

CELEBRATING

80 YEARS
1939-2019

Gowrie

LADY GOWRIE TASMANIA



'Children First'

Foreword

My congratulations to Lady Gowrie Tasmania on a very significant contribution to our community over 80 years.

My enduring memory of Lady Gowrie - over a number of years! - is of a bright, buzzing and safe place for inquisitive young minds to play and learn. And wonderful educators, in whom parents and carers place great trust. I know that many lifelong relationships are also born at Lady Gowrie, which has a special place in our community.

Best wishes,

The Hon Will Hodgman MP

Premier

Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Events

Minister for Parks

Minister for Heritage

Minister for Trade





Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Children First	5
Introduction	6
Part 1 – The 20th Century	7
Early Days	8
1930's and 1940's	10
1950's	20
1960's	25
1970's	32
1980's	33
1990's	36
Part 2 – The 21st Century	39
Lady Gowrie Tasmania Services in the 21 st Century	46
Reflections on Gowrie	60
In Conclusion	62
References	64
Current Services and Programs	66

Acknowledgements

There are countless individuals, both past and present, who have been and continue to be an important part of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania story. Their contribution across the past 80 years is acknowledged and valued as they paved the way for others to follow. To those who have been so generous with their time – to reminisce and provide their stories for this publication, again this is so highly appreciated.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania engaged the Gowrie Training & Consultancy team to take the lead in researching and documenting the 80-year history publication. This publication is only a snapshot as it impossible to capture the immense contribution of the many people involved in the Lady Gowrie Tasmania story.

On behalf of children, families and those who work on a daily basis with them, I take the opportunity to thank Gowrie Training & Consultancy for undertaking the enormous task of mapping the past 80 years of this amazing and resilient organisation.

William McShane

Chair, Board of Directors



'Children First'

Children are and have always been at the centre of the work undertaken at Lady Gowrie Tasmania. What better way to celebrate 80 years of service to the Tasmanian community than by placing 'Children First' in this publication. Thank you to the children who gave their permission to share their drawings and thoughts.



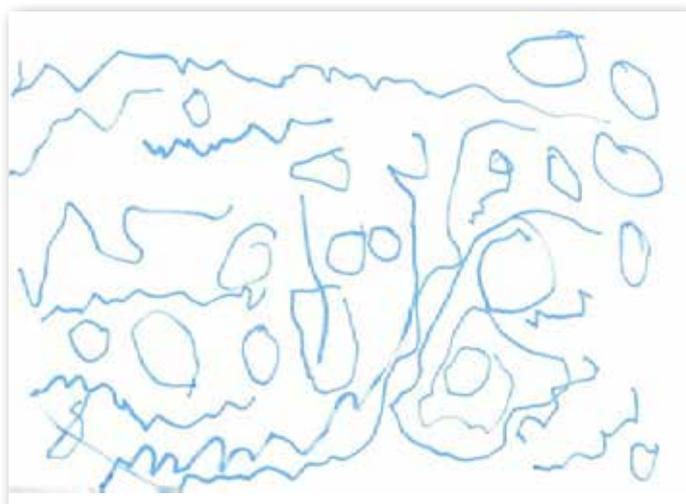
"I like playing with Bella and all my friends and I like playdough and doing drawings as well."

Maya Tamlyn (3 years)



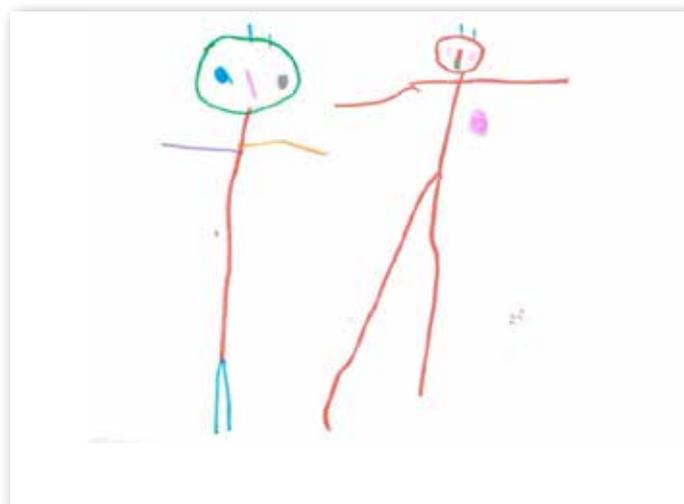
"I like coming to Lady Gowrie because I can play with Maya and she's my cousin."

Matilda Cashion (4 years)



"I'm going to draw Bella and Mum and Dad and I like coming here to play with Bella 'cause Bella is my best friend. I like seeing all my friends and playing in the playground!"

Annabelle Clark (3 years)



Educator: "What do you enjoy doing at Lady Gowrie Bella?"

Bella: "What's Lady Gowrie?"

Educator: "Lady Gowrie is this place here, where you come every day."

Bella: "Well I like coming to Lady Gowrie and I'm going to draw Archie and me cause I get to see Archie at Lady Gowrie. And I also like playing with my friends."

Bella Gough (3 years)

Introduction

Lady Gowrie Tasmania - the name is synonymous with quality education and care and 2019 sees the milestone achievement of providing 80 years of continuous service to the Tasmanian community. Throughout the past eight decades countless children and their families have been a part of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania story, with many families using services across generations. This connection and ongoing endorsement has seen Lady Gowrie Tasmania enjoy the rare privilege of becoming a part of many family histories.

In fact, Gowrie's history isn't unlike that of many families. From an eventful birth in 1939 Lady Gowrie Tasmania has grown up, with some occasional growing pains, into a flourishing organisation that continues to serve Tasmanian children and their families through a range of services and programs. Today, Lady Gowrie Tasmania is a mature and confident organisation that knows its business; an organisation which continues to advocate for children and families across its services and across the broader Tasmanian community. The commitment to best outcomes for children is captured in the Lady Gowrie Tasmania position statement 'Children First'.

So, how is 80 years captured? It is best shared through the recollections of 'Gowrie' people, through descriptions of the programs that have been provided and through telling the story of the organisation's journey. It's impossible to capture the complexity and depth of Lady Gowrie Tasmania, but this publication gives a brief insight into a rich and long history.

The story also captures the state and national social changes that have influenced the Education and Care sector in which we operate today. The Lady Gowrie Tasmania story is one to be celebrated and acknowledged and there's no conclusion in sight!



Lady Zara Gowrie, champion of early childhood education

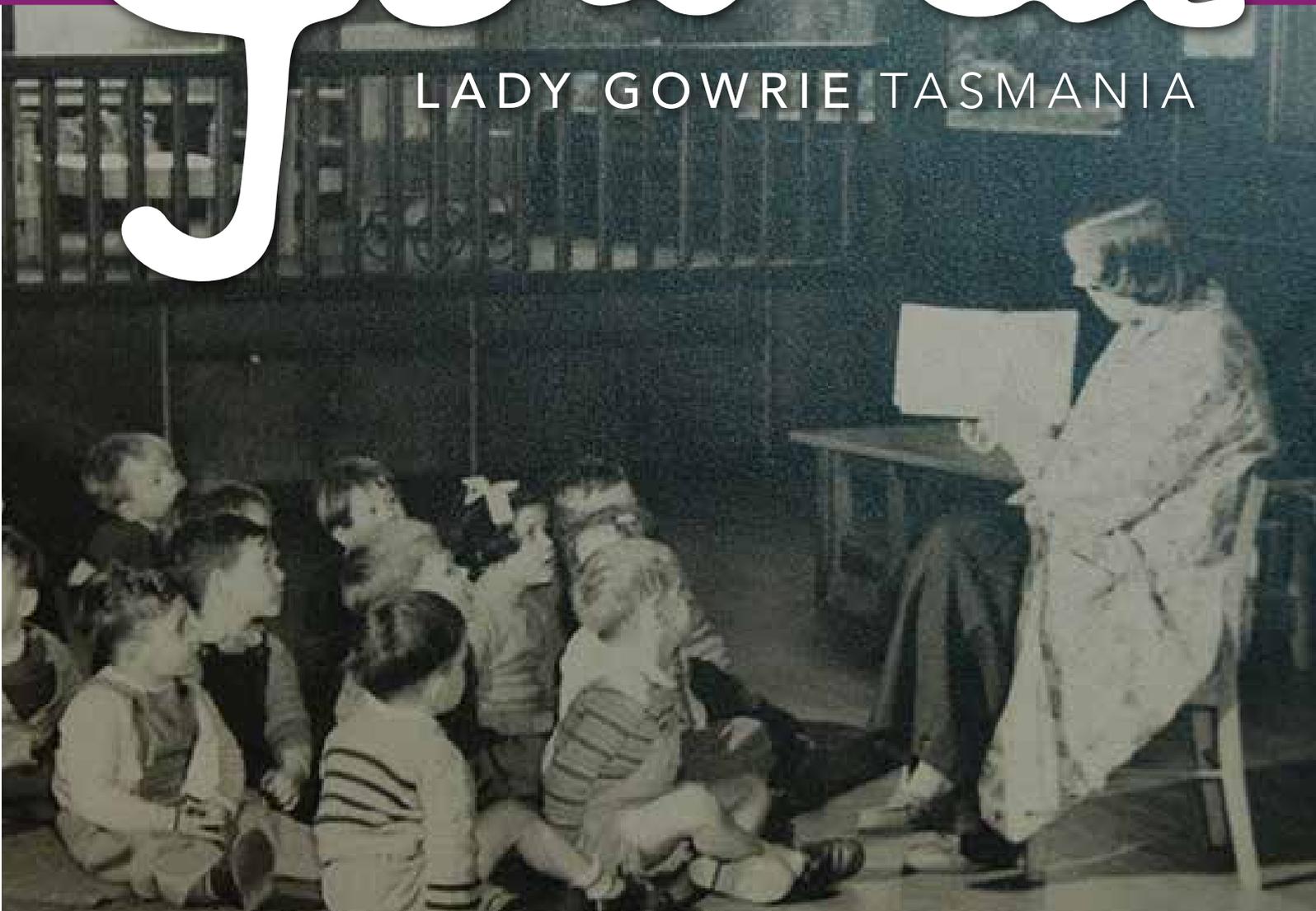
PART 1

THE 20TH CENTURY

There has been significant research and documentation on the history of the Kindergarten movement from the 1930s and the subsequent formation of Lady Gowrie services nationally. This publication focuses on the Tasmanian history. Additional information in relation to the national history is available through a number of other publications listed in the bibliography.

Gowrie

LADY GOWRIE TASMANIA



Early Days

Although the 80 year anniversary is celebrated, the Lady Gowrie Tasmania story really started at the commencement of the 20th century, when the Tasmanian Education Department (as it was known at the time) and some independent schools established kindergarten classes. Tasmanian 'Free Kindergarten' committees were also formed at this time to raise funds to establish kindergartens for children who lived in 'poor areas'. Frederick Street Kindergarten, Launceston and the Barclay Street Kindergarten, Hobart were the first Free Kindergartens established in Tasmania in 1910.



Hobart Free Kindergarten, 1911

In the post-world war years national attention turned towards the need for greater investment in the health and welfare of Australian children. With one war recently past and fears of another to come there was widespread consensus that the future of our isolated country was dependant on the nourishment of healthy children who, as adults, would contribute to the prosperity of our nation and defend it if necessary. The Rights of the Child, as known today, had their origins at this time when the League of Nations *Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child* was widely adopted in 1924. The Declaration stated:

- The child must be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually.

- The child that is hungry must be fed; the child that is sick must be nursed; the child that is backward must be helped; the delinquent child must be reclaimed; the orphan and the waif must be sheltered and succoured.
- The child must be the first to receive relief in times of distress.
- The child must be put in a position to earn a livelihood and must be protected against any form of exploitation.
- The child must be brought up in the consciousness that its talents must be devoted to the service of fellow men.

In 1936 **Lady Zara Gowrie** opened the first meeting of Interstate Kindergartens as a part of Women's Centenary Congress on Child Welfare in South Australia. Lady Gowrie was the wife of the longest serving Governor-General of Australia, Alexander Hore-Ruthven, 1st Earl of Gowrie, who served between 1936 and 1945. She was also a keen and powerful advocate for the development of nursery schools across Australia and in 1936 was the Patroness-in-Chief of the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria. Following the first meeting between the state-based Kindergarten Unions, a number of subsequent meetings took place, resulting in the formation of the Australian Association of Pre-School Child Development. Its areas of focus included:

- coordination of the six state-based Kindergarten Unions
- the establishment of standards for the guidance of young children in Nursery-Kindergartens
- setting standards for the training of Kindergarten teachers
- establishing a Federal Bureau of Publications relevant to pre-school work
- organising a biennial conference.

(Australian Association of Pre-School Child Development, 1939)

These commitments have continued through the ensuing decades and in 2019, approved early years services across Tasmania and the other states and territories of Australia operate under the *National Quality Framework*. This framework includes the requirement for minimum qualifications for educators and the *National Quality Law, Regulation and Standard*, which responds to the complexity of professional work in the early years.

Speaking at the first meeting of Interstate Kindergartens Mrs. W. H Thummier, who was representing the Free Kindergarten of Tasmania, gave a brief survey of methods employed in Tasmania, noting that "One great factor in success of kindergartens in Tasmania was the system of co-operation. Each Kindergarten received advice as to what the others were doing." The spirit of collaboration was clearly important in 1936 and, unsurprisingly, is still central to Lady Gowrie Tasmania today.

In 1938 the Demonstration Nursery School Committee, as a part of the Australian Association of Pre-School Child Development, formed a working party which devised a plan to develop a demonstration centre for preschool child development in each capital city. Each of the centres was to provide a contemporary three-year pre-school education

Lady Gowrie Praises Work Of Kindergartens

"Some of the greatest men and women in the world have come out of the poorest cradles, so every life born in Australia must be preserved," said Lady Gowrie in opening the interstate conference of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia at the Keith Sheridan Free Kindergarten.

Lady Gowrie spoke of Australia's need for population. "We never take up a paper but we find public men saying how vitally important it is that Australia should be populated," she said. "Populate or perish" is the cry. What we want to do is to preserve the child life we have here. Kindergartens are doing that work, but they must walk hand in hand with nursery schools. Every child life in Australia should be preserved, firstly through the Mothers and Babies' Health Association, then by nursery schools, and after that by free kindergartens, which would look after the children until they were six years of age, and old enough to start school.

"Public men say that women should have more children," Lady Gowrie continued. "I think that is unfair to the mothers. They are whisked into big hospitals, and in 10 days they are turned out because there are no more beds. They go back to their tiny homes, where perhaps there are other small children. How can these women bring up their children as good citizens? They have to turn them out into the streets, or they do not have an opportunity to do their housework. For this reason nursery schools and free kindergartens are a blessing."

Responsibility For Children

Lady Gowrie disagreed absolutely with the suggestion that free kindergartens took the responsibility for their children away from mothers. They merely served to show the mothers their responsibilities, she said, and they not only educated the children, but the parents as well.

Before introducing Lady Dugan, who asked Lady Gowrie to declare the conference open, the chairman (Lady Bonython) explained that the conference itself was the outcome of a desire expressed by Lady Gowrie some time ago. The conference would be a preliminary one, as it was hoped that Lady Gowrie and Lady Huntingfield would be able to arrange another bigger conference later on.

Lady Bonython added that she was glad the conference was taking place on the eve of the South Australian Centenary floral festival. It seemed appropriate, for kindergarten meant "children's garden," and kindergartens were often the only beautiful spots in sordid neighborhoods.

Causes Of Failure

The co-principal of the Kindergarten College of South Australia (Miss D. H. King) gave a history of the kindergarten movement in South Australia. In the old days, she said, "correlation" had been the great watchword for children of four and five years of age. So much had been crowded into the children's time that they had no opportunity for independent activities.

Representing the Free Kindergarten of Tasmania, Mrs. W. H. Thummler gave a brief survey of methods employed there. One great factor in the success of kindergartens there was the system of co-operation, she said. Each kindergarten received advice as to what the others were doing.

program that would be used for demonstration and research purposes. Lady Gowrie's support for the development of these centres was critical at this time and her support contributed towards a positive decision by the commonwealth government. In April 1938 the scheme was approved by the Prime Minister, who wrote to the Premiers of each state.

"It has been decided that a Demonstration Centre should be established in each Capital city at which not only the methods of care and instruction of young children be tested and demonstrated, but also problems of physical growth, nutrition and development will be studied. These centres will be under the direction of the Commonwealth Department of Health."

1930's and 1940's

The plan for six Lady Gowrie Child Centres across Australia was brought to life in 1939. These centres were to provide a holistic approach to childcare (what we now know as Early Childhood Education and Care) with a focus on nutrition, health and well-being as well as education. Each service was to employ a social worker and a nurse, alongside the teaching staff and assistants to support children's education and care under the guidance of the Centre Director. The children admitted to the centres were to primarily come from disadvantaged families. Battery Point in Hobart was chosen as the site for the Tasmanian centre.



Battery Point is named after the battery of guns which were established on the point in 1818 as part of the Hobart coastal defences. The battery was situated on the site of today's Princes Park. The guns were used to fire salutes on ceremonial occasions but were never called upon to repel an invasion. The battery was decommissioned after an 1878 review of Hobart's defences found that its location would tend to draw an enemy's fire onto the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

Battery Point today retains its historical features with narrow streets (once filled with children playing), historical buildings including Georgian cottages and grand colonial mansions. It has evolved over the centuries from a very poor suburb, which was a key determinant of where the first Lady Gowrie Child Centre was to be built, to being the very affluent suburb of Hobart it is today.

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point

By 1939 the busy Salamanca Place industrial area had grown alongside Battery Point.

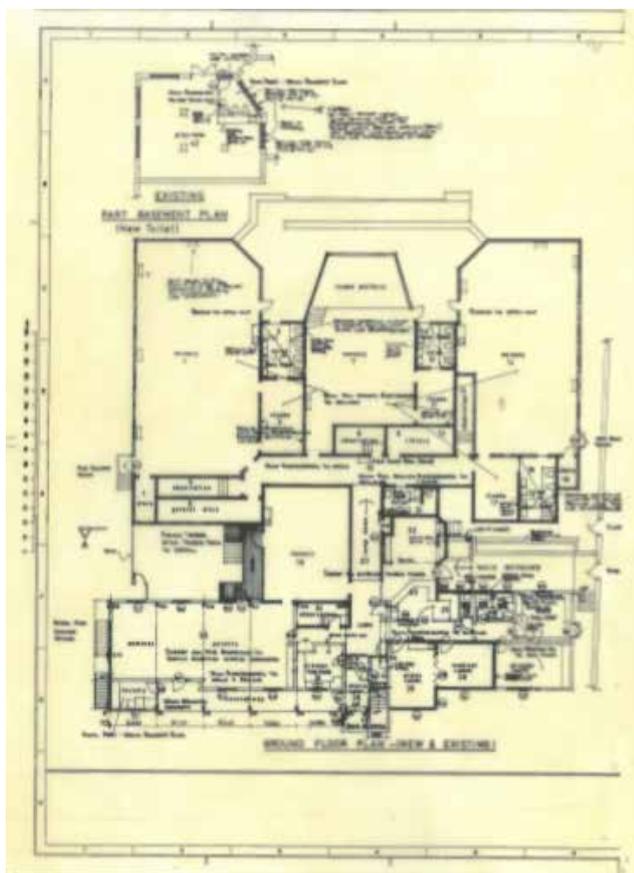


The Tasmanian Lady Gowrie Child Centre was intentionally located at Battery Point to serve children and families who lived in the area. Its design incorporated observation booths that enabled children to be studied in each of its three rooms for the purpose of research. The centre also included separate spaces for the onsite nurse to perform regular health checks, the social worker to support parents and children and a doctor's room for when doctors were to visit all children.

This cross-disciplinary approach to supporting children’s optimal development was revolutionary for the time and it’s an approach that Lady Gowrie Tasmania has pursued in the 21st century through the development of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families. This service opened in 2016 and like the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service it has been designed to enable visitors and students to observe children and educators in the learning spaces. Additionally, the Mary Gibson training room enable Gowrie Training & Consultancy to facilitate professional learning onsite as well as use by community groups.



The Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families, South Hobart (2016).



Architect, Bernard Walker’s plans for the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point (1939).

On April 23rd, 1940 the Mercury reported:

“Many persons crossing Hobart harbour during the past few months have wondered at and remarked upon the new building in Runnymede St., Battery Pt. Long and low, and full of windows, it suggests a hospital perhaps, but far from being a refuge for the sick, normal health is one of the essentials for entrance. It will be the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, and here, before long, it is hoped to gather in about 100 children- all under school age- all healthy, normal Australian Children, preferably of Australian parents.”

This statement offers some insight into societal norms in the 1940’s, but there has since been a great deal of change in relation to cultural competence, diversity and inclusive practices across the country.

Although the centre was developed in 1939, its official opening didn’t occur until the 11th of November 1940. The event was presided over by Her Excellency Lady Zara Gowrie herself with opening comments from the Governor of Tasmania, Sir Ernest Clark, captured in the Mercury on the 12th of November 1940.

“If these centres fulfil their aims, they will not only promote the physical, mental and social development of the pre-school child, but they will serve as centres for parent education, and for researches which will benefit children generally”.....



Her Excellency Lady Gowrie receiving from the architect (Mr. Bernard Walker) the key to the Lady Gowrie Child Centre building at Hobart. The opening ceremony was performed by Her Excellency yesterday. The centre is performing a valuable service in providing interest for the pre-school child.

“In beautiful surroundings the children would be taught by specially skilled and specially trained staff and would be carefully watched from a health point of view. His excellency urged those carrying on the work to remember that there were other kindergartens, and that there was no better way of learning than by interchanging ideas and knowledge.”

