Tony is usually not far from the action, helping keep track of the finances (as he did with the former Quarry studio), or carting some piece of equipment from here to there in his four-wheel drive.

In the past few days, the pair has been involved in putting the final touches to an art project Claire has developed with art teacher **Kathryn McMeel** at **St Joseph's Primary School**, where each of the 180 children in grades five and six have created small 'portrait' boxes that they have fitted out with objects that they believe capture who they are.

Imagine a chocolate box, without the lid, and a tiny, individual world created inside: a child's world.



Capturing little lives: some of the children's work they have developed with Claire.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] W  
[dropcap]orking from an industrial shed at the back of a Warrnambool business, Tony has assembled and painted a 2-point-something metre display board in bright red, upon which Claire has been methodically gluing the boxes in preparation for their display at the school within the next fortnight.

(**Ryan's Removals** have kindly agreed to deliver the display board which simply won't fit in Tony's four-wheel drive, no matter how hard he tries).

The final display is going to look spectacular.

Artists working with children has to be one of the most mutually beneficial relationships in existence and that is why Claire and Tony, and those like them, are our quiet heroes for this week.

[box] Our Quiet Hero will receive a coffee and cake voucher from this week's sponsor [Lozzar's Lounge Cafe](#), Warrnambool – thankyou Lozzar's. [/box]



*Meet some of our other quiet heroes...*

[Susie Alexander fights cancer...and aims for a fun run](#)

[Holden Club helps out](#)

[Caring for the environment](#)

[Embracing diversity](#)

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**Our quiet hero: Susie  
Alexander**



[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] T  
[/dropcap]HIS week's quiet hero is somebody rarely caught without a smile on her lovely face, even when life throws the greatest challenges her way.

**Susie Alexander** and I (Carol) went to school together at East Warrnambool Primary and later, Warrnambool High School, and because she was an Alexander and I was an Altmann, we tended to be in the same alphabetical order line-ups for the selection of the fun stuff (sports teams) and the not so fun stuff (innoculations).

I would joke that I was glad Susie had to go first, then I would know if it was going to hurt or not.

Susie was always much braver than me.

When I met Susie again for the first time in a long time, she told me her mother was very ill with cancer and that she was making the most of the time they still had together. We were suddenly at that age, it seemed, when our parents became vulnerable and fragile.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] E  
[/dropcap]arlier this year, I saw Susie again and she told me that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer. It is the sort

of news that shrinks the world down to the small stuff, the important stuff and reminds us that, no matter how old we are, we – as humans – are all vulnerable and fragile.

Despite her diagnosis, Susie has not retreated. She is facing her illness head on and undergoing a series of treatments (including what she calls her 'cocktail days') that she hopes will see her well enough to join the **Sussan Women's Fun Run** on December 8 in Melbourne to raise money for the **Breast Cancer Network Australia**.

Yes, you read that right: *fun run*.

Susie always was so much braver than me. I know that to be truer now, than ever.

We normally donate a coffee and cake voucher to our quiet hero, but this time we have made a donation toward Susie's run on December 8.

We hope you might do the same by clicking on this link: [Susie's run](#).

Good luck Susie.



***Meet our other quiet heroes...***

[Holden Club helps out](#)

[Caring for the environment](#)

[The Warrnambool artist](#)

[The face behind Fifteen Minutes of Fame](#)

[Embracing diversity](#)

[The musician](#)

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## Our quiet heroes: the Holden club



Graeme, Peter and Jack from the Western Victoria Holden Club, with Glenn at his 50th.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] 0  
[/dropcap] UR choice of quiet hero for this week is a very personal one, based on my brother Glenn's recent 50th birthday party.

Reaching 50 years of age is a significant milestone for Glenn, who has Down's Syndrome, so his party needed something special.

This is where the members of the **Western Victoria Holden Car**

**Club** come in. I contacted the club through its president, **Peter Dunn**, to see if I might be able to hire a car to arrive at Glenn's party and, maybe, take him for a short ride.

The group had a club event already scheduled for that day, but, despite this, Peter called around and organised for two of the most beautiful, restored Holdens (a Sandman panel van and a Holden FC) to be available.

Glenn's face lit up when they arrived, but he was, unfortunately, unable to ease himself out of his wheelchair and into the front seat of the Sandman.

No problem: Graeme, the car's proud owner, scooped him up and put him in.

And around the block they went. In fact, several blocks.

The club refused to take any payment, so we instead made a donation to Down's Syndrome Victoria as part of its everyday hero campaign.

This club is certainly made up of everyday heroes.

[box type="bio"] If you would like to know more about the Western Victoria Holden Club, check out its Facebook page [here](#).[/box]



### ***Who are our other quiet heroes?***

[Caring for the environment](#)

[The Warrnambool artist](#)

[The face behind Fifteen Minutes of Fame](#)

[Embracing diversity](#)

The musician