

MCT MATTERS

002

STAY INFORMED - STAY CONNECTED - STAY ACTIVE

FEB 19

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LET'S TALK WORKSHOP

Toukley locals were recently treated to a visit from mental health advocate and founder of Man Anchor, Steven Gamble.

With "Let's Talk About Mental Health" printed in big, bold type on the back of his t-shirt it was clear what the purpose of his visit was. Before long the crowd had settled in and Steven was sharing stories about the spectrum of mental health and how anyone can identify the warning signs.

Although it was a hot summers day, the turnout was great and highlighted the need for these types of events where the community can unite and together break down the stigma and stereotypes of mental illness.

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SCG TOUR EXPERIENCE

Taking a short break from their regular caring and life responsibilities, 18 men got together to wander around one of Australia's most iconic sporting grounds ... a 'marvelous' day!

Sitting in the change rooms where legendary cricket and rugby league players once sat, walking out on the turf and looking up at the historic members and ladies stands or standing in the media room looking out over the Sydney Cricket Ground from up high were all special moments from the MCT at the SCG tour but the stand out was 5 simple words offered as feedback from one of the men, "Thank you for including me".

Those words resonated most because often as carers we can get forgotten about or feel left out of the things that are going on around us. To be included and part of something, particularly a social activity, might not change our circumstances but it can help make us feel a little more connected and not so alone.

United by the experience of caring for a family member or friend with an

illness or disability, 18 men from all different walks of life enjoyed a short break from their normal routine with a visit to one of Australia's most iconic sporting venues for a guided tour and look behind the scenes at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Hearing tales of players, teams and crowds added some extra insights into the history and folklore of the ground which has hosted so many memorable events.

As we wandered through the home and away dressing rooms, names like Bradman, Benaud, Gasnier and Langlands come to mind with many more recognisable names on the honour boards, priceless memorabilia on the walls and in the museum, all paying tribute to the significant sporting history of the ground.

One of the many benefits for carers, and men in general, getting together..

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'LET'S TALK' WORKSHOP WITH MAN ANCHOR

With the message that a 'Simple conversation could potentially save a life' the Man Anchor Let's Talk workshop really hits the nail on the head.

It doesn't matter who you are, where you live or what your status is, everyone experiences ups and downs throughout each day, week, month and year. Typical challenges include financial pressures, worries about employment, study or health concerns. There are

also relationship issues that can cause a great deal of stress and uncertainty. It is not uncommon to experience one or more of these things and sometimes they can snowball creating even more pressure than just dealing with one issue.

Recognising these issues in your own life and talking them over with a mate, your GP or anonymously over the phone with a counsellor can help take away some of the uncertainty

and give you the confidence to make good choices.

Sharing your problems with someone doesn't make you weak it makes you stronger and smarter.

If you're doing ok then it might be a chance to chat with a mate who is doing it a bit tough. Let them know you care and spend some time listening to them without the need to fix anything, sometimes all it takes is a simple conversation.



from page 1 ...

SCG TOUR EXPERIENCE

... as a group, is the distraction from everything else going on in our lives. It might only be for a few hours every now and then but a short break and focus on something completely different can be a huge boost for your wellbeing. If a chance comes up to join a tour group, do a short course, attend a show or any number of other activities, the best thing you can do is go along. You deserve a break and time for yourself. Plan ahead and call in favor's if needed so that you get some time to recharge your batteries.

Following the tour we had lunch at the Members Lawn Kiosk which was well prepared and delicious. Our meals were enjoyed by all - thank you to the staff from the Kiosk for the friendly and efficient service. Thanks to our guide, Ray who shared so many great sto-

ries with our group and extra special thanks to Gail from the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust, for being so helpful in the lead up to our groups visit.

Men Care Too highly recommends the SCG Experience to everyone, sports fan or not, the history of the ground and access to places usually only open to players or staff offers a unique experience and one that will be remembered for many years to come.

The biggest thank you goes to the men who came along to be part of the day. Often when caring for someone we don't make time for our own interests or take a much needed break to be around others. It can sometimes feel like we're on our own and that way of thinking can be hard to break. The 18 men who got together last Friday for a few

hours set a great example for other carers by showing that it's ok to take a break from time to time and be reminded that you're not in it on your own.

MCT at the SCG was made possible thanks to funding from The Elderslee Foundation - Thank you to the Elderslee board for supporting family and friend carers to take a break.



OVER THE LINE AT WYONG RACE CLUB

The annual Owners and Trainers day at Wyong Race Club provided Men Care Too with an opportunity to talk about carers with the local racing community.