Mercury, 12th November 1940

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre at Battery Point official opening was undoubtedly an exciting time of celebration that heralded a shared community vision to expand the provision of Child Centres across the state and also to share the experience and knowledge gained within the services through research, and practical experiences.

“The eagerness which parents are displaying to have their children admitted to the recently established Lady Gowrie Child Centre at Battery Point, Hobart is a striking indication of the public appreciation of the value of the modern methods of the institution.”

Mercury, February 26th, 1941

Although an early chapter in the Lady Gowrie Tasmania history, the ‘appreciation and value of the modern methods’ employed at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point emerged from a strong focus on nutrition and health as well as a commitment to developing independence. This focus, along with a commitment to contemporary research-based approaches has remained and is still a feature of Lady Gowrie Tasmania today.

The Lady Gowrie Tasmania Education and Care Service at Battery Point continues to operate in 2019 and is a much loved fixture in the local community. Over the decades it has undergone extensive renovations, in the most part to extend its capacity to include more spaces for children. The first round of renovations was undertaken in the 1960’s with further work taking place in 1970’s, 1980’s, 1990’s and 2010’s. The most recent renovation was completed in 2014, when the Hampden room was opened to coincide with Lady Gowrie Tasmania’s 75th anniversary.

Mel Byrne, Lady Gowrie Tasmania Centre Manager at the time, vividly recalls the opening of the Hampden room which coincided with Lady Gowrie Tasmania 75th Anniversary:

“The celebrations for the 75th anniversary were to be held at Battery Point and it had been decided to hold this in conjunction with opening the new Hampden room. The date was set, an enormous cake was ordered and the Fahan School had been invited to send along some children from their orchestra to provide the musical component of the celebrations. The children in the centre had been discussing who Lady Gowrie was, and had done some work through visual medium to share their thoughts on the namesake of the centre which was on display for all to appreciate. The day arrived and it was a wet one, a really wet one! The anticipation was building and there was a nervous buzz in the air. The Fahan schoolgirls arrived en masse, with not just two or three students, but rather the entire orchestra, none of whom, had wanted to be “left out” so had all decided to come along. While they set themselves up and settled into the Hampden room, I put on my high vis vest, huddled under an umbrella and set about directing the traffic of arriving guests in Runnymede street.

For anyone who has been to the Hampden room, you would know that it provides an intimate and cosy setting for smaller groups of children. Needless to say, the opening of the room by Hon. Matthew Groom, with the full Fahan Orchestra, and invited guests seeking shelter from the rain, was squeezey to say the least, but was a successful event!”

The Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service now caters for 112 children daily, across 6 indoor and 4 outdoor learning spaces.

Miss A Miriam Chamberlain, reporting for the Advocate in 1944 noted:

“The Lady Gowrie Child Centre might be described as a kindergarten-deluxe. Appointments and equipment are modern, and on almost a lavish scale. The welfare and advancement of the happy little inmates of the preschool period of 2-6 years which it serves have been studied in every detail.”

The Advocate, 3rd March 1944



Story Time, 1944

Ian Bronowski (a friend of Lady Gowrie Tasmania and local resident) recalls an unusual addition to the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point at the time that would definitely not be described as ‘lavish’. It does, however, reflect the very real concerns of a community caught up in the second world war:

“So do you know about the air raid shelter (at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre; now Lady Gowrie Battery Point Child Centre)? They used to have a flap. You lifted the flap up and put the kids down the chute and in fact, when they were renovating, they found it.”

1944 also saw a move to establish a second Lady Gowrie Centre for Children, this time at Lower Sandy Bay. The Mercury reported that representations had been made to the Minister for Health (Mr Howroyd) asking him to make representations to the Federal authorities. The request referred to 4 years of success at the Battery Point centre but also noted it served a limited area (Mercury 9th March 1944).

Ultimately the request was unsuccessful, and it wasn't until the 1990s that another Lady Gowrie service was established in Tasmania, at Campbell Street in North Hobart (pictured below).



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service 1990's.

Lady Zara Gowrie's Farewell

On 28th May 1944 Lady Zara Gowrie arrived in Launceston Tasmania to commence her farewell tour. She visited the Battery Point centre on 31st May and the Examiner reported on her speech on the following day.

"She had learnt so much from the women of Australia that she would ever be grateful to them, especially for their quite outstanding ability to do what-ever came their way, their great-heartedness, and their thought and understanding of others."

Examiner, 1st June 1944



Lady Zara Gowrie during her farewell tour – 1944.

Later in the tour, Lady Gowrie was quoted by the Mercury:

"I am very impressed by all the keenness, enthusiasm, and hard, solid work of the women in the

organisation I have inspected, and at the conclusion of this, my farewell visit, I send to the women of Tasmania my love and admiration.... I am delighted with the pre-school child centre in Hobart, but I do want to see an extension of these centres. Our great hope when we started them was that they would be copied, perhaps on a smaller scale. I wish them every good wish. They represent an amazing piece of national work. For it is important to get these small children started in the right way."

The Mercury, 2nd June 1944.

While Lady Gowrie was to move on and travel back to the United Kingdom, her name today is synonymous with quality education and care services across Tasmania. In part this is due to the expansion of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania services; but it also about an unwavering commitment to those early principles that put children first by a visionary number of local women that is carried on today.

After the departure of Lady Zara Gowrie, work at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point continued.

Appreciating Children's Creative Expression

On 20 September 1944 the Mercury reported that senior teacher Pat Adams, along with Lorna Newman and Beth Stubbs had worked together to prepare the children's artwork into an exhibition for the families. The exhibition promised *".....an unusual insight into methods of teaching and the response of the small pupils."*



This appreciation for children's art is still apparent today, from the provision of spaces and places in Lady Gowrie Tasmania services for children to create and display their work, to educator practices that nurture and support artistic and creative development.

The Gallery which is part of the Battery Point Centre includes art works by a number of well know local artists who participated in an artist in residence program in the 1990's.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Family Day Care children, educators and scheme personnel have led an Art Exhibition at West Moonah Community House since 2017.



Family Day Care Exhibition, 2019

In 2018 the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families at South Hobart entered a collaborative artwork by the children into the "Art from Trash" exhibition at the Salamanca Art Centre. The success of this exhibition has been the impetus for other Lady Gowrie Tasmania services to exhibit.

The Great Escape

Throughout the 80th year celebration, the voices of people with a connection to Lady Gowrie Tasmania have been sought. Imagine the delight of the archival discovery of Ian Smith's 'escape' from the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point as penned by his mother Ruth. Although unsure of when exactly this was written, it is shared with the permission of Ian Smith.

"A little three year old boy in a green suit caused his teacher much concern one day in 1944. Because his Dad was a prisoner of war of the Japanese and he lacked playmates he was allowed one of the vacancies at Lady Gowrie, so we moved to the area. Fences were no barrier to this boy from the farm, and in his green suit under the peppercorn tree he eluded the watchful eyes of the supervisor and was up and over and off!

When I arrived to collect him, I felt sorry for the anguish he had caused while staff searched the waterfront and Salamanca and eventually caught up with him outside the Hobart Savings Bank in Murray Street."

After a very happy six months at Lady Gowrie we received word that his Dad was alive and returning soon, so it was back to the open spaces."

Mrs Ruth Smith, Battery Point



Ian Smith

Mr Smith shared his recollection of the incident.

"My most outstanding memory was the first few days at Lady Gowrie. I was a country boy who didn't like being there. At the time, I wanted to go home to mum even though I had no idea where she was.

On the 1st day I jumped the fence only to find a teacher on the other side waiting for me.

On the 2nd day I waited to ensure there were no teachers near-by and took the opportunity to jump the fence once more. The teachers quickly identified what I was about to do but I was quick and took off. I headed to Salamanca Place and even though I had a head start, the teachers were right behind me. They were hot on my heels.

From memory I proceeded to St David's Cathedral where I was met by my teachers and returned to the Lady Gowrie Child Centre."

Today, Ian Smith is the second-generation owner and operator of The Willie Smith's company in the Huon Valley. While Ian's absconding behaviours in 1944 would have caused the teachers at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre Battery Point much concern, it is potentially this strength in character, determination and adventurous spirit that drove his innovations in the 1970's to weather the down-turn in the apple industry at the time, through forging a new business model, which has seen Willie Smith's prosper into the 21st century.

A Qualified and Skilled Workforce

Isla Stamp was the first Tasmanian Lady Gowrie Child Centre Director (1939-1942). By all accounts Miss Stamp was a valued advocate for Tasmanian children, so when she was transferred to Western Australia to take up a position as the Director of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre there, the Mercury reported on it.

Miss Stamp's new position in Western Australia also included taking charge of the Free Kindergarten Training College. No doubt her tenure in Tasmania, leading and nurturing her team, would have prepared her well for this responsibility.



Mercury, December 8th, 1942

A skilled workforce has always been a priority for Lady Gowrie Tasmania. In the 1940's attainment of a suitable qualification was only possible through travel to Melbourne, where young Tasmanian women were expected to live away from home whilst they studied for their qualification. This would have been particularly challenging for some, but the commitment of these pioneers is admirable.

Lois Williams and **Elaine Watson** were both Lady Gowrie Tasmania educators in the 1940's. They shared memories of their time with the organisation and of their training experiences.

Lois Williams: *"What we did, we got scholarships. The Kindergarten union offered scholarships to Lady Gowrie Centre because at that time it was staffed by interstate people, and the Kindergarten Union felt we could have a local input and so they offered scholarships to go off to Melbourne to the Kew Training Colleges."*

Elaine Watson: *"I heard it on the radio. It was Mrs Elliot. Doctor Elliott's wife was talking about the Bursaries they were giving to go to Melbourne, and I thought oh yes, I could do that. Because I really think I thought it was going to be a bit like grade one."*

Lois Williams: *"Because I loved my first year of school, and that was what I thought it was going to be like. And still I did like my years in Melbourne."*

Lois Williams: *"My mother didn't want me to go; she thought I was too young to go away to Melbourne. I was 16. You were the right age"*

Elaine Watson: *"Yes I was 17."*



Graduation dance, Kindergarten Teachers College, Kew, Victoria, 1947 (Elaine Watson third from right. Mary Gibson, far right)

WOMAN'S REALM.

TASMANIA KINDERGARTENS

West Australian's Interest.

Miss Dora Kahan, who has spent the past two years in Tasmania as director of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Hobart, and part-time field officer for the Kindergarten Union of Tasmania, recently returned to Perth for a vacation. She has brought back with her some interesting facts of how the Tasmanian Government is assisting the Kindergarten Union with its work.

The first important move made by the Director of Education in Tasmania was the sending of the two best first-year students of the State Training College to Melbourne to study at the Kindergarten Training College for two years. As the dearth of kindergartens in Tasmania was due to the lack of trained teachers this was a considerable advance in the bettering of conditions for the pre-school child.

The first two students left for Melbourne in 1942 and the following year another two were sent. The director decided to continue this practice until there were sufficient trained teachers to staff kindergartens in Tasmania. Up to date this State has relied on trained staff from other States, there being no Kindergarten Training College in Tasmania.

Last year the first two students returned and at present one was teaching in an infant section of a State school, while the other was in charge of a pre-school centre built by the Australian Newsprint Paper Mills at Boyer. A truly co-operative effort, the land and materials for the school were supplied by the firm and the men of the mill erected and equipped it. The teacher's salary was paid by the Education Department.

With this encouragement the Kindergarten Union decided to expand and last year an extension committee was formed to tackle the problems of assisting local groups to build centres. The director offered all the assistance his department could give. With the aid of the extension committee local groups could erect and equip buildings and the Education Department would supply and pay the salary of trained teachers. Although these teachers would be supervised by the Government, the director suggested they co-operate fully with the union.

Miss Kahan said that it was encouraging to find the public generally, becoming more aware of the need for pre-school centres. Local groups had proved most helpful and now that the Government was supplying trained staff she hoped for an increase in kindergartens throughout the State.

Miss Kahan, who has been spending her vacation with her family in South Perth, will leave on her way to Hobart by tomorrow's airliner to resume her position.

In 2019 Lady Gowrie Tasmania employs over 450 educators across its education and care services who hold or are actively working towards a Certificate III or Diploma of Early Childhood Education & Care or an Early Childhood Degree. Many others hold additional qualifications that relate to leadership, management, training and assessment. Furthermore, Lady Gowrie Tasmania provides leadership through advocacy and practice in raising the status and standing of the workforce on a state and national level.

In 1945 the early identification of a skills gaps, and the commitment by the Tasmanian Government to support the upskilling of Tasmanian early years educators was identified by Dora Kahan as an important move in bettering the conditions for pre-school children in Tasmania. Dora Kahan was at the helm as the Centre Director between 1943 and 1949.

The strong commitment to professional development voiced by Dora Kahan and the Kindergarten Union hasn't diminished since 1945 and Lady Gowrie Tasmania's ability to support and nurture our educators has evolved. Today, through Gowrie Training & Consultancy, educators can enrol in accredited vocational training courses to achieve Certificate III and Diploma level qualifications as well as engage with a range of ongoing professional development opportunities. This is encouraged and supported by the Lady Gowrie Tasmania organisation to not only ensure professional pathways are pursued, but also to ensure that children attending services are receiving the best possible education and care experiences.

2017 saw Lady Gowrie Tasmania actively engaged in broader sector workforce development through the management of the Early Years and School Age Care Workforce Development Plan, 2017-2010 for Early Childhood Australia Tasmania Branch. This work has, in part, drawn on Lady Gowrie Tasmania's extensive experience and knowledge, along with the organisation's strong commitment to nurturing educators with attributes suitable to providing quality learning experiences that nurture the whole child.

Peter Emery

Peter Emery, a teaching student in the 1960's reflects on his association with Lady Gowrie Tasmania beginning as a child in the 1940's:

"I was an unusual child because I was a French boy who only spoke French. But I remember beginning to learn to speak English in the playground. I also remember staying with a couple of teachers at their home on the banks of the Brown's River in Kingston.

I remember Battery Point better when I returned there in 1965 and 1966 when I attend the Hobart Teachers College. We were there to study, observe and report for a period of time."

Peter Emery attended Lady Gowrie Battery Point in 1948. Peter is a qualified teacher who has taught all over Hobart and its surrounds. Peter and his wife established, own and operate Mum's Meals on Wheels which has been servicing the Hobart community for the past 30 years.



Peter Emery in Princes Park (1940s)

Dora Kahan Retires

After 6 years' service Dora Kahan retired from her position as the Director of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre due to ill health. In a piece written in the Mercury in May 1949 Miss Kahan was cited for her technical knowledge and for proving the need for trained personnel and suitable accommodation in child centres.

Retiring Director Of Child Centre Praised

TRIBUTES to the way in which Miss P. M. Kahan had raised the standard of work among pre-school children were paid at Hobart on Monday by representatives of kindergartens.

MISS KAHAN is retiring from the position of Director of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre because of ill-health and will leave Hobart. She has been director of the centre for six years.

Those represented were the Hobart Free Kindergarten Union, Tasmanian Kindergarten Union, and the Lady Gowrie Child Centre.

At a gathering of the three bodies at the Highfield Hotel, the Director of Public Health (Dr. Park) who is also president of the Tasmanian Kindergarten Union, made a presentation to Miss Kahan.

He said her work in Tasmania, both as director of the Lady Gowrie centre, a field officer, and a member of the executive of the union, had been of great value because of her technical knowledge.

Her work had proved the need for trained personnel and suitable accommodation and equipment in child centres.

The secretary (Miss I. Stephenson) also spoke on Miss Kahan's work, and hoped she would be able to continue her interest in the pre-school movement in other parts of Australia.

Early Advocacy & Lobbying

LADY GOWRIE CENTRES FOR CHILDREN

HOBART, Friday.—A deputation from the Lady Gowrie Pre-School Child Development Association and the Free Kindergarten Union told the Minister for Health (Mr. White) to-day that it believed that if the Lady Gowrie Centres for Children were handed over by the Commonwealth to the States they would not have the same facilities for the interchange of officers and other advantages.

The Minister said Tasmania did not wish to take over the centres. The proposed handing over would be discussed by the conference of State and Federal Health Ministers in Canberra next month.

As early as 1946, control of the Lady Gowrie Centres nationally was under discussion. The Advocate (Burnie) on April 27th, 1946 reported that a deputation representing the Lady Gowrie Pre-School Child Development Association and the Free Kindergarten Union met with the Tasmanian Minister for Health to express their concerns about the possibility of handing responsibility of the Gowrie Centres from Commonwealth to State Government control. On this occasion, the Minister allayed fears by saying that the Tasmanian Government didn't wish to take over supporting the centres, but across the following years, substantial societal changes and changes to government approaches and responsibilities, including setting and regulating standards and funding approaches, have certainly had an impact and have sometimes caused concern. These changes have included:

- an increase in the number of childcare services nationally in the 1970s and 1980s in response to broader societal changes, including more women entering the workforce and improving education levels
- the introduction of the Child Care Act 1972 signalled the beginning of the Commonwealth Government's financial involvement in Australian childcare. This provision of funding for non-profit organisations (including local government bodies) to operate centre-based facilities for children or working and/or sick parents was provided in the form of capital grants, recurrent grants (to help pay qualified staff and provide for children in special need) and grants for research into matters relating to childcare
- the extension of Commonwealth childcare funding to all children in 1974. This was a marked change in the philosophical underpinning of the provision of childcare to move from just children from families that were poor or needy, to all children.
- an increase in provision of Commonwealth funding to family day care (FDC) services and outside school hours care (OSHC) services from the mid 1970's to the early 1980s.

These changes, across years, underpinned a shift in Commonwealth Government focus, in relation to early years education and care, from the child to the family that is still prevalent across Australia today. In 2019 Lady Gowrie Tasmania operates within a system funded to support parents, yet the focus is always on 'Children First'. This organisational commitment sometimes sees Lady Gowrie Tasmania taking a strong position against government initiatives and proposals which the Organisation believes are not in the best interests of children.

As recently as 2017 the Tasmanian State Government was advocating for the lowering of the school starting age to 3 years. Lady Gowrie Tasmania challenged this position, calling upon the knowledge of its team, research and international best practice evidence. As a result of this position, which was shared by state-wide colleagues, the government reflected on its position and has since introduced the Working Together for 3 Year Olds initiative; an initiative that works in partnership with the Tasmanian early years sector to support eligible Tasmanian 3 year old children to access suitable early childhood education and care programs.

Ros Cornish (Lady Gowrie Tasmania CEO since 1999) reflects on Lady Gowrie Tasmania's actions around the proposed lowering of the school starting age in 2017:

"Lady Gowrie Tasmania had a very strong evidence based view about lowering the school starting age which came about in the review of the Education Act. We took a strong approach to lobbying to persuade the Government to change its mind. Evidence was presented to the Legislative Council, we wrote articles for the press and engaged with families and the community to gauge support. Why? Because we truly believed that this was not in the best interests of very young children to be in a structured school setting."

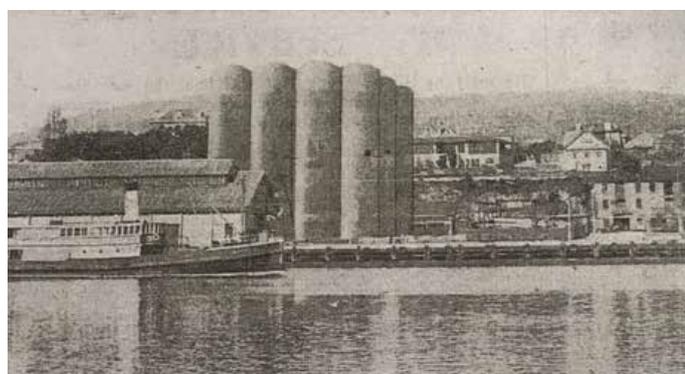
Unsurprisingly, at an earlier time, Mary Gibson (Lady Gowrie Child Centre Director 1952-1970) noted in the Lady Gowrie Child Centre 1956 Annual Report that *"We have... become increasingly concerned by the fact that very young children are frequently sent to private schools at a very early age, three and four years. This has been reported to us this year from other schools and has proved to be not in the best interest of the child or the school to which he is sent. It is the considered opinion of a number of primary teachers that five years of age is quite soon enough for children to enter school proper"*.

This statement by Mary Gibson, along with the statement by Ros Cornish shows that Lady Gowrie Tasmania has and continues to always place the rights of children to the forefront of political debate and policy.

Some of the earliest acts of Lady Gowrie Child Centre advocacy for children include objecting to the air pollution caused by the expulsion of soot from motor vessels around the waterfront area of Hobart in 1948, to opposition to the proposed construction of the wheat silos at the Salamanca waterfront area in 1951.



Letter from the Marine Board Hobart, August 3rd, 1948.



Silos on the Hobart waterfront in 1951. The Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point is the partly obscured building on the immediate right.

Despite best efforts, Lady Gowrie Child Centre was unsuccessful on both occasions. The silos were built and in more recent times have been converted into apartments.

Lois Williams, teacher at this time:

"I remember when we were there they built the wheat Silos - it stopped our views to the water. We just lost our view."

Today, Lady Gowrie Tasmania continues to advocate for children and families through family support, inclusion support, research projects, such as supporting children's physical health and wellbeing, and building strong and sustainable relationships with government that enable lobbying to be undertaken in a professional and respectful manner.

The organisation also supports individual staff to contribute to the work of the leading advocacy organisation – Early Childhood Australia, both at a national and state level.

The current CEO Ros Cornish served on the Board of Early Childhood Australia for 27 years and in 2018 completed the six year term as the National President – the first Tasmanian to hold this prestigious position. Lady Gowrie Tasmania's strong and long history of advocating for the rights of children is now well established and will, no doubt, continue well into the future.



Children at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point looking through the fence at the silos, 1967.

1950's

Elspeth Vaughan, Lady Gowrie Child Centre Director, 1949-1952

Elspeth Vaughan (later Elspeth Hope-Johnstone) was born in Hobart in 1926, training and working as a kindergarten teacher in Melbourne, before returning to Tasmania, where she taught at the Augusta Road Kindergarten before starting work with Lady Gowrie at Battery Point. Elspeth was awarded membership of the Order of Australia for services to art, education and public broadcasting. She is currently a resident at Vaucluse Gardens retirement village in South Hobart.

Similar to Miss Isla Stamp, Elspeth Vaughan served as the Director for 3 years, before leaving to become Supervisor of Pre-Schools in the Education Department. At this time Miss Mary Gibson was appointed to the position of Director.

Mary Gibson, Lady Gowrie Child Centre Director, 1952-1970

Mary Gibson was to occupy the position of Director for 18 years and further continued her relationship with Lady Gowrie Tasmania beyond her retirement for the rest of her life. Current CEO **Ros Cornish** recalls hand delivering the Annual Reports to Mary Gibson at her Battery Point home and then in later years to the local aged care facility-Vaucluse Gardens in South Hobart.

"When I came to Gowrie, one of the handover tasks was to take the Annual Report to Mary Gibson, the former Director who lived in Battery Point in a little cottage at the time. I continued to visit Mary Gibson to deliver the Annual Report for many years. She was a funny, wise, no nonsense woman - an iconic early childhood figure, respected by many university lecturers and students. She was also a strong and opinionated advocate for children. When I visited, I'd sit with her in the cottage and in later years in the nursing home. She'd have a sherry as she perused each page of the report and she'd ask me questions, "Tell me about this love" and "What does that mean?". Then we'd get to the financials. "I'm not interested in that. Just tell me if we've got enough dough in the bank."

Mary Gibson always maintained her strong connection and association with Lady Gowrie Tasmania, attending the 60th anniversary celebrations in 1999 at the Royal Yacht club of Tasmania in Sandy Bay. Ros Cornish recalls Mary Gibson, being quite the card.

"At one of the milestone celebrations at the yacht club she was the guest of honour and cut the cake. We had dignitaries, politicians and her job was simply

to cut the cake. Well, she held the floor with her stories, proceeded to light up a cigarette in a no smoking area and was the last to leave to go back to her nursing home. She was an amazing woman and that's why the training room at the Integrated Centre in South Hobart was named in her honour".

Ian Bronowski reflects on Mary Gibson's stories from her time with Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point:

Ian: *"Oh, I adored Mary. I used to go around to her house for sherries at 5.30 and she was such a lady and such a character. I think that's what I wanted to say to you. You can have all these policies and all the mission statements and all the bulls**t and statistics. It's the people! When I briefly looked at the 75 yearbook, I could just see those people in my head. They were such wonderful characters, and that's what's made it. Powerful, often difficult women.... Mary lived in Battery Point in a gorgeous little house at the end of DeWitt Street. She smoked like a chimney because they all did!"*

Ian: *"Do you know about Miss Gladys Penrith?"*

Interviewer: *"No."*

Ian: *"Oh! She was a dynamic figure. I'm pretty sure she became the Australian Preschool Association National Director, probably based in Canberra, I think, and she was a fearsome woman. These were the days you know. So here's Mary, young, straight out of college, and here's this fearsome woman turning up once a year to do the annual check. This was a nerve racking experience for Mary. One year Miss Penrith turned up and said, "Mary you need a glory vine out the front." So Mary, you can imagine her sipping her sherry telling this story, spent all year growing this glory vine. The day before Miss Penrith turned up all the leaves fell off. So Mary cello taped them all back on!"*

"Mary also taught me a wonderful strategy. Do you know the dead flower strategy? It's brilliant! So what you do is you put a big vase of beautiful flowers on the front counter. She (Miss Penrith) walks in but in it you have a dead flower. You get her rant for the first hour half hour "How could you possibly have a dead flower in the foyer?" and of course, it deflects from everything else!"

Penny Andersen (long-term Lady Gowrie Tasmania friend and associate) knew Mary Gibson for many years:

"I first had contact with Mary in 1958 when she interviewed me for a Department of Education scholarship to go to Kew for the 3 year Diploma and to return to lecture at the Hobart Teachers College, to equip students to teach children aged 3 to 8 (the first in Australia). As a lecturer at Hobart Teachers college from 1967 to 1971, I regularly visited Gowrie and brought groups of students there to observe from the booths. I continued to have contact with Gowrie for the rest of my career. I taught with Mary at UTas and remained friends until her death."

The observation booths mentioned by Penny Andersen, were used for research purposes, parent observations and teacher training and are still utilised today for families to observe their children, by university students, students of Gowrie Training & Consultancy as well as allied professionals. The Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service continues its strong connection to the University of Tasmania (UTas), with researchers still undertaking observations from these original observation areas.

The early 1950's saw the Lady Gowrie Battery Point Child Centre continue to strive for excellence in early education, with praise for work underway reported in the Mercury on February 22nd, 1952. The 1953-54 Lady Gowrie Child Centre Annual Report noted that "250 visitors had been to the centre, many from other pre-schools seeking help and advice, while others were professional visitors."

Lorraine Polglase (Lady Gowrie Tasmania staff member in the 1990s) reflects:

"I remember using the observation booth with the Kindergarten teacher Helen Stephen. Later I studied Psychology at university, and we came to Lady Gowrie (Battery Point) to observe children with special needs. The booths are a wonderful teaching and learning tool."

1953 saw significant shifts in training in Tasmania with the University of Tasmania (UTas) announcing a 3-year course covering 'kindergarten and infant training' (deferred until 1955). 1955 also saw a Teachers Seminar held at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point along with a fair held by the mothers committee.



*Mercury March 29th, 1955 Teachers Seminar
(from Mary Gibson's files)*

In 1956 the six Lady Gowrie Child Centres across the nation participated in a research project on "stress in young children" which was overseen by Professor John Bostock, Queensland University, in conjunction with Professor D.R MacCalum in England and Miss Christine Heining. In this same year the six Lady Gowrie Child Care Directors met in Canberra in April, where Professor Bostock gave guidance about carrying out research in centres.

As initiated by the Lady Gowrie Child Care Directors in 1956, the tradition of meeting continues in 2019 with the CEO's of each State Gowrie gathering on a regular basis to share

pedagogy and practice, undertake joint projects, develop resources and network. Despite being separate entities, each share the Gowrie name as well as the shared commitment to quality. One of the key initiatives undertaken by the Gowrie Australia Consortium has been the development of an early childhood journal titled "Reflections". This free publication is distributed to the education and care sector nationally and has become a well-respected practical resource for educators.

The value of centre-based research was not lost on the Lady Gowrie Directors in 1955 and is still used across Lady Gowrie Tasmania services in 2019 as a valuable professional approach towards achieving quality outcomes for children. In early 2000, two educators participated in a study tour to New Zealand as part of a Gowrie Australia initiative to gain insight into documenting childrens learning through Learning Stories. 2007 saw five Lady Gowrie Tasmania leaders participate in a Study Tour to Michigan, USA. The study tour focused specifically on understanding and learning about High/Scope and to investigate which aspects of the approach might apply to the different contexts in Australian services. On their return two Action Research Projects were implemented across the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Frederick Street Occasional Care Service and Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service.

Action Research continues to be a methodology utilised as a professional development approach in 2019. As this history is being written, Dr Megan Gibson, Queensland University of Technology (QUT), an Associate of Gowrie Training & Consultancy, is working with and supporting three education and care services to design individual Action Research Projects.

In 2010 Lady Gowrie Tasmania partnered with University of Tasmania researcher Dr Janet Dyment from the Faculty of Education to embark on a research project that explored the relationships between playground design and quantity and quality of children's physical activity.

The partnership stemmed from the growing awareness that the prevalence of childhood obesity has increased dramatically in recent years and seen to be 'one of the most serious public health challenges for the 21st century' (World Health Organisation, 2010).

The study conducted across four Lady Gowrie Tasmania Education and Care sites with a diversity of playgrounds sought to understand if and how playground design influences pre-schoolers' activity patterns.

The findings of the research challenged the perception that children are active, busy and 'on the go' the majority of the time with children recorded to be inactive for a significant amount of time each day. These findings provided the impetus for Lady Gowrie Tasmania educators to be more intentional in planning outdoor play experiences for young children.

The research methodology and findings were published in a series of three articles written by Dr Dyment in the Gowrie Australia "Reflections" magazine. Dr Dyment presented the research findings at international conferences.

In 2016, the Lady Gowrie Tasmania executive team worked closely with researchers from University of Wollongong, specifically with the Early Start Research Institute (ESRI) team, Lady Gowrie Tasmania southern services and educators in a project focusing on future sustainable professional learning models in the early childhood education and care sector, positively impacting on physical activity levels and healthy eating behaviours of toddler and preschool aged children across Tasmania and beyond.

In 2017 Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families in South Hobart and Gowrie Training & Consultancy embarked on an Action Research project which was supported by the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). Dr Megan Gibson from QUT, in collaboration with Professor Andrew Hills from U Tas led the project.

The project was titled 'Physical Health and Wellbeing: innovative approaches in an inner-city community'. It focused on building educator capacity to enhance children's physical health and wellbeing through new and challenging activities and innovative programs.

As a result of this research project, on 21st September 2018, Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families was named the winner of the Advancing Pedagogy award at the 2018 HESTA National Early Childhood Education & Care Awards in Sydney.

On behalf of Lady Gowrie Tasmania and the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families team, two educators accepted the award and stated:

"As a result of the project educators are now working more intensively to create physical environments that thrill and challenge children. A great outcome of the project is the increased focus on providing myriad opportunities for genuinely effortful activity within all of our children's learning spaces, both indoors and out."



Neivh Gilligan accepts the HESTA National Award on behalf of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families educators, September 2018.

Since receiving the award, Lady Gowrie Tasmania has continued to explore action research as a valuable pedagogical tool.

From Committees and Clubs to the Board

The 1955-1956 Annual Report noted an increase in the annual commonwealth grant by £475 per annum, but this was clearly not enough to cover operational expenses as parental contributions were "reluctantly" raised to meet the increased costs of providing meals for children at the centre. It was also reported that the Mothers Club has raised £350 towards equipment for the year.

Throughout the early history of Lady Gowrie Tasmania, the Mothers Committee or Mothers Club played an important fund-raising role. They were a somewhat informal group of volunteers. In comparison Lady Gowrie Tasmania today is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors elected for their skills, knowledge and experience in specialist areas that support a strong governance framework. The Board convenes on a regular basis to measure progress against the strategic direction of the organisation and discuss and debate current issues to ensure the viability and sustainability of the organisation into the future.

The Board delegate responsibility for the operationalising the strategic direction to the CEO and Senior Management Team. With Board Directors much less occupied with rolling sleeves up and participating at a grassroots fundraising level, the selection process is now tailored to ensure that the members are able to connect with multiple levels of community and are able to participate strategically in moving the organisation constructively through time.

2019 Board Directors

Chair: William McShane

Deputy Chair: Barbara Mawson

Anne Beach

Belinda Beltz

Bobby Court

Kane Ingham

Andrew Saward

Angie Somann Crawford

June Wansong

Ros Cornish reflects on how the Board, in its current form, evolved:

"If you sit on the railway long enough you'll get run over". That was how I was feeling. We had to keep moving forward, without selling our soul, without losing our values, what we stand for and why Gowrie was established originally. So, the adoption of a strong governance framework, including the appointment of a skills based Board and a clear delineation between strategy and operational matters, resulted in a change in the way the Board operated. The change of name from Management Committee to Board of Directors supported the delineation."

When appointed as CEO and attending the Management Committee meetings, Ros Cornish was amazed at the size and composition of the Committee. Many were parents, who talked about things that were important to them – very operational issues such as the daily food menu for children.

“The meetings went long into the evening without a great number of outcomes. It was certainly not strategic, but through strong leadership by a couple of people who formed the first Board under the framework, it became much more streamlined and focused through the development of the strategic plan. A key part of that strategic plan was growth, planned growth, as we were beginning to witness the beginning of major changes in in the market and an increased number of competitors.”

Ros Lamprill reflects on her time with the Board:

“I was on the Board for several years and It was always very professionally run.”

Ros Cornish:

“Being a Board Director at Gowrie is viewed as a desirable position, which has been evidenced by the number of high level applications received when a vacancy exists. The skills matrix identifies the gaps in specific areas and whilst legal, financial and risk are high on the list, the importance of having Directors with a sound knowledge of early childhood education and training is vital, given the cornerstone of the organisation is programs for children and families and those who work with them.”

The shift from a Mothers Committee in the 1950s to a Board of Directors in the 2010s reflects on the complex changes to how not for profit organisations are operated and on contemporary understandings of families and workforce participation.

The changing societal and political landscape required a strong vision and strategic leadership to ensure the work of Lady Gowrie Tasmania in supporting children, families and childhood professionals continued.

In 1990 a significant initiative by the Government to extend fee relief (Childcare Assistance) to commercial childcare centres that had previously only been available to non-profit centres saw a major increase in the number of centres established nationally. The growth of the corporate giant ABC across the nation and into Tasmania was one catalyst towards the Lady Gowrie Tasmania expansion. Lady Gowrie Tasmania as a non-profit community organisation, through the strong leadership of the Board of Directors and CEO, Ros Cornish, implemented a planned growth strategy (combined with unplanned acquisitions where community-based services sought LGT expertise) to enable the community model to thrive in Tasmania.

Today Lady Gowrie Tasmania offers a range of education and care options to families, including long day care, occasional care, family day care and outside school hours care. In 2018 Lady Gowrie Tasmania tendered to the

Commonwealth Government and was successful in becoming the In-Home Care Support Agency, a gateway for families to access In Home Care. While the services may have expanded to meet family needs, Lady Gowrie Tasmania’s attitude to supporting children is remarkably similar to that of 1956.

The 1956 Annual Report noted that:

“The child gains security through unhurried routine and consistent guidance planned to support individual children’s needs. We aim always at developing the child’s own interest and ability through creative work, discussion, music, stories and the widening his knowledge of the world about him through excursions.”

Valuing Families

During the late 1950’s the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point organised and hosted a parent week. Beth Stubbs had previously worked at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point but by this time was living in Melbourne. She was invited to speak about her works ‘Know more-worry less- A study of the child’s growth and development and What and why are Pre-schools- what they plan and why they plan it’ held between July 7th and July 12th 1957, Parent Week was hailed as a success. Three years later, and only 10 weeks after Tasmania commenced broadcasting television, Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point hosted another Parent Week from August 4th to August 9th, 1960. This time the focus was on “Television for Children” and “The Status of the Child in the Family”. Such innovative and responsive responses to current trends and societal changes would have been no small task.

Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point continued to support families in all manner of ways, including home visits. The following guidelines, revised on February 16th, 1959, were in place for Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point staff to follow when participating in these visits.

Parent Visiting

- Why? To visit the child and get to know him – let child see good relationship between Teacher and Parent.
- Let mother know you are coming.
- Avoid times when Mrs Cardno (the Lady Gowrie Child Centre nurse) is visiting home.
- Have something to talk about other than the child.
- Don’t commit yourself too much on other children.
- Don’t get upset if mother is cross. Be calm and courteous.
- Not too well dressed in poorer areas.
- If asked to have tea - do!
- Fictitious Aunt.
- Make a time, e.g., I’ll come at 3.30 and stay for about an hour if that’s convenient.

Most of the points seem fairly self-explanatory, supporting the development of respectful relationship with the families, although one can only wonder and speculate about point 9.

Elaine Watson recalls participating in Home Visits during her time as a teacher with Lady Gowrie:

"I remember down near the Theatre Royal, near Wapping where the floods came of course. I remember visiting there. Some of the children came with four layers of clothes; they seemed to be tight on the children."

Interviewer: *Did you enjoy doing the home visits?*

"Oh Yes, that wasn't a problem, and we felt that it was good for the children to have the teachers come and know mum or dad, brothers or sisters. It gave them a way into what they could be doing. Yes, some of them were very poor those families... I remember these little houses and they were poor."

With each home visit documented in detail, along with developmental records, assessments and other relevant communication, a holistic image of each child was captured.



Parent/teacher meeting at Lady Gowrie Child Centre, 1967.

In 2019 Lady Gowrie Tasmania educators no longer work in sessional pre-school settings as they did between the 1940s to 1990s at Lady Gowrie Child Centre at Battery Point, so home visiting isn't commonly a part of their professional work. Instead, strong relationships with families are achieved through a combination of face to face interaction and the use of a digital platform, which enables educators, families and children to contribute to rich pedagogical conversations that guide curriculum planning and delivery. This approach respects the limited available time that families have to meet yet invites parents into their children's learning as valued partners.

This approach is guided by several theoretical and evidence-based approaches, including the Learning Frameworks and the National Quality Standard.

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point Fair

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point Fair was a long-standing funding tradition for Lady Gowrie, commencing in the 1940's and continuing until the 1980's. Hobart businesses were great supporters of the Fair, donating goods, services and through making financial contributions. The Tasmanian Police would direct traffic on Runnymede Street before, during and after the event to ensure peoples safety.

Lorraine Polglase:

"In my first introduction to Gowrie, the fair- the queues were around the street, Runnymede Street, with people waiting for the bell to ring for it to open..... and all the stuff was made by the parents."

Lois Williams:

"We put on the three little pigs- I can't think what the occasion was. I think it was the fair..."



*Elsbeth Vaughan – in profile at bottom of image
Jane Miller (Willing) wearing spots
Pat Finlay in the middle
Marjorie Scott 2nd from right
June Bec on the end (right)
Lois Williams in the back row*

Fundraising today is a small component of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania story. Fundraising strategies now work to support family's access to quality learning resources such as books and children's toys/equipment for the family home.

1960's

On August 17th, 1963, Mary Gibson returned from a 16-month work/pleasure trip to England where she attended a course on child development. When reflecting back 55 years later, Mary Gibson was truly leading the field, demonstrating the commitment to learning and professional development that has become synonymous with Lady Gowrie Tasmania.

In 2007, Ros Cornish travelled to Canada to research innovative manager models relevant to multi-site providers with a strong focus on how to maintain quality. A two-manager model was successfully implemented across the Lady Gowrie Tasmania long day care services soon after along with the development of a Curriculum Practice Guide.



Taryn Hall and Jodie Hayes, current Co-Managers of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Acton Education and Care Service could not speak more highly of the two-manager model:

"We love the two manager model. Both of us have strengths in different areas, and the two manager model allows us to really be able to use our strengths to the fullest capacity as well as still doing what we love to do- supporting children and educators. The two manager model allows us to role model to educators best quality practices, and we have been able to use this to strategically support educators or trainees in areas of practice that may need support. The two manager model for us has worked for nearly nine years. We have learnt so much from each other too." Jodie reflects "The Educators who get to work with Tarryn are so fortunate. She is such a strong pedagogist, and really loves working with the children and it is the two manager model that has really allowed this to continue to happen."

Taryn reflects that:

"The educators who work with Jodie have a great mentor. We have been able to use the two manager model strategically to support educators by perhaps placing them in the same room with Jodie. This has allowed the support to be real-time for those educators. Jodie does this so well, and if there was not the two manger model, this would not happen!"

1965 saw the first of many redevelopments to the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point outdoor learning environment proposed, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the centre.



On March 22nd, 1966 an invitation sent to Lady Burbury to officially open the newly designed playground at Battery point- and the 25th birthday of the centre.

Lady Gowrie Child Centre 1967 - A Snapshot of Teaching and Learning

Across 80 years Lady Gowrie Tasmania has always endeavoured to provide education and care experiences for children that interpret up to date evidence-based understandings. The child has consistently been central to professional work, but pedagogical approaches have evolved, particularly as deeper understandings of the competent and capable child have emerged. Across time children have come to be acknowledged as key decision-makers in Lady Gowrie Tasmania Education and Care settings and educators have been increasingly understood as attuned adults, equipped with specialist developmental knowledge and pedagogical skills.

In 1967 a suite of photos was taken of children engaged in play and learning at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre at Battery Point. Some of these photos demonstrate remarkable similarities to contemporary pedagogical understandings and foreshadow some of the approaches in place today. At a glance the repertoire of play and learning opportunities for children is familiar; focussed on the development of children across a number of domains, including physical development, language and literacy development, emotional and social development, musical understanding, art, science and numeracy. Additionally,

many of the children appear to be engaged in open-ended, self-directed play, and in some instances are taking risks that are, unfortunately, not always a part of the contemporary education and care experience.

The height of the climbing trestles and the lack of softfall mats or surfacing, while supporting risk-taking in 1967, would not comply with standards in 2019. None the less, the children captured in these photos appear to be very confident as they play.





Elaine Watson reflects on routine times within the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point in the late 1940's that were still observed in the 1960s:

"Of course we had dinner there for the children.... Then there were these little canvas beds that they went to sleep on after the lunch and we played music to them."



Shared story experiences were a regular feature of the day at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point in 1967. A suitable spot, a soft mat, a small group of children with an educator and a good quality book were, and still are, the elements of a fundamental early years learning experience.



Dramatic play has always offered children opportunities to explore ideas and to make sense of their experiences and the world around them. These images of children engaged in role play reflect the gender stereotypes present in Tasmania in 1967.





Elaine Watson:

"I liked doing the paintings, and I liked their block buildings. That intrigued me, what they could do."