Carers can be found in all areas of the community, from class rooms to cafés, travel agents to trackside and wherever there are carers there is a chance to acknowledge what they do and let them know how important they are in the community.

Thanks to a partnership with **Over The Line Racing**, Men Care Too was given the opportunity to rub shoulders with the owners and trainers at Wyong Race Club on Tuesday February 19th and as the official charity partner for the event, Men Care Too with the support of The Iris Foundation spent a large part of the day selling raffle tickets and speaking with men and women from all walks of life.

The stats suggest that around 1 in every 8 people in NSW are providing care and support to someone with a disability or illness and yet when speaking with

people it seems that almost everyone has a story about caring for someone. To have a conversation with someone about caring at the racetrack might seem a little out of place but the reality is that anyone, anytime can be a carer and being able to talk about it with others in any situation helps create awareness and understanding that carers are not alone in their role.

Thanks to some generous prize donations from Over The Line Racing and **Wyong Race Club** in partnership with **Mercure Kooindah Waters**, along with cash donations, the Men Care Too fundraising raffle raised exactly \$1000 towards future events, socials and workshops to improve the social wellbeing of men in caring roles along with other disadvantaged members of the Central Coast community.

On top of this, Wyong Race Club CEO David Jewell announced that the club would match all monies raised, effectively doubling the fundraising tally to \$2000 for the event. Thank you to David and the team at WRC for your generosity that will enable MCT to better support local men in caring roles.

MCT will continue work on initiatives to engage with carers in all areas of the community, starting conversations about carer wellbeing and creating opportunities for carers to have a break



CUT TO THE POINT

TALK IT OVER

How do you maintain a happy relationship with someone you care about when there are regular arguments or frustration?

Many of us try to avoid conflict, sometimes we don't know how to express our thoughts or we can become angry at ourselves. Even though it can be difficult, next time your feeling like things are getting out of hand, stop, take a breath and think about reframing your thoughts. This can help you too stay calm and get your point across without the relationship being hurt.

MENSLINE: 1300 789 978

YOUR TIME

Do you enjoy photography, bush walking or sitting by the lake? How much time each day, each week, do you spend on yourself?

Many people who are helping someone else rarely make time to really enjoy any of their own hobbies or interests. That is where understanding and utilising respite services can help.

It can be hard to switch off and not think about all the work you need to get done but short breaks where the time is spent on you can help you relax and get some much needed rest.

RESPITE INFO: 1800 052 222

BLOKES BBQ

More than just getting together for a feed, the Men Care Too 'Blokes BBQ' provided a space for sharing stories, information and of course a couple of jokes.

Plenty of fresh air and sunshine on hand for the men to enjoy at Lalor Park Community Garden for the MCT Blokes BBQ.

Kicking off early with a visit from Blacktown City Councillor Kevin Gillies, the group heard about some of the work being done locally to improve health and community services. This led into a conversation about the importance of speaking up about issues that affect us as men.

Access to male friendly services, recognition at all levels of government for the need to

better engage with men and our responsibility to be proactive were all touched on.

During and after lunch we heard stories from some of the men about their own challenges, talked about some of the local services that have been helpful and set the ground work for future meet ups so we can continue to show our support to each other and men in the community doing it tough.

Events like this serve as a reminder that those hard topics we often avoid can become much easier to talk about.



KEY DATES IN 2019 ...

JUN 10-16 | Men's Health Week

JUL 7-14 | NAIDOC Week

SEP 1 | Fathers Day

SEP | Prostate Cancer Month

SEP 10 | Suicide Prevention Day

SEP | Men's Shed Week

OCT 5-11 | Mental Health Week

OCT 13-19 | Carers Week

NOV 19 | International Men's Day



"THE EVERYDAY KINDNESS OF THE BACK ROADS MORE THAN MAKES UP FOR THE ACTS OF GREED IN THE HEADLINES." - *CHARLES KURLAT*



NSW Central Coast LHD Carer Support Unit - 43 205556 (9am-4.30pm, Mon-Fri)

MensLine Australia - 1300 78 99 78 (24/7)

Lifeline - 13 11 14 (24/7)

Carer Gateway - 1800 422 737 (8am-6pm, Mon-Fri)

National Carerline - 1800 242 636 (9am-5pm, Mon-Fri)

QLife (GBTI) - 1800 184 527 (3pm-12am 7 days)

Suicide Call Back Service - 1300 659 467 (24/7)

Open Arms (Veterans and Families) - 1800 011 046 (24/7)

GriefLine - 1300 845 745 (midday to 3am)



ELDERSLEE FOUNDATION



Visit www.mencaretoo.org for more information

All photos from **MCT** and www.unsplash.com

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Proudly distributed to the Central Coast community through the support of