Foraging for interesting construction materials for children is built into the DNA of education and care professionals. In 1967 children would delight in working with cardboard rolls, offcuts, cereal cartons and found objects supplied by their educators as their imaginations guided their hands. In ensuing decades this has continued. Alison Doyle (current employee) and past Lady Gowrie Child Centre Kindergarten Teacher, Helen Stephen recall:

Alison Doyle:

"I have vivid recollections of you regularly popping into the old R.W Browne Pharmacy in Lower Sandy Bay, collecting the boxes for "box-work" when I was working there after school with my mother in my teenage years!"

Helen Stephen:

"How funny you recalling me picking boxes at the Lower Sandy Bay Pharmacy! And I still do! Not as often though. I teach just 2 days a week, so not quite the same demand as in the full-time days."

From the days of playing the piano to the children to YouTubeing, the children's requests in 2019, the use of music and movement has certainly changed. In 1967, teachers were expected to have some ability to play a musical instrument (and indeed music was included within their teacher training), as music was regarded as an essential vehicle through which children gained abilities across such important developmental areas as creativity, language, physical skills and numeracy.

Elaine Watson:

"Lois played the piano and I played the piano. Elspeth didn't. I liked them to dance and sing... I used to play for them to do skipping and running and galloping and all that sort of thing!"





Scott Gibson (Education and Care Consultant with Gowrie Training & Consultancy) works with Lady Gowrie Tasmania educators in 2019 to understand the value of safe, yet challenging play and learning experiences, which introduce an element of managed risk.

“One of my main goals when delivering professional learning to educators, teachers and managers is to explore the benefits of risk-based play for children.

I often ask our educators to reflect on what they loved about their childhood and surprisingly the most overwhelming responses include playing outside with friends, climbing high in trees, playing in creek beds, building cubbies from sticks and found items, riding down steep hills on homemade billycarts and taking risks generally without an adult anywhere in sight. But this notion of a free-range childhood has changed across time to such an extent that we’re now seeing children spending more time indoors than at any other time in history, due to decreasing availability of ‘wild’ urban play spaces, increased screen time and a growing culture of risk-aversion.

Thankfully the tide is turning, and educators and parents are becoming more aware of the enormous value to children of free-range play and managed risk. In 2019 we’re beginning to see a renewed emphasis on nature play, using real tools and exploring risky play. This is where children of all ages can challenge themselves, learn about their limitations, build confidence and resilience and ultimately learn how to identify and manage risk in play.”



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Brighton Vacation Education and Care Service, 2019.

Since 1967 several societal changes have occurred that have influenced how play is understood and valued in Australia. Increased workforce participation and the rise of information communication technology (ICT) have seen less available opportunities for children to engage in self-directed play and greater focus on screen time and organised activities. Lady Gowrie Tasmania has always understood the importance of challenging and engaging play spaces and has maintained a strong focus on its outdoor environments. The organisation has subsequently invested in outdoor environment upgrades and developments that align with quality practice principles. Overcoming risk-adverse licencing requirements has been a long-term challenge, which in 2019 is seeing results.



Children engaged in woodwork, 2019.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Acton Education and Care Service, 2019.



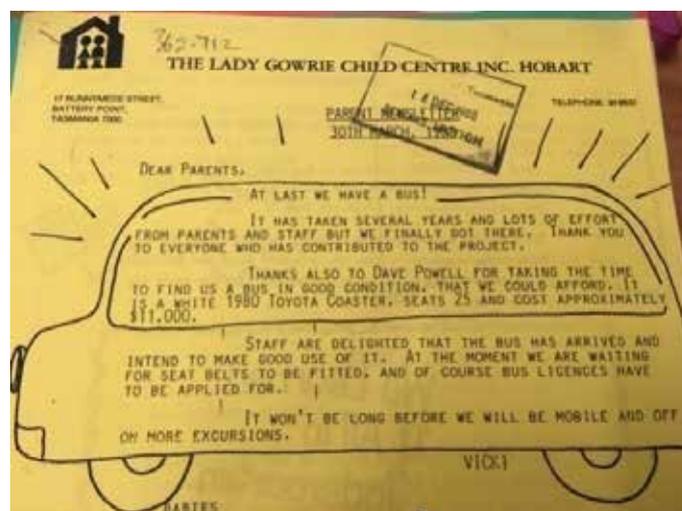
Lady Gowrie Tasmania University South Education and Care Service excursion to the Sustainability Learning Centre, Mt Nelson, 2019.

Connecting with Community

Excursions have always been a valuable element of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania curriculum, giving the children opportunities to engage with the communities where services are located and beyond. From the earliest days, where the children and educators took walks to Princes Park in Battery Point, down to the waterfront or into the city, the value of getting out beyond the confines of the service hasn't diminished.



This photo of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point children on an excursion to the Hobart waterfront is from Mary Gibson's personal collection.



In 1988 the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point took delivery of a second-hand bus, which was the result of the fund-raising efforts of the staff and parents. This, no doubt, opened opportunities to travel well beyond the local Battery Point community.

In 2019 the National Quality Standard outlines the importance of community engagement in *Quality Area 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities* and in particular Element 6.2.3 – *The service builds relationships and engages with its community*. The bus purchased in 1988 was a well-used asset that is long gone, but in 2019 a new bus has been purchased by Lady Gowrie Tasmania. This bus is shared across the Lady Gowrie

Tasmania services and programs to ensure that the educators can confidently plan programs for children that include connecting them with community.



The Lady Gowrie Tasmania bus, 2019.

1970's

The 1970s saw some significant changes to Lady Gowrie Tasmania, starting with the departure of long serving Director, Mary Gibson in 1970. Miss Gibson's influence cannot be underestimated, as she was not only a strong champion for a qualified and knowledgeable team but was also a strong advocate for children and families. Her replacement from 1970 to 1975 was Miss L Benham, who was replaced from 1976 to 1979 by Mrs Shona Tremlett (Robinson).

Ros Lamprill (Past Board Director and professional friend of Lady Gowrie Tasmania) remembers:

"Shona was a passionate advocate for children's services and had quite a diverse background. Babies, seemed to be her passion, and her focus... She was a very supportive colleague and she made a major contribution."

Julian Roberts recalls his time attending Battery Point from 1976 to 1978:

"I attended Lady Gowrie Battery Point in 76, 77 and 78. My parents lived in Battery Point and still do today. I remember a lot of things from my time there. It hasn't changed much. It still has the railings for both parents and children down the main corridor. I went through the three rooms down the bottom over the course of my time. The playground used to have a big pipe that we would slide down instead of the slide that's there today. The trees were smaller, and we used to use them for climbing. The teachers were all lovely but sadly I don't remember their names apart from Mrs Emmett... I believe. My brother Tristan also went there."

I have a fond memory for walking down Kelly's Lane and the smell of baking bread from the bread bakery that was located behind what is now Jackman and McRoss on Hampden Rd. I used to chip of some of the stonework from the building, thinking it was like bread but once I got down the street, I realised it certainly didn't smell like bread.

Currently my children attend Battery Point and it's great. Incredibly well run and just amazing. It just keeps getting better. I think it's brilliant that they still visit Princes Park. My children love and really enjoy it!"

1979 marked some significant events at Lady Gowrie Battery Point Centre, starting with the appointment of a new Director, **Mrs Wendy Russell** (Berry-Porter), who occupied the position until 1984. On September 3rd, after significant work, new extensions for the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point were officially opened. **Helen Stephen** also started work as the Kindergarten Teacher at the centre in 1979.

Ros Lamprill 2019:

"Helen Stephen...was just amazing in the kindergarten. She just had an aura about her."

Helen Stephen reflects on her 25 years at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point:

"I began at Lady Gowrie in 1979, teaching the Intermediate Kindergarten with Lois Emmett. This was one of four kindergartens, each staffed by two teachers. Shona Robinson was the Director at that time."

In the early 1980s, Education Department funding was reduced to cover just one kindergarten class, which I taught until 1997 when the funding ceased. Brenda Hodgson and Loraine Jackson were my aides during those years. It then came under the Child Care umbrella and I continued to teach the kindergarten until 2003."

In addition to my main role as kindergarten teacher, I was involved in numerous other programs, including Parent/Teacher/Child and outreach programs for parents; conducting workshops for child carers throughout Tasmania,; giving talks to various parent groups; occasional lecturing to trainee teachers at UTAS and presenting a paper at the International Children's Peer Relationships Conference in Adelaide."

Some memories from my early years at Lady Gowrie include the strict Zone A, B and C procedure for admission to the Kindergartens; the observation booths for each room, used by student teachers, doctors, nurses, child carers and parents, home visits by teachers to all kindergarten families, excursions to Gibson's Flour Mill and the waterfront, frequent health checks for children by Sister Palmer and the annual Kindergarten Nativity concert for families."

I have fond memories of the many wonderful children, families and staff I met and worked with during my 25 years at Lady Gowrie."

Lorraine Polglase reflects fondly about the people who she felt have really impacted on Lady Gowrie:

"Helen Stephen was the crux of the whole kinder. I mean every parent who had a child in Helen's class would remember what she said.....I worked for the Department of Human Services, as a resource worker and I didn't know anything about childcare. She knocked on my door in Battery Point and said she ran a program down the road at the Battery Point Centre and this was the last house on her list. She must've had a radius or something that she could bring people in from. So I went in with some other sets of parents. The twins would've been three. And in that room there was Trudy- the aide. So, we'd have an hour of play and then Trudy would take the children outside. Helen sat and talked to us, and we ask questions. She might have talked about sibling rivalry. This might sound a bit strange, but when I presented my parenting courses (I probably did about 300 six week parenting courses over the years) when I'd say something it would be Helen's voice I'd use. And this makes me think about working with families, if you trust a person you're more likely to take onboard what they are saying. Helen was the person who introduced a lot of us to practical things."

Kathy Cripps (General Manager, Children's Services) recalls:

"Children were starting to be out of area, but some were very much local. Lady Gowrie Kinder had a great reputation, and people travelled because it offered a point of difference. It wasn't in a school environment. It could offer that wrap around care. Parents could bring their child to kindergarten, and they could then stay for after kinder care."

1980's

By the early 1980s, an ideological battle was beginning to envelope the early childhood sector. On the one hand, childcare advocates promoted working women's rights to childcare in safe and enriching environments. These advocates stressed the importance of providing high quality, seamless childcare and education experiences as a community service – like public schools and public hospitals. On the other hand, there were deep-seated beliefs based on traditional ideas about women's key family and homemaking roles, and that children were best cared for at home – primarily by their mothers. This view saw child rearing and childcare as a private, rather than a community responsibility.

"..... it was a difficult time politically because Gowrie's funding was changing from education to childcare. That was what the government was

funding, so things changed. The teachers were not really happy with the situation at the time. The teachers were derogatory about childcare. Care had a stigma attached to it."

Victoria Hadley (Former Lady Gowrie Tasmania staff member in the 1980s and 1990s and former parent in the 1980s).

The enduring influence of the care–education divide in early childhood has been extensively discussed and analysed (Brennan, 1990; Kelly, 1986; Sebastian, 1981). The inability of policy makers and professional groups to transcend the care–education distinctions have resulted, as predicted by Sebastian (1981) a quarter of a century ago, in a two-tiered system of early childhood education and early childhood care. This division is enshrined in funding, regulations and licensing. It is characterised by unequal distribution of resources, and by sector specific qualifications, pay and working conditions for staff.

Ian Bronowski reflects on the 1980's and the changes that effected Lady Gowrie Tasmania and it's trajectory:

"So we're getting to the 1980s. Prior to that the Gowrie's as a bulk, got large government grants for doing a whole lot of work, which was good, resources that sort of thing but then, of course, you get the ugly commercialisation of childcare and people see dollar signs..."

You know when I started it was about education and welfare and I do believe in that model.... All the evidence is there but then, when people come in and start making money. Who was that dreadful man who made all the money from childcare? I worked out that he made more money in one minute than a graduate made in a week!

I know it's a difficult topic, but childcare started with women controlling it and then it was sort of taken over by men in a lot of ways, because the corporate world got involved and I just find that interesting... So the commercial operators came in.... and were saying "How come Gowrie gets all this money and they're not actually providing childcare?" So, don't think for a moment that Gowrie happily went into childcare. They were dragged kicking and screaming and fighting every inch of the way. They wanted to remain a kindergarten provider. They were very conservative and didn't want change. They were running a good program and it was working, but it was no longer relevant. The area was no longer poor. It was improving. It wasn't what it had been 30 years before so the justification (to continue operating as a kindergarten) was hard."

Interviewer: *"What are your thoughts on the change of the image of the child from when you first started teaching at TAFE in the 1970's to now?"*

Ian: *"I think if you look at Gough Whitlam's speech from 1972, he talked about kindergarten education for all children. When (Paul) Keating got in he talked about kindergarten too. I can't*

remember the terms, but he talked about the economic benefit to the society. What shifted at that time was a focus from “we need education for all young children” to “childcare” and they (politicians) still talk about it as an economic benefit to society. We see it as an economic benefit because women can work but the children are somewhere way, way down.”

The economic benefit discourse continues today (2019). Lady Gowrie Tasmania personnel continue to work tirelessly on raising the profile of education and care. Lady Gowrie Tasmania has understood the importance of the early years for 80 years. Over the past two decades, the introduction of powerful new evidence in neuroscience, continues to drive our advocacy work on why the early years are so important in establishing the underlying skills and behaviours that are essential to a child’s lifelong learning, behaviour and health; all key considerations that 80 years ago culminated in the birth of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania story.

Ian (on the role of the educator):

“Their role is to have a good environment and they’re part of that environment... I view childcare as an art form rather than a science. It doesn’t mean you don’t use science. We’re not living in the dark ages, but principally it comes from within as it does with an artist or a musician.”

The 1980’s saw funding initiated by the Commonwealth Government to provide state-wide resource and advisory services to early childhood professionals and an access and equity team to support the broader education and care sector. Lady Gowrie Tasmania has delivered these Commonwealth Government funded programs under different reiterations over many years from the Special Needs Subsidy Scheme (from 1987) and in more recent times successfully tendered for the 2016-2019 Inclusion Support Programme, State-wide Inclusion Agency for Tasmania which has since been extended to 2021.

The Supplementary Services Program (SUPS) funded the engagement of specialised workers to provide support and training to childcare staff to provide suitable care and involve children with additional needs in the service’s programs.

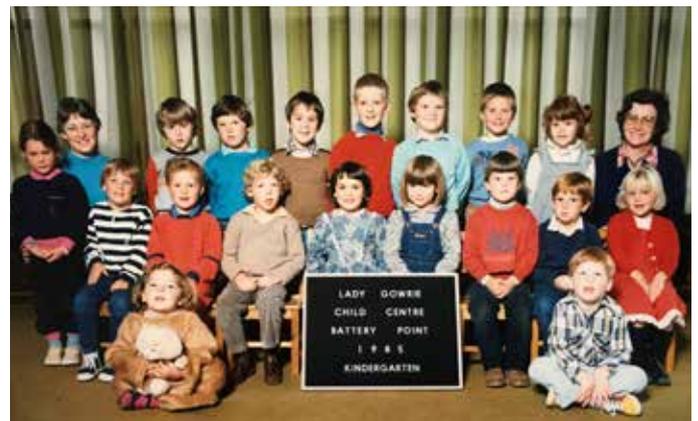
Other iterations of the Commonwealth funded programs included;

The Inclusion & Professional Support Program (IPSP). Lady Gowrie Tasmania successfully tendered for the IPSP program element, the Professional Support Co-ordinator (PSC) and commenced delivery of this program in 2005. Lady Gowrie Tasmania also managed the Inclusion Support Program – Southern region from 2005. The Commonwealth Government approached Lady Gowrie Tasmania to seek the Organisations sponsorship of the Indigenous Professional Support Program in 2008. These programs ceased in 2016.

Miss Mary Gibson was still a familiar face at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point in the 1980s, continuing to consult with the organisation in 1983. She was also a lecturer in Education at UTAS at this time.

In 1984, **Mrs Marilyne Beresford** was appointed to the position of Director of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point the same year that standardised fee relief for children in non-profit centre based long day care centres was introduced. This fee relief, now called Child Care Subsidy, was the main avenue through which the Commonwealth supported childcare.

In 1985 Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point Kindergarten continued to be held in high esteem. Through the provision of before and after Kindergarten care, the transition between environments was minimised, thus supporting children’s strong sense of identity and security.



Kindergarten class of 1985. Helen Stephen (Teacher) and Brenda Hodgson (Aide). Alice Polglase is in the front row, wearing the animal suit.

Alice Polglase:

“I remember loving my time there.”

Kathy Cripps reminisces:

“I remember times when it was winter, and we’d go outside in the Battery Point playground with flashlights and look for possums and play hide and seek in the dark..... And parents would come out looking for their children in the dark, and we’d hide from parents. Parents were very open to that and joined in with the game.”

1988 saw a change of Director at Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point with Mrs Jan Feneley appointed.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania continued to provide additional support services to the broader community with the Special needs resource workers facilitating a program two mornings each week at St David’s Child Care Centre, North Hobart for children with a disability.

1980 saw a new Family Support Program managed by Lady Gowrie Tasmania commence. Today this program continues, funded by the Department of Health.

The Service is available to families with children through the gateway referral process to provide respectful, confidential support for strengthening and developing family life. It promotes the safety, stability and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and their families. It also promotes strong, functional and well supported families by building child, family and community capacity and resilience.

This support is provided by working collaboratively with other agencies through a referral process and providing support tailored to families with complex needs.

The commitment to family support continues today with Lady Gowrie Tasmania self-funding a family support worker for the education and care services families and organisation staff.

Michael White reflects on the 1980s at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Hobart:

“The 1980s was an exciting and challenging time to be involved with the Lady Gowrie’s in Australia. I wore many hats throughout this time – Board member and then Chair of the Hobart Gowrie, Director of the Hobart Gowrie and Chair of the National Committee of the AECA [Australian Education Consultants Alliance] coordinating the work and funding of all the Gowrie’s in Australia.

My first involvement was sparked by a financial crisis which the Hobart Gowrie was facing. As the centre moved from its traditional early childhood education role to more complex “business-like” services such as childcare, the old systems had struggled to keep up and there was a lot of concern from our funders about whether we were a financially viable organisation.

We weathered the crisis, improved the systems, introduced accounting practices which matched what we were actually doing and got back on our feet again. But the real message of all of this was that the demands of early childhood care and education were changing, and that the Gowrie needed to change with it. It was a time when the Gowrie was moving from something of a “cottage industry” to the modern service it is today.

It wasn’t all about administration and business planning though. Over the next few years, with the new Director, Marilyn Beresford, we strengthened the childcare program and wrestled with many of the policy issues which are still alive today. – what is quality in childcare? How do you deliver it? and most importantly, how do you integrate early childhood care and education when our systems in Australia were designed to keep these apart?

We were able to address quality questions through providing high staff: child: ratios (1 to 7 for children over three) and employing qualified staff, including early childhood teachers, in the childcare program. However, I can also remember our surprise when parents asked us to move their four year olds out of the childcare room across to the kindergarten for their “dose” of early childhood education. While it was of course a good service, our Kindergarten program had lower staff: child ratios and lower numbers of qualified staff than the childcare program.

Thirty years later we are still struggling with this concept in Australia and still have much to learn from

the models which the Lady Gowrie’s instituted in the early 80s and are still practising.

One of the other key debates at this time was how to provide childcare staff with contact free time for programme planning. We approached this in two ways. Firstly we took it upon ourselves to establish a new award which incorporated programme planning time for care staff. In our naivete we approached the industrial relations commission and told them about plans to change the award. We then learned we had to have a dispute before the commission would consider our proposed award.

Fortunately, we found that the union was only too happy to provide us with the basis of a dispute and I still have their letter of demand requesting, amongst other things, extraordinarily high wages and shopping holidays in Melbourne for all staff! The result of all of this was that we established the first federal award for childcare staff which provided them with some program planning time.

By linking the Hobart and Perth Gowrie’s we were able to create a national dispute and the resolution became a nationally applicable award. It was our hope that this would become a model for the rest of the country.

The other approach we took was to lobby federal politicians directly. When the then Federal Minister told me that he could not see the need for program planning time for staff we made a video of the programme planning activities being conducted at the Gowrie at that time and sent it to him – perhaps again naively we hoped to change a system which many are still struggling to achieve so many years later.

As well as expanding the services to children through childcare program we also built the range of offerings and services which the Lady Gowrie delivered to parents and to other early childhood professionals.

Lady Gowrie had always played a leadership role in the sector and this was expanded through new programs such as the Special Needs Resources Team, a Commonwealth funded program to assist other childcare services to better integrate children with disabilities into those services. At that time we also developed the Family Support Program – a new service to assist parents who were needed support in their parenting role. It was a time when we were actively reaching out to find new ways of communicating, new ways of connecting with parents and children. The use of video was also fairly new at the time. We used to set up the (large!) video camera in the childcare and kindergarten rooms and play the tape in the foyer as parents came to pick up their children later in the day. We also started to make video programs to support parent education and family support programs.

When Marilyn took 12 months maternity leave I stepped down as Chair of the Board and undertook the role of Director for a year. That too was an exciting and challenging step. I was the first male to undertake the role and my other Director colleagues around the country never missed an opportunity to remind me of my place! The fax machine would regularly roll into life with yet another cartoon or wise saying which helped me know my place. I well remember one that reminded me to "Just remember, Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did – backwards and in high heels".

I don't know about "backwards and in high heels" but I do remember my time at Lady Gowrie as demanding, exciting and extremely professionally rewarding."

1990's

1990 saw a significant change to the childcare funding. A decision was made by the Commonwealth Government to extend fee relief (now referred to as childcare subsidy) to commercial childcare centres; funding that had only been previously available to not-for-profit services. This resulted in a significant increase in the number of long day care services which continues today with a high percentage of education and care services privately and/or corporate owned.

In 1991 there were 4,100 Education and Care services in Australia, the majority of which were run by not-for-profit organisations. As early as 2010 there were more than 13,000, this time with a good proportion operated by private enterprise (Department of Education, Employment and Relations, 2010). Lady Gowrie Tasmania was not immune to this trend and the 1990's saw Lady Gowrie Tasmania begin to expand with an Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Program established at the Battery Point site in 1990. The OSHC program was relocated to Albuera Street Primary School in 1993.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania's expertise was again recognised through Commonwealth funding for an OSHC Project Officer to provide support for OSHC Services state-wide.

In 1991, **Gillian Lewis- Cole** was appointed to the position of Director of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point.

Jeff Gordon recalls his association with Lady Gowrie Tasmania as a parent and as a Board Director:

"We lived in Battery Point from the late 1980s and my children attended Lady Gowrie Battery Point. We had a really lovely experience and I remember there was a gorgeous kindergarten teacher, I forget her name now (Helen Stephen).

*In '92 we brought the house next door and turned it into a Bed and Breakfast similar to Faulty Towers. At the time **Frank Graham**, the Chair of the Board,*

invited me to be part of it which I saw it as a great opportunity to give back for the lovely experience we'd had..... I got a lot more out of it then I gave, I believe."

Ros Cornish recalled taking the weekly cheque payments to Jeff next door for signing each Friday morning.

"If there were a large number of cheques to be countersigned, I often ended up cooking the breakfast while Jeff signed. I became quite adept at eggs – boiled, coddled, scrambled, poached or fried. Those were the days!"

Glenora



Glenora

Glenora was originally the site for a windmill that was constructed by William McRobbie. In 1870 George Arnold purchased the windmill and converted it into a biscuit factory which was very successful. Due to demand Arnold relocated the factory and built his large home 'Glenora'. Eventually, Sir Henry Jones (founder of IXL Jams) purchased the home which was his residence until his passing. The residence remained with Lady Jones until her death in 1956. The house was then privately sold. Lady Gowrie Tasmania leases the building from the Department of Health.

1993 saw the Lady Gowrie Tasmania administration and support services relocated to 'Glenora', 229 Campbell Street, Hobart. Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care service was also established as part of the State Health Department's vision for a community hub.

Lorraine Polglase recalls:

"The Glenora building was fabulous, because there was plenty of space. I used to do adult education classes there. I used to do sibling rivalry and the monies received through adult education would contribute to the program continuation and it extended what we were able to offer."

1993-96 **Ms Lisa Jane Solomon** was appointed as Executive Director of Lady Gowrie Tasmania.

Ros Cornish:

"Lisa Solomon she was the Executive Director as it was called then. She did some really good things for the organisation in terms of brand recognition and corporate development."

1994 saw **Jennifer Parsons** appointed to the position of Children's Services Program Manager. This year also saw two other significant developments: the introduction of a Quality Improvement and Accreditation system which was aimed at improving the quality and standard of approved childcare and the introduction of the Childcare Cash Rebate (CCR). The CCR was paid to families to help them with the cost of work-related childcare expenses after Childcare Assistance was received.

Jennifer Parsons recalls her time working with Lady Gowrie Tasmania in the 1990s as the Children's Services Co-ordinator and as the In-Service Training Co-ordinator:

"My first visit to Tasmania was on my honeymoon. Little did I realise as I looked at Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point from our hotel room at "Lenna", that just a few years later I would be living near Hobart and working at Lady Gowrie as the Children's Services Co-ordinator, and in time, I added In-Service Training Co-ordinator to my role as well!"

In 1990 Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point was the only Lady Gowrie centre in Tasmania. Lady Gowrie housed all of its multi-disciplinary teams at the one site. It was exciting to work with a multi-disciplinary team and I believe that each of us, whatever our role, learned from each other. Children and their families were always the focus. Decisions about programs and desired outcomes were consistently made as to what was best for the child. The Battery Point site catered for children 0-12 years through CBLDC and OSHC. There was also Kindergarten each weekday morning, the Kindergarten room, with clever modifications, was then used for Occasional Care in the afternoon. Child Health Clinic was twice weekly and was an excellent bridge in assisting families to access care and support through the various Lady Gowrie programs.

The early 1990's saw a number of changes within childcare and support programs as well as the continuation of established Lady Gowrie concepts.

There were regular columns on issues to do with children and families in Hobart's newspaper, "The Mercury". The columns were written by various team leaders of the Resource Centre, Family Support, Integration Support, and Children's Services and covered many topics from teething to step-parenting. Very positive feedback was received about the columns.

There was a regular talk-back program called, "Child Wise" on local ABC radio. I did enjoy doing this program and know that we reached a wide and appreciative audience. One Friday I was at the airport with a colleague waiting to check-in for a flight to

Queenstown. We were then going to Zeehan to deliver in-service training. As we waited, we were chatting away. When it was our turn to check-in the lady said, "You must be passengers Parsons and Stephen." I replied, "Oh, are we the only females on the flight today?" "No", replied the lady, "I recognise your voice from the radio."! There was also a series of "Q & A" type interviews with a presenter on what is now Southern Cross television. These were also most enjoyable to participate in as there could be visual content as well. The use of the media was a very positive and effective way of reaching out into the community.

Delivering In-service Training was very rewarding. Sometimes we would be travelling state-wide, other times there would be state-wide training delivered in Hobart. There was always excitement about these programs as it meant carers could get together and share their ideas and experiences as well as participate in quality training. We used Lenna for the In-Service as there were multiple rooms available for various sessions. I think that we all used to feel rather spoiled by the professional service by the Lenna staff too! Mrs Eulie Brain, the then secretary of Lady Gowrie, always did a remarkable job of booking accommodation for everyone who travelled from outside Hobart and always kept within our budget too! Thank you Eulie!

The introduction of the National Child Care Accreditation System brought with it new demands. The In-Service programs focused on supporting carers state-wide as they learned about the recording that would be necessary. Understandably, the NCCAS seemed daunting to carers but I like to think that the training and support provided by the Lady Gowrie In-Service team helped to build confidence and allay concerns and fears.

The early 1990's saw the various programs outgrowing the Battery Point site. To get funding for larger premises to allow for the growth and program delivery that was the vision required provision of additional childcare places.

After a degree of searching, the Campbell Street site was decided on. The site gave the original home, "Glenora", for relocation of support programs and the Resource Centre and also provided rooms for delivering In-Service programs. There was a vacant kindergarten building at the rear which could be adapted and remodelled to give childcare places. This move marked the first expansion and additional site for what is now Lady Gowrie Tasmania."

It wasn't until 1993 that any expansion beyond the Battery Point Centre occurred. In this year administration moved to the Glenora building in Campbell Street, North Hobart. This was possible through Lady Gowrie Tasmania entering into a long-term lease with the Tasmanian Department of Health on the proviso that the facilities were also utilised as a community centre.

Lorraine Polglase remembers:

"The Glenora Building was owned by the State Government. The reason the State Government wanted to put our programs in there, was because mine was the only state funded program; all the rest were commonwealth funded..... They wanted the family support worker there and extending it into a community centre, a bit like a neighbourhood house."

Victoria Hadley reflects on the Glenora resource library, and her vision for its use:

"I wanted this space to be a working space, where people could come together, not a silent space where no one could talk. It wasn't just staff who went there, the wider community, parents, TAFE students were all welcomed. I encouraged coffee and chatter. This was strategic and allowed people to come and talk..... Part of this work really, when you look back on it, was family support and referrals and it was important to know what we had on the library shelves etc, but also to know what people were delivering in training, and also what other services were available out there so I could refer people on to other supports. For example, if a parent came in having just been at the doctors and told their child had autism, they'd come to us for information about autism, but what we really offered was more than that. We would listen and we would support families to find other avenues for support- especially family support."

July 1994 **Ros Cornish** commenced her career with Lady Gowrie Tasmania in the position of Director, Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point. Ros is still with the organisation 25 years later. Appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in 1999, she leads Tasmania's largest not-for-profit education and care provider.

One of the most recent asset acquisitions for Lady Gowrie Tasmania is the transformed former Performance Automobiles show room in Macquarie Street, South Hobart. Under the guidance of CEO, Ros Cornish through a shared vision with the Board of Directors, this development was designed to provide an integrated space for Lady Gowrie Tasmania services alongside a boutique Early Education and Care facility. Currently the site houses Lady Gowrie Tasmania Corporate Services, Outside School Hours Care Management, Family Day Care Scheme, and Support Services, which includes Gowrie Training & Consultancy, Inclusion Agency & In-Home Care Support Agency. Additionally, the site includes the Mary Gibson and Aella Giblin training rooms and the resource library. The Glenora site houses personnel from Children's Services, Family Support Services and facilities. In 2019 Lady Gowrie Tasmania permanently employs 471 people across the state.

1st July 1997 saw a major change that has lasting effects on not-for-profit community-based education and care services. Operational subsidises were removed. Education and care services now relied solely on family fees to provide quality education and care for children.

Other changes included;

- the limiting of Childcare Assistance to 50 hours per week per child as from 1 April 1997.
- the freezing of the levels of Childcare Assistance and CCR Fee Ceilings for two years. This meant that planned indexations of the fee ceilings for these two payments, which were due on 1 April 1997 and 1 April 1998, did not proceed.
- the reduction of the CCR from 30 per cent to 20 per cent for families whose incomes were above the Family Tax Initiative income cut off (\$70 000 per annum for families with one child). This took effect from 1 April 1997.

1998 saw tighter targeting of Childcare Assistance from 1 January 1998 through a limit of 20 hours per week for each child utilising childcare for non-work purposes and sadly has reduced to only 24 hours a fortnight in 2019. Lady Gowrie Tasmania in collaboration with the peak body Early Childhood Australia and many other partners continues to advocate for the importance of the early years and like, ECA believes that the *Australian Government should invest in delivering high quality early learning for at least 18 hours per week (over two or three days) to all Australian children from the end of paid parental leave until school. In particular, the Government must support efforts to improve the participation of children who are most at risk of educational disadvantage.* (ECA Pre-Budget Submission 2019-20).

In March 1998 the Commonwealth Child Care Advisory Council was established. Ros Cornish, the CEO of Lady Gowrie Tasmania has been a valued member and advisor on this group, bringing her expertise and philosophy of 'Children First' to the table.

A positive change in the 1990's occurred (1998) when Lady Gowrie Tasmania secured funding from the Commonwealth Government to support a much-needed major upgrade of the Battery Point service. The service was subsequently renovated in 1999 and officially opened by Senator Rosemary Crowley.

In 1999 Lady Gowrie Tasmania commenced a 3-5-year education and care program at the Lindisfarne North School site, next door to the Kindergarten. This service operated until its forced closure in 2013 due to the need for additional space required by the school. Twelve months later the Lindisfarne North School was relocated to a larger site at Geilston Bay leaving the facility vacant. Government policy at its very worst!

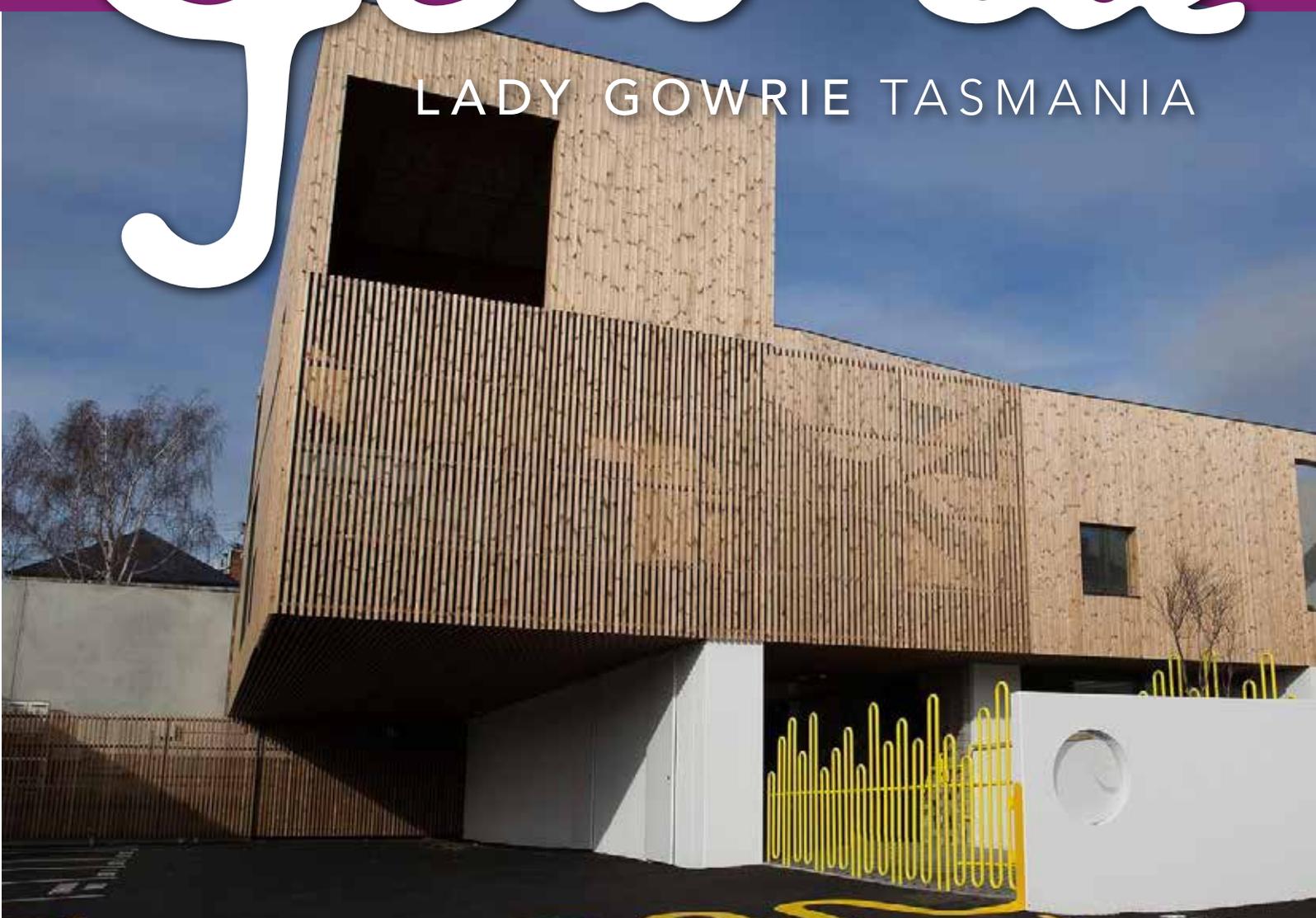
PART 2

THE 21ST CENTURY

The first 19 years of the 21st century for Lady Gowrie Tasmania have been marked by significant expansion across the state. Throughout this time (as well as in the last years of the 20th century), Ros Cornish has been at the helm as the CEO, leading the organisation through significant sector-wide changes.

Gowrie

LADY GOWRIE TASMANIA



Business and Enterprise

In 2000 an organisational restructure was undertaken after an external review. This resulted in a fundamental governance change that saw the Management Committee replaced by a Board of Directors.

Sandra Falconer was a Board Director at this time:

“My time on the Lady Gowrie Board was a time of change and growth. At the beginning there had been a restructuring of the roles within the Organisation. Directors had become Managers and Senior Managers were appointed. This was a forerunner to reforming the Board, with sub-committees established and members operating in their strength areas. Strategic Plans had been developed which led to many changes including a new logo. Eventually Risk Assessment Plans were put into practice.

There was a growth in the number of new Centres and Outside School Hours Programs. New Centres included Norwood Child Care Centre in Launceston, the Acton Child Care Centre, South Hobart Child Care Centre and the Fahan Centre. Initial planning for the Head Office and Parent/Child Centre was commenced with visits to various sites in the hope of finding a suitable location.

Changes were made in the governance of the Board. Meeting papers were refined and made clearer. Cars were provided for staff to visit centres.”

On 1 July 2000 a major Commonwealth Government reform was introduced to the childcare payments regime with the introduction of the new Childcare Benefit (CCB). The CCB replaced both Childcare Assistance and the Childcare Cash Rebate (CCR) and allowed for varying levels of benefit, largely dependent on family income levels, for up to 50 hours of approved care per week.

2000 also saw the redevelopment of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service to enable an increase in places to 90 and in 2003 the upstairs office space was redeveloped to provide an additional 12 infant spaces, increasing the overall Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service to 112 places.

2000 was not only a busy year for the education and care services, but also for the expansion of other program areas of the organisation. The Lady Gowrie Tasmania Registered Training Organisation commenced operation in 2000 but closed in 2007 due to the high costs of delivering a quality qualification. In 2013 Lady Gowrie Tasmania entered into a partnership agreement with Gowrie South Australia to re-commence delivery of Certificate III & Diploma of Early Childhood Education and the Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management. The partnership enabled both organisations to pool their resources in the development of a quality and highly respected training product that continues today.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania acquired sponsorship in 2000 of the Jobs, Education & Training (JET) program with the aim of

primarily helping recipients of the Parenting Payment to enter or re-enter the workforce by providing an integrated program of advice, childcare, training and employment opportunities. In 2001 The Work for the Dole Program was established named ‘Our Youth Our Future’ which Lady Gowrie Tasmania managed.

2002 saw Lady Gowrie Tasmania assume sponsorship of Mount Nelson After School Care Program.

The Bowen Road After School Care Program at Bowen Road Primary School commenced in 2004. Lady Gowrie Tasmania also successfully tendered for the operation of two new purpose-built long day care centres on the Bowen Road Primary and Norwood Primary School sites. Lady Gowrie Tasmania committed substantial funds to include an additional training room at the Bowen Road service. Sponsorship of Frederick Street Occasional Care Program commenced through the Department of Education.

2005 saw Lady Gowrie Tasmania successfully tender for the lease, management and operation of TAFE Child Care Centre in Launceston (now named Lady Gowrie Tasmania Alanvale Education and Care Service) and two new after school care programs at Goulburn Street and Norwood Primary Schools were established. In February 2005 Lady Gowrie Tasmania assumed management and operation of Richmond Child Care Centre which at the time was operating as occasional care service. In response to the community’s growing need, the centre was soon transformed into a long day care service.

2006 saw the establishment of a second resource library at Frederick Street, Launceston. The resource library holds the name of a long-standing principle of Frederick Street School and chair of the Launceston Kindergarten Association, the Margaret Dixon Library and Resource Centre.

Two new programs, Springfield Gardens and Taroona OSHC programs commenced under the Lady Gowrie Tasmania banner in 2007 which aligned with the continuing growth of the OSHC sector. 2007 saw Lady Gowrie Tasmania’s expertise sought by private operators wishing to engage the organisation in consultation re: design of long day care services. Lady Gowrie Tasmania provided support to a private operator which quickly turned into managing and operating the centre. Soon after the service commenced, the Board approved the purchase of the then privately-owned Acton service in 2008, now called Lady Gowrie Tasmania Acton Education and Care Service. David Bartlett, the Education Minister officially opened the Centre.

During the 2000 (and continuing today), non-education and care organisations approached Lady Gowrie Tasmania to negotiate transfer of sponsorship. In 2007 The University of Tasmania commenced negotiations with Lady Gowrie Tasmania to sponsor the two education and care services (North and South) on the University campus. Subsequently Lady Gowrie University North and Lady Gowrie University South Education and Care Services commenced in 2008. Many of the educators continue to work with Lady Gowrie Tasmania today.

2008 saw the commencement of Lady Gowrie Tasmania Swansea Education and Care Service after the Glamorgan-Spring Bay Council Tasmania, Swansea Management Committee approached Lady Gowrie Tasmania to take on the service for the community.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania's continued experience and expertise in education and care did not go unnoticed with a number of funded program terms ending with a requirement to engage in a competitive tender process and subsequently Lady Gowrie Tasmania continuing these programs under different iterations.

Outside school hours care at Rosetta Primary School commenced in 2008 providing a much needed quality service to the school community. Additional OSHC services that commenced in 2008 included University Launceston and Mowbray Primary School.

Society trends were moving away from the 'cotton wool' generation to understanding the importance of safe risk to children's learning and development. In 2008 Lady Gowrie Tasmania secured a funding grant through the Department of Health, with the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Board re-investing another \$250K into the design and development of a safe and challenging playground at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service. The playground was officially opened by the Premier of Tasmania, Hon. Lara Giddings. Subsequently the playground won the Kidsafe National Award and HIA Award for Best Outdoor Project and personnel facilitated site tours and presentations on the key concepts of 'safe and challenging' experiences for children.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania expansion and extension of programs was an opportunity to reflect on the history and how this was replicated in the brand. The Board undertook an extensive external and internal marketing review resulting in the development of a new logo and positioning statement.



**LADY GOWRIE
TASMANIA**

The logo prior to review depicted 4 circles that represented the 4 specific aspects of Lady Gowrie Tasmania;

- Children's Services (Education and Care Services)
- Family Support
- Access & Equity (now the Inclusion Support Programme)
- Resource & Advisory Program



The new logo formalised in 2009 depicted Lady Zara Gowrie's signature. The logo reflects the longevity of the organisation from inception in 1939 and into the future; what the brand stands for and recognition of the advocacy work of Lady Gowrie and her unwavering commitment to children and families, many of the attributes held today by Lady Gowrie Tasmania's CEO, Ros Cornish.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania assumed sponsorship of the former ABC OSHC service at Lansdowne Primary School in 2009.

2009 saw a significant change in education and care policy. In July, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed investing in the Early Years – A National Early Childhood Development Strategy. The strategy aimed to ensure that 'by 2020 all children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves, and for the nation.' To achieve this vision, Commonwealth, State and Territory governments committed to a suite of interrelated national partnerships and national initiatives.

The National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for early childhood education and care (ECEC) was the first major tranche of reform. It established an integrated and unified national system for ECEC and OSHC, which is jointly governed, and which drives continuous improvement in the quality of services – the National Quality Framework (NQF).

In 2009 National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) was introduced and during the coming years, Lady Gowrie Tasmania through the Commonwealth Government funded program, Professional Support Co-ordinator (PSC) assisted services in the utilising the EYLF to guide programs for children.

2011 saw the establishment of a new vacation care commence at Frederick Street and after school care programs at Richmond Primary School and Launceston Preparatory School.

2012 saw a number of discussions with Lady Gowrie Tasmania and the Department of Education, Wellington Alliance. As such the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Springfield Gardens OSHC service closed on the 24th September 2012 and a new service open on the Glenorchy Primary School site on that same day catering for children from the Springfield Gardens, Moonah and Glenorchy school communities.

The NQF introduced a new quality standard in 2012 to improve education and care across long day care, family day care, preschool/kindergarten, and outside school hours care services. In 2012, Tasmania and Western Australia chose to

continue regulating kindergartens (preschools) under relevant state education legislation.

The NQF includes:

- National Law and National Regulations
- National Quality Standard (NQS)
- the assessment and quality rating process
- national learning frameworks.

'The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services across Australia' (Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority).

Prior to the introduction of the NQF, Lady Gowrie Tasmania education and care services were regulated under the Child Care Act 2001. A significant change to the sector in 2012 was the introduction of a minimum Certificate III relevant early childhood qualification and/or educators requiring to be actively working towards this minimum qualification. The training landscape was changing and many new entrants into the Registered Training Organisation space was a catalyst for Lady Gowrie Tasmania to begin speaking with Lady Gowrie South Australia about a partnership agreement to deliver high quality qualifications.

2012 Lady Gowrie Tasmania was appointed operator at the Fahan School Education and Care Program (3 years to 5 years & an OSHC program). Oatlands Child Care Centre Management Committee transfer their management and operation to Lady Gowrie Tasmania.

In July 2014 Lady Gowrie assumed operation of the former Collegiate Early Learning Centre at Kingston. Lady Gowrie Tasmania Kingston Education and Care Service continues the long-standing integrated program (KITE – Kids Interacting with the Elderly) with OneCare's Bishop Davies Court aged care facility that is co located with the Centre.

2016 saw the establishment of an OSHC program at Warrane Primary School, and a change of sponsorship to Lady Gowrie Tasmania of the Brighton and Sorell OSHC programs. The Sorell Council operated long day care centre at Midway Point transferred to Lady Gowrie Tasmania the same year.

Supporting Children and Families to Maintain Relationships During Incarceration

In 2013 Lady Gowrie Tasmania undertook an important project to work cooperatively with Family and Child Support, Tasmania Prison Service with a goal of improving opportunities for inmates to meet and play with their children in welcoming and suitable environments. This project drew upon the long history of knowledge sharing and community support from Lady Gowrie Tasmania and the result was positive and transformative. The project investigated the barriers to quality play and leisure experiences for children and their fathers, then set about

making changes to indoor and outdoor environments and provision of suitable resources.

Visits by Lady Gowrie Tasmania staff were made to view the Ron Barwick Minimum Security Prison visiting area and to speak with inmates in relation to their thoughts and ideas of providing family friendly visiting facilities that would enhance family connection and influence better outcomes for children.

An online resource was also developed to support the Correctional Officers understanding of the importance of parent/child relationships during the period of incarceration. Breaking down the cycle of incarceration within families is paramount and it is important that children visiting their parent/s are supported and nurtured through the process. The resource outlines:

- Children as hidden and invisible victims of crime and imprisonment
- The rights of the child
- Who are the children of prisoners?
- Reflecting on values and beliefs
- Ecological theory
- Attachment theory
- Social and emotional development
- The need for a safe environment for children visiting or living in the prison
- What happens for a young person who has a parent in prison?
- Key messages – What can I do as a Correctional Officer?

The changes made as a result of the project had an immediate positive effect, which is still apparent in 2019.



New Directions

2017 saw a significant change to the education and care landscape with the Australian Government Jobs for Families Child Care Package endorsed by Senate.

In 2018 Lady Gowrie Tasmania supported families through the transition from the old Child Care Assistance model to the new Child Care Package by sharing regular updated information, fact sheets, dates for Department of Education family information webcasts and personal guidance at services.

In May 2018, Lady Gowrie Tasmania was successful in securing a four-year contract to be the state-wide support agency for In Home Care in Tasmania. While this was a new opportunity for the organisation, the program itself aligned well with the 'Children First' philosophy. The In-Home Care Support Agency now supports 35 families who utilise in home care through external service providers. In home care is provided to families who are unable to utilise any other forms of care due to their individual family circumstances and enables access to qualified education and care

programs for their children. The In Home Care Support Agency Tasmania is accountable to the Australian Government on ensuring that only families who meet strict suitability and eligibility guidelines are able to access this subsidised form of Education and Care for children.

In 2018 a review of Lady Gowrie Tasmania's Strategic Plan resulted in an organisational restructure. This re-structure saw the creation of several key positions, including the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.

STRATEGIC PLAN
2017-2020

Vision:

- Families are supported;
- Children reach their full potential and are at the centre of all practice;
- Early and middle childhood education and care services are valued and supported;
- Quality and experienced early and middle childhood educators are vital;
- Ongoing professional learning and development enhances practice;
- Quality matters; and
- The community benefits.

The strategic direction 2017-2020 has been developed to set clear goals and priorities for the next three years. These will drive the development of operational plans and budget processes. The direction is structured around four goals.

<p>GOAL 1 CHAMPION QUALITY</p> <p>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will be an agile and innovative organisation</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i></p> <p><i>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality, inclusive services tailored to client needs • Deliver evidence based practice in pedagogy and research • Measure the effectiveness and quality of the services provided to clients • Determine the competitive distinction in delivery of goods and services 	<p>GOAL 2 ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN</p> <p>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will be courageous advocate for the interests of children and those who support them</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i></p> <p><i>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the understanding of the importance of the early years within the broader community • Positively influence the early/ middle year's agenda as inclusive of all • Partner with other agencies for better outcomes • Champion for the rights, interests and well being of the child • Promote the importance of a highly qualified and skilled workforce 	<p>GOAL 3 STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY</p> <p>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will be robust, responsible and sustainable</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i></p> <p><i>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership through a strong governance framework • Be flexible in response to policy change • Invest in technology and infrastructure improvements • Develop a secure business model that positions the organisation for future growth and success 	<p>GOAL 4 OUR PEOPLE</p> <p>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will continue to invest in its people and culture</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i></p> <p><i>Lady Gowrie Tasmania will</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and develop our people through ongoing professional learning and development • Engage and inspire our people in building and maintaining a dynamic culture that reflects the organisation's values in everyday practice • Drive a high performance culture across the organisation • Build the organisation's capacity and capability to achieve the strategic goals
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Mission:

Lady Gowrie Tasmania is a community owned organisation whose core business is the provision of quality programs to the community that promotes the best outcomes for children, families and early and middle childhood professionals.

'Children First'



Gowrie Culture

Lady Gowrie Tasmania has always valued its people, so across the years has enthusiastically devised and supported a number of social and professional development events. From early events, such as the Lady Gowrie Dance to more recent events like "The Great Gowrie Getaway", the organisation has understood the enormous value of our people.



Lady Gowrie Dance, 1948.

In 2005 "The Great Gowrie Getaway" was staged. This scavenger hunt saw a range of Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point team members travel from Hobart to Launceston, collaborating, problem solving and just having fun together!

Kellie Watson (past educator) recalls:

"The Scavenger Hunt was a most wonderful mixture of 'Cannon Ball Run' and the old 'Around the World in 80 Days' cartoon, minus the cream pie fights, although it was a close call at one point! It brought to the fore an array of skills and talents that may not otherwise have been apparent in our people's everyday work.

- *Creativity; designing 'uniforms' and dastardly kidnapping schemes of our team gnomes!*
- *Leadership; onwards, upwards and astray.*
- *Brain power; to untangle the clues between Hobart and our undisclosed destination (Grindelwald, Launceston).*
- *Physics; establishing the ultimate fulcrum point of the seesaw, balancing competition and teamwork.*
- *Remembering, the other team were still going to be your team on Monday at work! The stakes were high! The prize? I can't remember – but obviously you cannot put a price UNLIMITED bragging rights. In case you have pause to wonder ... YES (of course) my team won!"*

In 2010 over 70 years of continuous service was celebrated by Gowrie Centres nationally. An afternoon tea was hosted by Governor General Hon. Quentin Bryce for Gowrie

Australia at Government House, Canberra. This event was attended by almost a hundred early childhood leaders and representatives from peak organisations. Ros Cornish CEO Lady Gowrie Tasmania was the convenor of Gowrie Australia at the time and had the honour of a private audience with the Governor General prior to the function.

As part of the 70th year celebrations, Governor of Tasmania Peter Underwood hosted a cocktail party at Government House, Hobart where Managers of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Education and Care Services enjoyed the reminiscing.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Education and Care Managers at Government House, Hobart, 2010.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania has always valued their people. Without the people, the vision of 'Children First' would not have come to fruition. Lady Gowrie Tasmania has been and remains a strong advocate for appropriate wages and conditions and through a number of Enterprise Agreement's has maintained above award standards. As an example, Lady Gowrie Tasmania was the first Tasmanian provider to include eight weeks paid maternity leave on the birth of an educator's first child.

You could say the people make the brand, from Lady Gowrie and several other dedicated professional women in 1939 to the Lady Gowrie Tasmania workforce today. When you speak to many of the Gowrie team, a common theme emerges. Gowrie gets into your blood, whether this is the long-standing history or indeed what the Lady Gowrie name represents for children, families and the people who work each and every day with them. There are many stories told or to be told (some not printable) as so many individuals have been part of the journey.

Jennifer Parsons notes:

"as staff we used to joke, "Once a Gowrie girl always a Gowrie girl". I, for one, am very proud to be able to say that I am still a "Gowrie girl". So many memories – learning, laughter, fun, friends – children and adults together. Congratulations on 80 years! May children and their families continue to benefit from Lady Gowrie Tasmania."

Professional Development

Across 80 years, Lady Gowrie Tasmania has demonstrated again and again a strong commitment to developing a skilled and agile education and care workforce and an equally strong willingness to take on programs and projects (as mentioned previously) that support positive outcomes for Tasmanian children and their families.

Sandra Falconer (Board Director 2007-2014) recalls:

"During the early part of the 2000s the Lady Gowrie RTO supported childcare workers with training and assistance, covering a distance from Dover to King Island and Swansea to Queenstown. It provided accreditation in Certificate III in Child Care, Certificate IV in Outside School Hours Care and the Diploma of Child Care."

The RTO's office was maintained in the Lady Gowrie headquarters at Campbell Street. The staff included a Manager, Penny Richardson, me, the Trainer and Clerical Assistant, Heather Clifton. At various times other qualified personnel were recruited for marking and training. They were Kathy Cripps, Rebecca Lazenby and Annette Barwick."

In 2007 a commercial professional development and learning arm of Lady Gowrie Tasmania was established, Campbell Burnett Training Services. This program has evolved into what we know in 2019 as Gowrie Training & Consultancy.

2007 saw the first state-wide Professional Development Day for Lady Gowrie Tasmania educators which was facilitated at Oatlands. This and subsequent state-wide professional development days enabled the North and South service teams to connect in a community of practice.



Throughout the 2000's and up until 2016, Lady Gowrie Tasmania supported not only their own workforce but all services state-wide under the Commonwealth Government Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP). Sadly, subsidised professional learning through the Commonwealth Government ended on the 30th June 2016 with the closure of the IPSP and specifically the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) and Indigenous Professional Support Unit (IPSU). The lasting impact on this has yet to be fully realised. Lady Gowrie Tasmania is, however, in a strong and sustainable position to ensure their own workforce continues to be offered and is undertaking professional learning, both accredited and non-accredited.

In addition to the participation in ongoing professional learning, Lady Gowrie Tasmania personnel have presented at a number of conferences and forums within Tasmania, nationally and internationally.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Services in the 21st Century

In 2019 Lady Gowrie Tasmania, 80 years on, is highly respected for the broad programs offered across the state; a not for profit organisation, focussed on children's education and wellbeing, with a commitment to community service, families and early and middle childhood professionals, sustainability and reconciliation.

Gowrie's growth has been anything but haphazard. Instead, the organisation has deliberately and strategically opened services across a range of communities, always with the best interests of children foremost in mind.

Today (2019) 17 Centre Based Long Day Care Services, 4 Before-School Care, 17 After-School Care and 8 Vacation Care programs and a Family Day Care program are managed and operated by Lady Gowrie Tasmania. Whilst they all adhere to the organisation's vision for children and work within the organisation's operational and strategic framework, they respond to the communities they serve and are encouraged to build robust and enduring relationships. These relationships with children, families and communities have, across time, resulted in a diverse and rich range of Lady Gowrie Tasmania education and care services.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service holds the distinction of being the longest operating Lady Gowrie Tasmania service in the state. As such it is a place filled with memories and stories. It is also the Lady Gowrie Tasmania service that has undergone to most change.



Battery Point entrance, 1967.



Battery Point outside environment, 2008.

From its construction in 1939 through to 2019, the service retains many of its original features, including the observation booths, that were integral to original intent of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres as places for adult learning. The original entrance may be gone, but the big windows in the rooms remain. The outside playground has been developed, but the original tree that was a much-loved climbing structure, remains.

Many teachers and educators have worked at Battery Point across the past eight decades, some of whom have moved onto other positions with Lady Gowrie Tasmania. These include CEO, **Ros Cornish**; General Manager, Professional Learning and Support, **Annette Barwick** and General Manager, Children's Services, **Kathy Cripps**.

Kathy Cripps recalls her time at Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point:

"I started at Gowrie on the 8th of March 1996. Even though I've had a variety of roles with Gowrie, I think my head and heart go back to Battery Point. I recall the relationships I had with the children and the relationships I had with the families. Even though we planned and programmed for children and there were obviously standards and licensing, we had lots of fun, and did lots of silly things with children. When I think back, adults would be part of the play too. I remember that boat, I'd be up and down that slide. I wouldn't be standing back, arms crossed to supervise. I'd be part of it! A lot of the spontaneous stuff..... We had a bus, and so we'd say, right lets go out on the bus today, and off we'd trot.

You connect with people who you have some affinity with, who have the same passions. And for us as we worked at Battery Point, we all seemed to share the same philosophy around what's best for children and we worked very much as a team. Communication was paramount.

We have purpose-built services now. When I started at Battery Point, I remember vinyl on desktops, and if there was shelving, there were curtains; lace or Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck on the elastic wires that went across. I remember Battery Point had lots of dark wood grain... Then I remember when it was renovated. An operational subsidy was available to update facilities. Ros (Cornish) was instrumental as was Christine Roberts in applying for that funding, which was hundreds of thousands of dollars. As each room was renovated, we'd move to another. It was quite a juggling act, but we worked it, between us. That's the beauty of teamwork - and the people who worked in that service at that time, were a great team!"

Annette Barwick (General Manager, Professional Development & Support) reflects:

"Like Kathy, Battery Point holds a special place in my heart. I commenced at Lady Gowrie Battery Point in August 2001 as a casual educator. Soon after I was offered a permanent role working in the Runnymede Room with children aged 2 to 4 years of age. Interestingly, I know that there would have been challenges, like in any profession, but my memories are of a brilliant team of like-minded people whose priority was the children and the families. As Kathy reflected, we had fun with the children. I can remember the dressing up, yes children and educators and the games of hide and seek we would play (the observation booths and large cupboards under the observation booths were great places to hide). We regularly visited Salamanca Square, purchased fruit and sat by the fountain. The children enjoyed their regular visits to the variety of shops and parks that were in such close proximity.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania is like a second home to me (some may say a first home), and I am privileged to have had such rewarding opportunities. From a participant in the first upskilling program, becoming a Manager at Lady Gowrie Battery Point, being seconded to develop the Lady Gowrie Tasmania first Curriculum Guide, then becoming the Director of Children's Services State-wide. This was a period of immense growth, but also an opportunity for a number of career pathways for Lady Gowrie Tasmania educators."

Ros Cornish reflects:

"I commenced my career with Lady Gowrie Tasmania in 1994 as the Director at the Battery Point Centre, so it has a special place in my professional journey. It is not only where I started but it is also the flagship - where Lady Gowrie Tasmania started. Upon commencing at Battery Point I truly thought I had entered a time warp - the facilities were old and tired, but the saving grace was that the program provided was of high quality. I soon decided a major upgrade of facilities was a priority and after securing funding, the refurbishment commenced. I am still in

awe of how a facility was demolished and rebuilt without any disruption to service delivery, with every child safe. Families and staff were patient and tolerant, as were the contractors. Children were enthralled with the goings on - diggers, trucks, machines - a child's delight. I recall a tradie stating: "If that child asks me once more 'Why are you doing that mister?' I'll surely bury him in the next concrete pour." Of course, he did not carry through with the threat despite, I'm sure, that child continuing to ask him questions.

My own family have been so much a part of the Gowrie family. In those early days at Battery Point, when funds were not readily available, my husband was the maker and fixer of children's equipment. My daughters spent much of their youth at Gowrie over the weekends; filing, shredding, copying etc. So I must acknowledge them as supporters of the organisation in their own small way.

One of my very favourite experiences with Gowrie was at the local Bank in the days of cheque books. I was to collect a new one and waited to be called. The call of "Lady Gowrie" resulted in some generous responses from fellow bankers - smiles, nodding, almost the parting of the path but not quite a bow... but I felt the Gowrie tiara should have been in play."

Helen Stephen - Teacher, Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point reflects on Queen Elizabeth II visit to Tasmania in 2000:

"We took the children down to Salamanca Place because I'd heard that Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip were to include a 'walkabout' there during her visit to Hobart in 2000. Because we were with young children, everyone made sure we were at the front! We had an excellent view and it was very exciting. Prince Philip was on our side and the Queen on the other side, but we still saw her clearly. My first impression on seeing her was surprise to see that she is in fact quite short! For some reason I'd imagined her to be taller - no doubt her regal bearing!"

After we went back to school, the Kinder children made drawings to send to her: they were about us going down to Salamanca Place to see her and we included a letter to say how much we enjoyed seeing her and Prince Philip. The children wrote their names on the letter. It was SO exciting when we received a reply."

As mentioned previously the 'Safe and Challenging' playground at Battery Point continues to provide children each and every day with the opportunity to engage in challenging experiences and extend their learning and development in the outdoors.

Annette Barwick, Annual Report Year Ending June 2008:

"The Safe and Challenging Playground upgrade for Lady Gowrie Battery Point site commenced late in 2007 and was officially available for children at the beginning of 2008. This project had many support

partners – HIA, Youth Build, Hobart City Council and K&D Warehouse – all assisted achieving the vision of this project. Children and families were actively involved in the design process with many views being incorporated into the final design and construction.”

Taryn Hall, Educator, Battery Point Education and Care Service:

“The children drew pictures of what they wanted to have in the playground.”



In 2010 the Battery Point Playground won the HIA Award for Best Outdoor Project - Safe and Challenging Playground, Battery Point, Lady Gowrie Tasmania - from Kidsafe.

National gong for safe playground - Posted 26 Oct 2010, 4:25pm, ABC News:

“A southern Tasmanian childcare centre has won a national award for its child-friendly design.

The playground at the Lady Gowrie centre in Battery Point uses natural materials and equipment, including a climbing wheel and balance beam.

The Kidsafe State Manager, Jenny Branch, says the playground ticks all the boxes.

“We also know in a child’s development we need to be safe, we need to be challenging, we need to provide an environment that lets them use their imagination, interact with other children and provide a learning environment, but in a safe and very secure place as well,” she said

“This playground has provided all of that.”

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service Celebrates 75 Years of Service - July 2014

The children attending the Battery Point service at the time shared their thoughts about Lady Zara Gowrie and the educators documented the following:

The children have been very interested in the photo of Lady Zara Gowrie and the many recent discussions surrounding the 75th birthday celebrations of the Lady Gowrie Centres this month. Some of the children chose to do their own sketch of Lady Zara Gowrie using the photo as inspiration, many wondering about the name of her little dog. All the children agreed that it is very important to celebrate such a special birthday.

“Especially because she died.” commented Ayla.

“Yes, and she made up Lady Gowrie.” added Mia.

The children made many comments about the look of Lady Zara during group discussions and as they worked on their drawings.

“I think she’s a bit like a princess.” said Owen.

“And she looks very kind.” added Greta.

“And helpful.” said Ethan.

“It was a good idea for her to build it because we can play and be happy!” said Zara.

“Lady Gowrie is really fun for me sometimes.” announced Henry.

It has been an important and informative time for the children to learn about the history of Lady Zara Gowrie and her remarkable vision and passion for the education and care of young children such as themselves.

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Battery Point Today

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Battery Point Education and Care Service in 2019 continues to be a thriving children’s service where the educators work collaboratively to ensure that all of the children feel connected and supported. This is achieved through a focus on building strong positive relationships with the children as active learning partners. The children are learning Spanish with the educators at present, thanks to a successful Early Learning Languages (ELLA) Grant application.

Community relationships and regular excursions are still of great importance and value to the Battery Point children and team. The children and educators make frequent trips to Princes Park and also explore Salamanca Place and pop into the local post office on occasion (much as they did in the early days of the service).

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service was the second service established by Lady Gowrie Tasmania in 1993 and is situated in inner-city North Hobart.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care upgrade, 2009.

Throughout the last 26 years the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service has been located alongside the Glenora building, which was occupied by Lady Gowrie Tasmania administration and support programs until May 2016. At that time administration and programs re-located to the new Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families in South Hobart. In the last two years Campbell Street has undergone some significant changes. The shared playground's internal fences, which separated the age groups, have been removed to create an inclusive and collaborative play space.



Additionally, the Burnett room, which is located on the ground floor of the repurposed Glenora building, was opened in 2018 to meet enrolment demands.

Theresa Blizzard, Co-Manager, Lady Gowrie Tasmania - Campbell Street Education and Care Service:

"The biggest change for Campbell Street in recent times is the introduction of the Burnett room and accompanying outdoor play space. The heritage listed building has been transformed into a beautiful, homely learning space for children who can utilise the play spaces they choose to be in."



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service playground post re-development, 2018.

Experiential learning is embedded in the program at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service. The educators work to foster children's curiosity about the world around them through a range of learning experiences, including excursions and incursions. These include visits to the local park and the local supermarket, where ingredients are sourced to embed science and numeracy concepts in cooking experiences, and participation in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) borrowing program. The children also have access to the Early Childhood Intervention Service playground (next door) which is ideal for the younger children, as it is sensory based.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service and Lady Gowrie Tasmania Bowen Road Education and Care Service have established a Buddy Up program, where the children and educators go out on excursions together. In 2019 the Buddy Up group visited the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra for a performance. A couple of the musicians were family members who took the time, at the end of the performance, to show the children how the instruments work.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Campbell Street Education and Care Service, 2018.

To support and foster the children's thirst for knowledge about animals, children attending the Campbell Street centre in 2019 visited the Hobart Animal Hospital. During this excursion the hospital staff guided the children through the facilities, demonstrated basic procedures and the children wore lab coats as they examined different things under a microscope.

After visiting the Sustainability Centre in Mount Nelson in 2019, the children and team were inspired to improve their carbon footprint. The centre is now offering families the opportunity to give their soft plastics to the service who, with the children, will deliver them to the local Woolworths soft plastic bin.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Lindisfarne North Education and Care Service



Lady Gowrie Lindisfarne North Education and Care Service was established on the eastern shore of Hobart in 1999 after a request from the then School Principal Lucy Fisher. Fourteen years later, in 2013 the service ceased operation when the school on which the service was co-located expressed a wish to utilise the building for its school program. As a result, the lease was not renewed by the Department of Education and Lady Gowrie Tasmania, despite the service being fully utilised, had to re-locate the children to other Lady Gowrie Tasmania services. Ironically the school relocated to Geilston Bay a year later – and the site sat idle until recent times when sold to a private operator to establish long day care centre.

Lady Gowrie left to consider limited options as shutdown row grows – **Michelle Paine**, Mercury, October 9, 2013:

"A row has broken out over a childcare centre's eviction from Lindisfarne North Primary School.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania has expressed its anger the centre will have to leave the site by March because of growing school enrolments.....Meanwhile, Lady Gowrie Chief Executive Officer, Ros Cornish said it had relocated all the 48 families that used its childcare centre at Lindisfarne North Primary School, but the loss was extremely sad.

The department told the 14-year-old service it had to leave the premises by March to make space for the school. Most children have been moved to Lady Gowrie in Campbell Street, Battery Point, South Hobart or Bowen Road."

In 2018 and 2019 Lady Gowrie Tasmania has been actively working with the Department of Education and other Education and Care sector representatives to develop a fair and equitable approach to managing co-location arrangements through the development of the Strong Partnerships Framework. This framework includes the Provisional Policy and process to guide co-location of Education and Care and Department of Education Services, which provides explicit guidance to all parties in line with current policy and legislation.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Bowen Road Education and Care Service



In 2004 Lady Gowrie Tasmania successfully tendered to operate a purpose-built long day care service at Bowen Road Primary School and across the last fifteen years has grown it into a thriving centre that provides an engaging curriculum underpinned by a strong connection with the school and the local community. The educators at Bowen Road have developed this priority in relation to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, which guides educator practice.

"Children learn about themselves and construct their own identity within the context of their families and communities." (p.20)

Connection with Bowen Road Primary School affords the children with opportunities to participate in the Launching into Learning Program, to visit the library and gym and to use of the school oval and playgrounds. All these activities provide the children with numerous new opportunities to learn and discover through play, to investigate and wonder, but also prepare for more structured environments and the transition to school.

Children attending the school also visit the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Bowen Road Education and Care Service, where they read books to with the younger children. This benefits both the children at the centre and the older children, who build confidence through this experience. This program is called "Little Readers" and it has been underway since 2017.

The Centre's engagement with Barrington Lodge Aged Care Centre is an important element of Bowen Road's commitment to community engagement. The relationship is important

to the children at the service and to many of the residents at the Aged Care Centre. In fact, visiting the Aged Care Centre is so popular with many of the children in 2019 that a roster has been created to ensure everyone can visit.

Hidajeta Vlaskovac, Centre Manager, Lady Gowrie Tasmania Bowen Road Education and Care Service recalls the excitement of one of the children:

Hidajeta Vlaskovac *“Hidajeta, we’re going to visit grandmas and grandpas today, but they aren’t my grandmas and grandpas...but they are!”.*

“Our ‘grandmas and grandpas’ also come and visit us occasionally. They recently visited us during Families Week for our Families Afternoon Tea. The tears and laughter, cooperation and communication are priceless. Everyone benefits from community engagement. It starts with one small step!”

Like the Battery Point and Campbell Street Education and Care Services, Lady Gowrie Tasmania Bowen Road Education and Care Service has undergone a major playground renovation since opening.



Before the renovation.



After the renovation, 2013.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Bowen Road Education and Care Service playground, 2013.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Norwood Education and Care Service

In 2004 Lady Gowrie Tasmania’s tender for the operation of new purpose-built long day care centre at Norwood Primary School was successful. In September 2007 the service expanded its scope to include supporting a growing number of families who wanted to access a quality outside school hours care program. In 2009 the playground was redeveloped to meet this growing need.



A positive relationship with the school currently supports children and educators visit the school library and participate in the schools *Launch into Learning* program. These experiences are not only enjoyable for the children but also support positive transitions to school.

Wider community engagement occurs when the children and educators take regular trips to the local nursing home. This helps to build intergenerational relationships that enhance the health and wellbeing of both the children and the local aged community. The service has also engaged with a local yoga program to extend and encourage children's physical development and wellbeing.

A long-standing commitment to sustainability and environmental awareness is embedded within practice at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Norwood Education and Care Service. As part of this commitment a sustainability work station, accessible to parents has been created. This enables parents to drop off their soft plastics, which the children collect and deliver to the local Woolworths for recycling. Additionally, the children visits bushland located within the school grounds on a regular basis. Lady Gowrie Tasmania Norwood Education and Care Service also has a well-established garden, which produces fresh fruit and vegetables for use in the children's meals. This cycle of growth, produce, consumption and waste is supported by the onsite worm farm.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Alanvale Education and Care Service

2005 saw Lady Gowrie Tasmania successfully tender for the lease, management and operation of TAFE Child Care Centre in Launceston, which is now known as Lady Gowrie Tasmania Alanvale Education and Care Service.

An advantage of Alanvale's location is the strong ongoing relationship it enjoys with Tas TAFE. Throughout the year, students from TAFE visit the service as part of their early childhood education and care studies. Alanvale children also visit the TAFE for five week blocks a few times a year for playgroup sessions, which are organised by early childhood Certificate III and Diploma students. This reciprocal arrangement affords many rich learning opportunities for both children and adults.

Recently a new community centre has opened close to the service and another strong relationship has developed. The children and educators have participated in events at the community centre in 2019, enabling the children to connect with diverse and interesting groups of people.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Alanvale Education and Care Service is participating in the Working Together for 3 Year Olds initiative as a pilot service in 2019. This program is being delivered by the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Tasmanian Education and Care sector. So far it is showing strong evidence of the positive impact that quality early years education experiences can have when all 3-year-old children and their families are supported to participate.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Richmond Education and Care Service

The centre is situated in the picturesque historical township in the Coal River Valley, which is a 20-minute journey from the Hobart CBD. It caters for 24 children in long day care and additionally offers an after-school care program.

The program at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Richmond Education and Care Service is based on a vertical grouping model, which addresses the education and care needs of all children across one space. It is an inclusive approach, which particularly suits the children and families in this small community, many of whom know each other outside of the service.

The Lady Gowrie Tasmania Richmond Education and Care team value the importance of shared early learning experiences that are delivered through evidence-based practice. As a result, a culture of collaboration and shared thinking drives the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service

In May 2005, the Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service commenced operation on the South Hobart School grounds, incorporating the building formerly known as the Kindergarten Annexe. Prior to opening, the centre was upgraded to meet regulations and provided a much-needed service to the community.



In 2019, South Hobart Primary School and Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service have a strong reciprocal relationship. On occasion, small groups of children visit the OSHC program in preparation for

Kindergarten the following year. The children and educators are also invited to join the school assembly on a regular basis and the service is permitted to use to the school library. Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service have been ambassadors for South Hobart Primary School fundraising events which in the past have helped the nation's farms and farmers during severe drought.

Establishing strong family and community relationships is always a priority for Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service. Currently, Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service is working with the Hobart City Council support parents and educators to explore building resilience and creativity in children through the Afloat project. Visiting the South Hobart precinct is important to the children and team at Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service. The children and educators take walks to explore the rich natural environment of the Hobart Rivulet and visit the local dentist during dental week. Children from Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service and Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families (located in the same suburb) visit each other's services where they enjoy diverse learning experiences within very different spaces.

The South Hobart team hold the children at the heart of their curriculum delivery by acknowledging diversity and facilitating learning experiences that meet the needs, learning dispositions and interests of each child.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania University Education and Care Services

In 2007 Lady Gowrie Tasmania engaged in negotiations with the University of Tasmania (UTas) to transfer the operational responsibilities of their childcare centres to Lady Gowrie Tasmania. Following this, in 2008 Lady Gowrie Tasmania assumed the management and operation of the two University Child Care Centres, Hobart and Launceston along with Outside School Hours Care at University Launceston and Mowbray Primary School.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania University North Education and Care Service

The Lady Gowrie Tasmania University North Education and Care Service is located on the University of Tasmania, Newnham Campus. The service features a large, natural play area, which is used each day, in all weather, to support the interests and learning of the children. The service also maintains strong community connections. The children frequently take excursions into the grounds of the University, visiting the University gym to support their physical health and wellbeing; Riawunna, the Aboriginal centre, to learn about indigenous culture and listen to Aboriginal stories with an elder; and the student nurses station, to learn about the people who help us in the community. The service also welcomes visitors from the local community, including ambulance officers from the

ambulance station across the road, and personnel from Bravehearts and the police department, who share their occupations and stories. In 2017, the service was fortunate to be involved in a Vietnamese language learning program in collaboration with the University, which the children thoroughly embraced over a ten-week period.



Developing and maintaining partnerships with families is an important focus at University North. The educators place emphasis on welcoming families and children and on creating environments that encourage families to linger and connect with others. Families have expert knowledge of their own children, and educators take the time to discover each family's unique background, building strong relationships with them over time.

There are many long-standing educators at University North who have cared for, educated and nurtured hundreds of children over the years. The team have seen many changes during this time, but their focus has always remained; children are at the centre of everything. Educators bring a wealth of knowledge and experience and know that children learn best through being immersed in rich, hands-on, play-based learning.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania University South Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania University South Education and Care Service is situated on University of Tasmania Southern Campus in Sandy Bay. Recently the service has been focusing on the importance of sharing information with families such as the significance of programming, how it captures children's learning and development, how crucial the first five years of a child's life is and how educators can play an important role in supporting children's learning across the early years.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania University South Education and Care Service encompasses a rich and thriving multi-cultural community. In 2019, the service has children from 39 different countries enrolled and six bilingual staff. This team diversity assists families and children to participate in the learning program with ease and understanding. This also supports each child's sense of belonging.

As part of Lady Gowrie Tasmania University South Education and Care Service's commitment to supporting families and celebrating diversity, the service was successful in their Early Languages Australia ELLA Grant application. ELLA is a digital platform for play-base language exploration for 4 – 5-year olds. The service has chosen Mandarin as their language of inquiry.

Workplace culture is of high priority to the team at Lady Gowrie Tasmania University South Education and Care Service. The team value the importance of strong partnerships for quality outcome for children and families. In the past year 9 staff members accessed long service leave which demonstrates their dedication to the children, families and the local community. Through time and through the dedication of management and the staff, a workplace and community of commitment, unity and celebration has been created.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Acton Education and Care Service

In March 2007 Lady Gowrie Tasmania became the operator of Acton Education and Care Service on behalf of a private owner. Then, in 2008 the owner decided to sell the service and Lady Gowrie Tasmania became the owner and operator of the Acton service.

Annette Barwick, Annual Report 2007:

"The centre has focused on environmental awareness with a space designated for children to grow vegetables and fruit. This focus supports children's learning about sustainability and environmental awareness."

Miffy Wedd - founding team member:

"It was a quiet centre when it first opened but it soon became a centre of choice for families in the area. The development of the 'paddock' next to the main centre has been a wonderful addition to support a nature play environment and the centre is thriving!"

Health and wellbeing are a primary focus for the team at Acton. In recent years the service participated in an action research project which supported educators through an online platform to enhance children's physical activity. It was their experience of this project and their commitment to the *Move Well Eat Well* program that has fostered daily physical activity sessions.

A few years ago, the team identified the need for more nature-based play for the children. Through a process of research and analysis, it was found that the paddock right next door to the service was an ideal location for nature

pedagogy. The location was representational of the semi-rural demographics of Acton and through consultation with children, families and community a vision was formed for the paddock.

The paddock is now utilised on a regular basis by the children and educators. The trees and shrub growth have created spaces for children to engage in play together or withdraw. There is a gathering circle for morning and afternoon tea as well as group gatherings. More recently garden beds have been established for the community garden, which supports the vision of connecting to the local aboriginal community to embed cultural understanding and awareness through bush tucker.

Connection is at the heart of everything that Lady Gowrie Tasmania Acton Education and Care Service does, whether it's connection with children, families, team and community. Moving forward, Lady Gowrie Tasmania Acton Education and Care Service is building relationships with the local aboriginal community to ensure that connection to history, heritage and country is honoured.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Swansea Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Swansea Education and Care Service is located in the centre of the seaside township on the east coast. Connection to community is embedded within the program and the pedagogy at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Swansea Education and Care Service. The service has a strong relationship with the local school, where the children and team go on regular excursions to participate in the *Launch into Learning and Little Stars* programs.



Another primary relationship Lady Gowrie Tasmania Swansea Education and Care Service has is with its local State Emergency Service (SES). In recent times the local community experienced significant fires to the Dolphins Sands area which is located 15kms north of Swansea. This was a call to action for the children at the service. They

baked sweet and savoury muffins for the SES. In return for the children's kindness the SES spent time with them showing them through their Helicopter and Fire Trucks.

Family engagement is pivotal to Lady Gowrie Tasmania Swansea Education and Care Service. Families are very involved and take great pride in 'their' education and care service. The families assist with gardening and enthusiastically participate in the program.

One of the defining factors at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Swansea Education and Care Service is the commitment and longevity of the educators and their passion for what they do each day. The service has many long serving staff and has a close network of educators who are committed to quality outcomes for children.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Oatlands Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Oatlands Education and Care Service is situated in the historic rural village off the Midland Highway in central Tasmania. True to its country roots, the Oatlands service places sustainability and respect for land and environment at the heart of its practice. Embedded in its daily program is composting, veggie patch maintenance and recycling. Upcycling also is a shared practice between the children and their families. Water walls and gravity walls have been created through upcycling, tree trunks have been repurposed for stepping stones in the playground and pine tree that had been removed from the school grounds has been used to make beautiful tables for the children.

The local School and Lady Gowrie Tasmania Oatlands Education and Care Service have in place a long-standing relationship which has seen the children participate in the Launch into Learning program, undertake regular library visits and attending school events. This year the service was invited to participate in the school fair as a fundraising opportunity. Town visits are also a regular experience for the children and educators.

Recognising children as individuals and citizens, who are connected to the community is a vital element of professional practice at the service. Each educator uses this understanding as a starting point for planning and delivering the program.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Fahan Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania commenced offering a unique service on the Fahan School campus in 2012. The service is located within the school's the Early Year's learning program area (Kinder to Year 1) and, as such, has a very immediate connection with the school community.

The service offers a Reggio Emilia inspired program, access to weekly art classes, library visits and fortnightly visits with the Year 6 buddies. It encompasses a Long Day Care and OSHC on the one site.



During 2018, the service implemented nature days where the children venture to Mt Nelson Reserve to explore and engage with a wild space. The children also explore the school playgrounds daily, which have been designed to embrace the connections with nature and enhance children's physical development.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Fahan Education and Care Service offers an environment based around children's interests and scaffolding the children's learning through play.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Kingston Education and Care Service

In July 2014 Lady Gowrie Tasmania assumed operation of the former Collegiate Early Learning Centre at Kingston. The Kingston service had a long-standing integrated program with OneCare's Bishop Davies Court aged care retreat and Lady Gowrie Tasmania continues that commitment today. The children enjoy visiting Bishop Davies Court on a regular basis especially for the singing senior's program. They also share in a range of cultural events.

The Early Learning Childcare Centre is a partnership between Lady Gowrie Tasmania and OneCare and the inter-generational programs and activities are a real asset for residents and children alike.

Currently the team at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Kingston Education and Care Service are working on redeveloping their playground to be more 'home-like' The current plans

include a mud kitchen, digging patch, meeting space and sensory garden. Educators are leading a gardening project with the children, which has already seen the exploration and inquiry of herbs and life cycles.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Kingston Education and Care Service has also partnered with the local Men's Shed in creating an outdoor kitchen for the children. The team sourced the materials and the Men's Shed created and constructed the kitchen. This work was acknowledged by the children and educators, when they hosted a morning tea for the men.

A major focus for the team at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Kingston Education and Care Service has always been the importance of the environment being the third teacher. Through reflective practice and close analysis, the educators have worked with children on creating inviting spaces that invite curiosity and wonder.

The blossoming of Lady Gowrie Tasmania Kingston Education and Care Service's practice and pedagogy has come from a rich culture of reflective practice. The team has a strong focus on how they can improve consistently for children, families, community and for the team. This reflective practice is now ingrained. It is how they choose to work to the best of their ability. Their desire and vision for the future is to ensure they create a home away for home for children.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Midway Point Education and Care Service

In 2016 the Sorell Council approached Lady Gowrie Tasmania to take over operations of its Malunna Child Care Centre, located in Midway Point. Since then Midway Point has grown into a thriving service which is now operating at capacity.

The service is a small family orientated centre which values each child as an individual. In recent times the educators have been focusing on building children's physical health and wellbeing capacity through new challenges.

The professional team at Lady Gowrie Tasmania Midway Point Education and Care Service are inspired by respectful and equitable relationships with children and families. They maintain a friendly, warm and approachable manner for all interactions within the service. Being valued and of value to each other as a team is at the essences of their daily practice.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families



The journey towards opening the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families began in 2010 when the Board approved work to seek an alternative facility for the head office and support services. In 2011 a budget commitment of \$3.5m was given to move forward with a West Hobart Child and Family Centre development. 2013 saw the proposed development abandoned due to community pressure. In the same year, a consultant was engaged to identify other potential sites in Hobart. In 2014, the former Performance Auto site in South Hobart was purchased for the development, subject to development approval. Approval was granted and in 2015 architects and building contractors were appointed and construction commenced.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families opened on the 2nd of May 2016, with administration and support services relocated to the site the following month.

The Integrated service is quite unique. Environments for the children's programs have been built to encourage the children to explore and challenge themselves each day and to respect children as capable and confident learners.

Miffy Wedd, Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Child and Families Centre Manager:

"The service has a unique setting that offers children, families and educators alike the opportunity to interact and engage with all aspects of the organisation. This has been evident with children enjoying numerous visits to Ros Cornish's (CEO) office to have a "chat and play". Many of the children refer to Ros as "Nanny Ros". While one of the newest of the Lady Gowrie Service's it has been a pleasure to see the service strengthen and flourish."

Each fortnight the Integrated Centre children are involved in a regular excursion to the local aged care facility. This program allows for children to spend time with the residents to engage in craft, songs, story reading and sharing their own stories. Additionally, the integrated centre children visit the Lady Gowrie Tasmania South Hobart Education and Care Service regularly. The Integrated Centre team are often seen in the community to visit the Hobart Rivulet with small groups of enthusiastic children.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Gordon Square Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Gordon Square Education and Care Service is the newest Lady Gowrie Tasmania service, joining the organisation in May 2019. Lady Gowrie Tasmania has been busy working with the existing team and the community to ensure that the education and care needs of the George Town community are met well into the future.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Family Day Care

In January 2007 Lady Gowrie Tasmania became the sponsor of Family Day Care (formerly Hobart Family Day Care).

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Family Day Care has developed into a boutique service; a service which supports educators to provide individual programs that utilise their strengths and passion for early childhood education and care. Partnerships with families are the corner stone of practice, so each of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Family Day Care educators endeavour to flexibly meet the needs of individual families.

The Lady Gowrie Tasmania Family Day Care service is a strong advocate for children and families and for its educators, who work independently each day within a sometimes challenging sector. The team leader and field support members are passionate, qualified and experienced early childhood professionals who are focused on collaborating with each educator to foster quality pedagogical practices and sound business management skills.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Occasional Care

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Occasional Care has been operating at Frederick Street in Launceston since 2004, when the Department of Education invited Lady Gowrie Tasmania to take on operational responsibilities.

At the end of 2004, the Department relocated the school program from the site, enabling Lady Gowrie Tasmania to expand our services to include our pre-school/occasional education and care program, along with a site to house our northern resource centre and meeting/training facility.

The Frederick Street Centre offers an alternative to long day care for families who may need short term education and care for children as well as the opportunity for a transitional program for children in the year prior to formal school. An early childhood teacher and additional qualified educator provide the education and care program for three to five year olds.

During school holiday periods a dedicated vacation care program for younger children is provided on site.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Outside School Hours Care services include Before School Care, After-School Care and Vacation Care programs across the state.

Outside school hours care (OSHC) is a growing sector within Tasmania and nationally. This could be attributed to increased workforce participation and school communities seeking establishment of these programs to support ongoing enrolments. Key changes in OSHC have included the implementation of My Time Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia. Although Tasmanian OSHC services do not require educators to hold a qualification, many educators working in Lady Gowrie Tasmania services do hold and/or are actively working towards attaining a relevant qualification.

2019 saw children engaged in a variety of learning and leisure experiences including a mud run challenge, re-purpose days - creating art from recycled items, woodwork,

cooking experiences, exploring parks around Hobart, sporting sessions and much more.

Vacation Care offers fun and inspiring school holiday experiences intended to engage children's curiosity, interests and skills. This is achieved through meaningful interactions with children, and a co-designed program where children are the leaders of their own experiences.

Kathy Cripps:

"OSHC has really boomed in the last 10-12 years and for Gowrie those services have grown, especially in the last 5 to 6 years as families try to balance work and family life. Families rely on it and want to know their children are safe. They want a relaxing transition between home and school and they also want a recreational program where their children get to learn and have fun!"

Keelyn Bogert:

"Ever since beginning work at South Hobart OSHC, many beneficial opportunities have been presented to me. Because of the huge support that Gowrie has given to me I've been able to further my experience and qualifications. Lady Gowrie Tasmania has allowed and assisted me in progressing towards my Certificate 3 in children's services qualification. This has enabled me to begin work at services such as South Hobart (Weld Street) Long Day Care as well as occasional shifts in the babies room.

Being able to work with children of all age groups has expanded my knowledge and shown me the varying needs and developmental stages of each individual child.

The staff I work with at all services are supportive and great at communication. Never have I worked for an organisation where I feel so supported and encouraged. Every day at Gowrie I have been excited to begin work."

Jayden McConchie:

"Gowrie provide and support staff with training, furthering and developing new skills to ensure Gowrie's motto 'Children First'. We have been given opportunities like the conference where I personally, and hope many others, gained ideas and new methods of assisting with children's development and growth. I gained many new connections and was able to share ideas and learn from others knowledge, skills and attributes. Our very supportive manager is the reason all our staff at South Hobart OSHC have flourished and become more than a team, more like a family."

Professional Development and Support Programs

In 2019 Gowrie Training & Consultancy (GT&C) manages a range of programs that influence the growth and development of a robust and agile education and care workforce, that support children and families and that influence broader education and care. GT&C has three areas of business focus:

- Gowrie Training Centre operates under the auspices of Lady Gowrie South Australia (RTO 4436). In 2019, Gowrie Training & Consultancy is working towards becoming a standalone Registered Training Organisation (RTO). This change will enable Gowrie Training & Consultancy to effectively guide learners towards a professional qualification that is highly compatible to the Tasmanian context.
- In 2019 the Gowrie Training Centre has Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care and Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care Trainees placed across Tasmania. It also has two Jobseeker cohorts; one in Hobart and another in Sorell. These are funded programs, through Skills Tasmania, for learners not currently working in the Education and Care sector. Their purpose is to support successful entry into the workforce with a professional qualification.
- Gowrie Training & Consultancy recently completed a successful six-week Career Pathway Program in Sorell. This was a pre-qualification program that gave participants an insight into the Certificate III and working in the education and care sector. A key component was to provide the participants with two transferable units of competency from the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care as well as facilitated individual career pathway meetings to support work and study goals and professional pathways.
- Gowrie Training & Consultancy works collaboratively with Lady Gowrie Tasmania Children's Services to provide professional learning experiences that build on the qualifications of the organisation's educators. It also works with a range of external clients and government agencies and departments to provide customised services, including project management.
- In 2019, GT&C wrote content for the Tasmanian Department of Education for inclusion in the Strong Partnerships resource. This resource is a central feature of the Department of Education's Strong Partnerships initiative, which will see the Department and the education and care sector work collaboratively to build and maintain positive relationships between co-located schools, education and care services and other education and care services in the community.
- From 2017, GT&C has managed the delivery of the Early Years and School Age Care Workforce Plan 2017-2020 (EYSAC) on behalf of Early Childhood Australia (ECA) Tasmania Branch. Tasmania is leading the nation with this significant project, which is focussed on nurturing a professional, proficient and activated workforce.

- In 2018, the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Centre for Children and Families was presented with a national HESTA award for advancing pedagogy and practice in recognition of an action research project with was undertaken at the service. GT&C initiated designed and managed the project. The success of this project has resulted in GT&C being engaged in 2019 to design and manage a new action research project for Lady Gowrie Tasmania. This time an additional three Lady Gowrie services are participating.

The Gowrie Training & Consultancy team has established strong partnerships with a range of associates who have contributed to the diversity and strength of our work.

Inclusion Support Programme

Lady Gowrie Tasmania (from 2016) is the state-wide provider of new Inclusion Support Programme (ISP) which is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

The ISP is a key component of the Government's Child Care Safety Net and provides support to early childhood and childcare (ECCC) services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs in mainstream services; providing them with an opportunity to learn and develop alongside their typically developing peers.



The team includes 9 Inclusion Professionals, all highly experienced and qualified. The Inclusion professionals works with services across the state to;

- Provide practice support to educators on inclusive practice to overcome specific inclusion barriers.
- Support educators to reflect, acknowledge and identify their strengths
- Support educators to reflect on understandings of inclusion and assist educators' teams to critically reflect on their practice and identify possibilities for change.
- Assist in the development and/or review a tailored Strategic Inclusion Plan
- facilitate access to the Specialist Equipment Library
- review and endorse applications for support from the Inclusion Development Fund.
- Support services to develop links with relevant community groups, services and organisations.

In Home Care Support Agency Tasmania

In May 2018, Lady Gowrie Tasmania was successful in securing a four-year contract to be the state-wide support agency for In Home Care in Tasmania. In Home Care (IHC) is an approved childcare for children in the family home created under the Australian Government's new childcare package that commenced 2nd July 2018. IHC supports families' workforce participation and early childhood education and care requirements.

Families unable to access Centre-Based Long Day Care, Family Day Care and Outside School Hours Care because of their unique circumstances may be able to access education and care provided in the family home through IHC to support their workforce participation.

IHC is designed to support the provision of early childhood education and care in the home particularly for families:

- working non-standard or variable hours
- geographically isolated from other approved childcare services, or
- those with complex and challenging needs but not to subsidise medical, health, or disability care support

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Family Support Program

The Family Support Service is funded by the Department of Health. The Service is available to families with children through a referral process to provide respectful, confidential support for strengthening and developing family life.

The program promotes the safety, stability and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and their families. The service promotes strong, functional and well supported families by building child, family and community capacity and resilience.

This support is provided by working collaboratively with other agencies through a referral process and providing support tailored to families with complex needs.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania self-funds an additional Family Support Officer for Lady Gowrie Tasmania staff and families to access demonstrating the long-term commitment (1939) and understanding of complexities of contemporary family life.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Corporate Services

Corporate services is the hub of Lady Gowrie Tasmania, consisting of Business and Finance, Human Resources, Marketing and Communications, Facilities Management and Administration.

The centralising of systems and processes support individual programs focus on their core business and a more efficient and effective use of resources.

Reflections on Gowrie

Ros Lamprill

"Lady Gowrie Tasmania was always a lighthouse in terms of its service provision, but now to see its expansion is extraordinary.I would like to say that Gowrie really needs to be congratulated; Ros (Cornish) particularly- she is a work horse, and not only that she has networked so well, and her management skills are extraordinary really, when you look at now, what an extraordinary large organisation it is. Ros has been the one who has made things happen- really- apart from Lisa (Solomon) who started the expansion to Glenora... But it is also the profile on a national level, that Ros has been able to look at it as well, which is great for Gowrie- but it is also great for Tasmania and you know at a political level too; offerings of policy advice. I've been lucky that I've been able to and invited to talk at some of the conferences that Gowrie have organised. It's been a really lovely association that I've had. It's been excellent."

Children
Learning
Community
Inclusion
Family
Consultancy
Reflection
History
Training
Pedagogy

Kathy Cripps

Kathy Cripps, current General Manager, Children's Services, and long-standing member of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania team reflects on her time with the organisation, pivotal people in her journey and changes that have occurred across the sector and within Lady Gowrie Tasmania.

"With Gowrie, if there's ever an issue, everyone seems to pitch in. It doesn't matter who it is, it wouldn't matter what issue, if you need help, you only have to pick up the phone and say I need some support here and you'll have a multitude of people who'd come and say "What can we do?" So you're not fighting that battle on your own. And you've got that committed support. You've got sounding boards, and you can go and de-brief, and get a different perspective."

I guess I've been very fortunate, because I've stuck with Gowrie for such a long time. I've had opportunities where I could've left but I haven't. I've also had lots of opportunities within the organisation. I've been fortunate to work in the access and equity team, the training team- state-wide project and I was fortunate to run some small Gowrie centres.....then this role (General Manager, Children's Services). I was seconded into this role when Annette (Barwick) stepped out of it. That's the beauty of working at Gowrie. It's possible to be seconded or offered opportunities to try, and its ok to say that wasn't great, or I didn't enjoy that- and that becomes a learning opportunity. I think that's always looked upon favourably regardless of what the outcome is."

I have to acknowledge Ros (Cornish). Ros has been a great mentor. Lots of my peers have been good mentors and colleagues too and have remained friends. I keep in contact with them; the Tanya Browning, Pam Humphries; we still catch up about every 12 months. They're still in Hobart. Pam works at Early Childhood Intervention Service. She has a great affinity with children with additional needs and she's focused very much in that space."

It's (Education and Care) an interesting sector and there's lots of complexities to it. The beauty of my role is no day is the same, and even if you think you know what your day is going to look like, it takes just one phone call..... But the beauty of that is that most things are fixable and most things can wait. You might have to re-prioritise somethings but at the end of the day if it's about the little people who're your priority. That's what keeps me grounded. I always wanted to work with young children. Even now, if I feel I need to be grounded, I'll go to a Gowrie centre and have a conversation with a child."

Annette Barwick

Annette Barwick has been a part of the Lady Gowrie Tasmania story for nearly 20 years. Annette was a family day care educator before she started work with Lady Gowrie. Since that time, Annette has held a number of positions, including Manager, Lady Gowrie Battery Point and Director of Children's Services, state-wide. Annette has overseen the development of Gowrie Training & Consultancy as the General Manager, Professional Development and Support.

"The education and care sector has seen and been part of many changes. The complexity of the early years, children's rights to quality early learning and family's rights to access affordable quality education and care services and recognition of educators have been the subject of societal and political debate for many years. Within all the broader policy decisions, one thing has remained true to its original vision of supporting children and families – Lady Gowrie Tasmania. A major change from that era is of course looking through a strength-based lens on pedagogy and practice. The view of the child has change for the better – capable and competent and the collaboration with families and other agencies strengthened with one focus in mind – supporting better outcomes for children.

I have had the privilege to work with many people and could write a book about their influence. I do need to mention the CEO, Ros Cornish. Ros's mentorship has provided an opportunity to engage in great debates and at times we've not seen eye to eye but have remained great colleagues. I have fond memories of working with Taryn Hall from the beginning of my Gowrie journey. Taryn's energy and commitment to children and families is never ending. I feel so proud of her achievements, becoming a manager and grappling with the ethical challenge of not being able to work on the floor full time. She is probably cringing now as she never did like being the centre of attention.

To the current team, a high performing team I work with in the Professional Development & Support Program, I am grateful and privileged to work with you each and every day, to be innovative and develop quality programs and projects all aligned to the Lady Gowrie Tasmania vision and purpose."

Ros Cornish

Ros Cornish has been at the centre of Lady Gowrie Tasmania's expansion across the past 25 years, most as the CEO. Ros's vision for the organisation encompasses a broad and wide-ranging agenda that will see it thrive across the next 25 years and beyond.

"In many respects we've just about come full circle as to why the Gowrie centres were established; supporting families and their parenting role, the social work, health and well-being and the training. I think if you look back to why they were established, we're repeating the model more and more today. It's that holistic approach where you can't separate the child from the family.

It's my vision for any new service for Lady Gowrie Tasmania and indeed with the existing services to find a way of having that integrated model incorporated. So, if we built another centre we would certainly seek to have it as an integrated model co-located with social work, family support... and for existing services that can't accommodate that model due to facility limitations, we could have an outreach program where we can effectively support our families regardless of location or facility.

Bringing it back to that teaching model - the research- will be important to us into the future. It's amazing to think that in the 1930s that was the Gowrie model and we've coming back around to it again.

Over the past 25 years at Gowrie I have worked alongside some of some most passionate and committed individuals – far too many to name and if I did so I would surely miss some recognition. But I must mention a few – Kathy Cripps, Annette Barwick, Carole Hurst (retired), Roxanne Ellis, Elsa Schwann (retired), Helen Stephen (former Kindergarten Teacher), Penny Richardson (retired), Lawrice Jack, Kellie Watson, Taryn Hall and Jodie Hayes. Friends of Gowrie including Ian Bronowski, Ros Lamprill, Penny Andersen, Judy Hebblethwaite and Kathryn Laing. This also includes many Board Directors who in their way have been my professional development providers. Their knowledge, skills and experience have guided me in my role and been an enabler for Gowrie to be what it is today.

But the important thing is to always remember that our people are our most valuable asset and to stay true to our position statement 'Children First'."

In Conclusion

Lady Gowrie Tasmania puts 'Children First'. The provision of quality programs to the community that provide the best outcomes for children, families and early and middle childhood professionals is at the heart of everything we do.

Monica Naselow shares her family's personal experience of Lady Gowrie Tasmania below:

"We had been living internationally in Holland and moved to Tasmania when Flynn was 2 years old. He started at Lady Gowrie Acton Centre at a time when our family had been through some personal upheaval.

From a parenting perspective the team at Lady Gowrie Acton were so helpful from the beginning. Flynn and Xander loved it and we loved it!

Prior to moving to Tasmania, we had been living in a cramped inner-city apartment with no real environments appropriate for children and then we went to Acton which had the large paddock and chickens. It was wonderful.

The educators noticed Flynn's behaviour and speech regression. We met with Roxanne Ellis, (Inclusion Agency Manager) who was very kind and gentle. Roxanne came to observe Flynn. Tarryn, Jodie and Emily kindly had a meeting with us informing us of the correlation with Flynn's behaviour to early ASD indicators. This led us to seeing numerous specialists. Hearing issues were identified, and this all led to more questions.

The Lady Gowrie team were patient throughout. Taryn and Jodie were so supportive of Xander, Flynn's older brother. They would check in with him, invite him into the office for a chat about his brother. They gave such brilliant help that set the path for a positive journey for Flynn.

They never told me what to do but guided and encouraged us. Tarryn shared positive stories of other children that have the same diagnoses as Flynn which stirred me on to push for more and advocate for Flynn.

The initial consultation and early intervention were hard for us but we always had the most amazing support from Lady Gowrie Acton.

The educators were always so mindful of Flynn's routine and really took a holistic approach. If any child had a question, it would never go unanswered. Their transitions were always supportive of Flynn and they accommodated his every need. They are always open to suggestions."

The Naselow family now live in Melbourne. Monica emailed Taryn Hall and Jodie Hayes, Lady Gowrie Tasmania Acton Managers, to update them on Flynn's and his brother's journey:

"Flynn has the most phenomenal memory and we are realising that he clearly remembers things from a very young age and he still talks about Lady Gowrie. Yes, he is talking now! He speaks in short sentences with some words missing, but boy can he communicate when he wants something!

He remembers Jacob and Fletcher and talks about the chickens at Lady Gowrie a lot. Whenever he sees a toy he played with at Lady Gowrie, he will point and tell us about it. His favourite thing to do for regulation is to bounce on a yoga ball or go for a walk. Stamina for days. Xander is in year 5 this year and is an extremely good role model for Flynn, and also in the community. He has settled in to his new school well, made a couple of friends by the end of Term 1 and seems very happy in general. He loves to sing and dance, but also loves a good conversation. He's looking to the future a bit now, towards high school, and he is a confident 10 year old.

I hope that Lady Gowrie is going well, and that you are both well and that your upcoming holidays are very restful! I feel like I wanted to write to you because as I have told you before, without your guidance at Lady Gowrie at such a crucial time in Flynn's development we would not have been able to make the choices we needed to for Flynn. It was still hard, even with your help, but I cannot imagine where we would be now if you hadn't stepped in when you did.

I hope this email is a small reminder for yourselves that the work you both do and the Lady Gowrie team goes far and beyond the walls of your centre. You are a fabulous team and I still appreciate your work!!!"

Monica Naselow (Flynn's mother), 2019

*"Things come and go,
but Lady Gowrie Tasmania doesn't
and that's a really great thing.
From where it started
it's really kept its focus on children.
Right in the beginning it was for
children and it still is!"*

Lorraine Polglase

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Current Services and Programs

Centre Based Long Day Care

- Lady Gowrie – Acton Child Centre, 1239 Acton Rd, Cambridge
- Lady Gowrie – Alanvale Child Centre, Alanvale Dr, Newnham
- Lady Gowrie – Battery Point Child Centre, 17 Runnymede St, Battery Point
- Lady Gowrie – Bowen Road Child Centre, Cnr Bowen & Albert Rds, Moonah
- Lady Gowrie – Campbell Street Child Centre, 227 Campbell St, Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Fahan Education & Care Service, Fisher Ave, Sandy Bay
- Lady Gowrie – Gordon Square, 2a Goulburn St, George Town
- Lady Gowrie – Integrated Centre for Children & Families, 346 Macquarie St, South Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Kingston Education & Care Service, Redwood Rd, Kingston
- Lady Gowrie – Midway Point Education and Care Service, Penna Rd, Midway Point
- Lady Gowrie – Norwood Child Centre, Norwood Ave, Norwood
- Lady Gowrie – Oatlands Education & Care Service, 34 Wellington St, Oatlands
- Lady Gowrie – Richmond Child Centre, 7 Commercial Rd, Richmond
- Lady Gowrie – South Hobart Child Centre, 24-26 Weld St, South Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Swansea Child Centre, Arnol St, Swansea
- Lady Gowrie – University South Child Centre, Grace St, Sandy Bay
- Lady Gowrie – University North Child Centre, Newnham Dr, Newnham

Outside School Hours Care

- Lady Gowrie – Albuera Street After School Care Program, Albuera St, Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Albuera Street Vacation Care Program, Albuera St, Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Bowen Rd After School Care Program, Bowen Rd, Moonah
- Lady Gowrie – Brighton Before/After School Care Program, 27 Downie St, Brighton
- Lady Gowrie – Brighton Vacation Care Program, 27 Downie St, Brighton
- Lady Gowrie – Frederick Street Vacation Care Program, Frederick St, Launceston
- Lady Gowrie – Glenorchy After School Care Program, Main Rd, Glenorchy
- Lady Gowrie – Glenorchy Vacation Care Program, Main Rd, Glenorchy
- Lady Gowrie – Gordon Square Vacation Care Program, 48 Goulburn Street, George Town
- Lady Gowrie – Gordon Square After School Care Program, Franklin St, George Town
- Lady Gowrie – Goulburn Street After School Care Program, Forest Rd, Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Lansdowne Before/After School Care Program, Lansdowne Cr, West Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Lansdowne Crescent Vacation Care Program, Lansdowne Cr, West Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Launceston Preparatory, After School Care Program, Elphin Rd, Newstead
- Lady Gowrie – Mt Nelson Before/After School Care Program, Nelson Rd, Mt Nelson
- Lady Gowrie – Mowbray After School Care Program, Cadorna St, Mowbray
- Lady Gowrie – Norwood After School Care Program, Norwood Ave, Norwood
- Lady Gowrie – Richmond After School Care Program, Commercial Rd, Richmond
- Lady Gowrie – Rosetta Before/After School Care Program, Riverview Pde, Rosetta
- Lady Gowrie – South Hobart After School Care Program, Weld St, South Hobart
- Lady Gowrie – Sorell After School Care Program, 10 Forcett St, Sorell
- Lady Gowrie – Sorell Vacation Care Program, 10 Forcett St, Sorell
- Lady Gowrie – Tarooma Before/After School Care Program, Channel H'way, Tarooma
- Lady Gowrie – Tarooma Vacation Care Program, Channel H'way, Tarooma
- Lady Gowrie – University North Vacation Care Program, Newnham Dr, Newnham
- Lady Gowrie – Warrane After School Care Program, Cambridge Rd, Warrane

Home Based Education and Care (Family Day Care)

Lady Gowrie – Home Based Care and Education, 346 Macquarie St, South Hobart

Occasional Care

Lady Gowrie – Preschool, 56 Frederick Street Child Centre, 56 Frederick St, Launceston

Funded Programs

Inclusion Support Programme (state-wide), 346 Macquarie St, South Hobart

In Home Care Support Agency, (state-wide), 346 Macquarie St, South Hobart

Family Support Service (southern region), 229 Campbell St, Hobart

Gowrie Training and Consultancy

Corporate Services

Project



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Gowrie

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