

# Lifeboat Geelong

FOUNDATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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## Introduction

Lifeboat is now in its 11th year of activity and support for those who have been abused within and by trusted members of the institutional Catholic Church (and in some instances other Christian churches).

In many ways, Lifeboat's story in 2023 has been very similar to previous years, simply because the ongoing requirements of the people we try to support are just that – ongoing. "Lifeboat" tries to assist as much as it can in any number of different ways: medical costs, provision of counselling, rental and other accommodation costs, therapies, and numerous other practical ways of helping our people. Some of these can be small but nevertheless important occasions which can lift the spirit, like people going to a concert or sharing a meal together - just knowing that they matter and, in the motto we have used for some years, that "they are worth it!"

In that area of affirmation and bringing a sense of worth, those wonderful people who are central to the work of Lifeboat continue to do a magnificent job: they listen, they care, they empathise, they organise and they make life a little more liveable, especially when times for our clients, for whatever reason, are really, really tough.

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"they are worth it!"

It is disappointing that the "institutional" Church's support for Lifeboat's work has not been overwhelming. Nonetheless, the generosity in financial, practical, emotional and spiritual support provided them through "Lifeboat" is a constant reminder to all our clients that there are many people who do care about them, who are deeply saddened with what has happened to them, and who are prepared to do whatever they can to lighten the burden they have carried since they were children or teenagers.

All of that notwithstanding, 2023 for Lifeboat has had much positive achievement, made possible by so many people who have in some cases given enormous support, but in all cases have given whatever support they could.

Thank you, each and every one of you.

## Lifeboat Patrons

Lifeboat is deeply appreciative of the support of Michael and Louise King (Kings Funerals Geelong) whose quiet but most effective and practical assistance is immense.

The provision, free of charge, of the Lifeboat Office at their premises in Newcomb gives Lifeboat a most worthwhile presence in the Geelong community and in the Victorian community.

Thank you, Michael and Louise, for your great leadership and most valued support.

## Lifeboat Board

Members of the Board are:

**Fr Kevin Dillon AM – Chair**

**Kevin Larkins – Deputy Chair**

**Cath O'Reilly – Secretary**

**Ian Kelly – Treasurer**

**Bruce Lindsey - Legal Advisor**

**Susan Wilson,**

**David Maiden**

**Terry Falkingham**

The Board has usually met each month, as recent years have seen an increase of "necessary business", especially the overseeing of Lifeboat's finances and the establishment of an Independent Review which is expected to be concluded by the end of this year. We anticipate that the Review, led by Independent Reviewer Craig Boyce, will provide a helpful focus for the direction of "Lifeboat" into the foreseeable future.


Each member contributes his or her special gifts to the Board's discussions and decisions. Lifeboat is especially fortunate to have not only their expertise but also their commitment and dedication.

## Committee

From its inception in December 2013, the Lifeboat Committee meetings have been central to the development of our organisation.

A little less formally structured than the Board, the Committee meetings have been open to all who wish to make some sort of contribution towards the mission of Lifeboat. Those who have suffered abuse within the Church personally have been especially welcome, and their courageous words have given others attending the meetings an ongoing reminder of why Lifeboat exists and what we are meant to be doing.

Widespread consultation with and advice from the Committee has been an invaluable asset to the work and development of Lifeboat over these past 10 years.



May God bless you for  
what you are giving and  
what you are doing.

Fr Kevin Dillon AM

## Staff

Of all the topics that could be mentioned in this Annual Report, recognition of and gratitude for our Staff members is essential.

Cath O'Reilly (our Office Administrator), Trudy Maiden, Anne Johnson (and now Josephine Barnes) as our Client Support Officers have all demonstrated a wonderful ability to connect with our clients and give them a genuine sense of hope, affirmation and respect. They are also the channel through which much of the practical help needed by our clients is provided.

At the end of December 2023, Anne concluded her four years of work and devotion to Lifeboat, and while her absence will be keenly felt, Lifeboat is truly fortunate to now have the services and commitment of Josephine, who brings with her a lengthy history of service, and understanding of deserving and vulnerable people – gifts which are now available to our all-important clients.

Thank you all for your great  
work and your unswerving  
loyalty to the work of Lifeboat

Patrick Caruana is our Property Advisor, and his broad knowledge and experience of the laws and regulations associated with rental and property matters has been so important to many of our clients.

Lifeboat has been genuinely blessed with the ability, sincerity and the commitment of Cath, Trudy, Anne, Patrick and Josephine. They are the frontline of our work, and they all make a magnificent contribution to assisting our clients to manage life as best they can. Thank you all for your great work and your unswerving loyalty to the work of Lifeboat.

## Meeting venues

When possible, Lifeboat continues to meet in person at the Geelong Yacht Club, and again we express our gratitude to the Club for their hospitality and unswerving support of our work.

The Covid lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 made us aware of the potential of

Zoom meetings, and have allowed Board, Committee and Subcommittee meetings to continue without always demanding long journeys for participants.

So the hybrid arrangements of in-person and Zoom meetings have been very welcome and have enabled increased attendance and participation.

## Finance

Overall, the finances of Lifeboat are still in reasonable shape, though our monthly expenditure continues, in most cases, to exceed our income! A few very generous donors who truly understand the purpose of "Lifeboat" have made significant donations in recent years, and these gifts have enabled us to set aside funds for use if and when there is a shortfall in income.

Our Treasurer, Ian Kelly, does a great job in overseeing our finances, which are very carefully administered. Clients are well aware that our funds are donations from individual supporters and only a small proportion of our income is from institutional Church sources. Nonetheless, we are genuinely appreciative of the support from some Religious Orders who have assisted our work.

Lifeboat's work of providing housing, counselling, basic household expenses, utilities etc. for our clients (most of whom are on pensions) along with the marvellous contribution of our Staff, is still recognised by many people who appreciate that our clients deserve the best we can offer, and are prepared to give generously so as to make that possible.

The ongoing generosity of our supporters, with both large and small donations, has been truly magnificent. Those donations, together with our fundraising efforts, have managed to keep Lifeboat both afloat and moving forward.



## Fundraising

The capacity to raise funds from social events has diminished in recent years due to increased costs for venues and catering etc., but Lifeboat has been able to initiate a variety of effective fundraising efforts in recent years, most especially through our participation in the Combined Catholic Parishes Car Raffle, which generates for us about \$12,000 per year.

The Car Donation Project has been overseen with great skill and commitment by Adam Kaali. We hope to expand this project considerably over the coming months, as more people are made aware of both the purpose and work of Lifeboat itself and also the way in which a donated car can save them the extensive time and often angst experienced in disposing of a vehicle.

We are also beginning to explore the use of Facebook Marketplace to sell donated goods of reasonable value and are currently seeking out supporters who have the skills and interest to oversee and arrange this.

## Grants

In 2023 Lifeboat received a grant from the Geelong Community Foundation to support Alternative Therapies. This grant was used to provide music therapy, art therapy, massage therapy and medication therapy to a number of clients who all reported improved well being as a result.

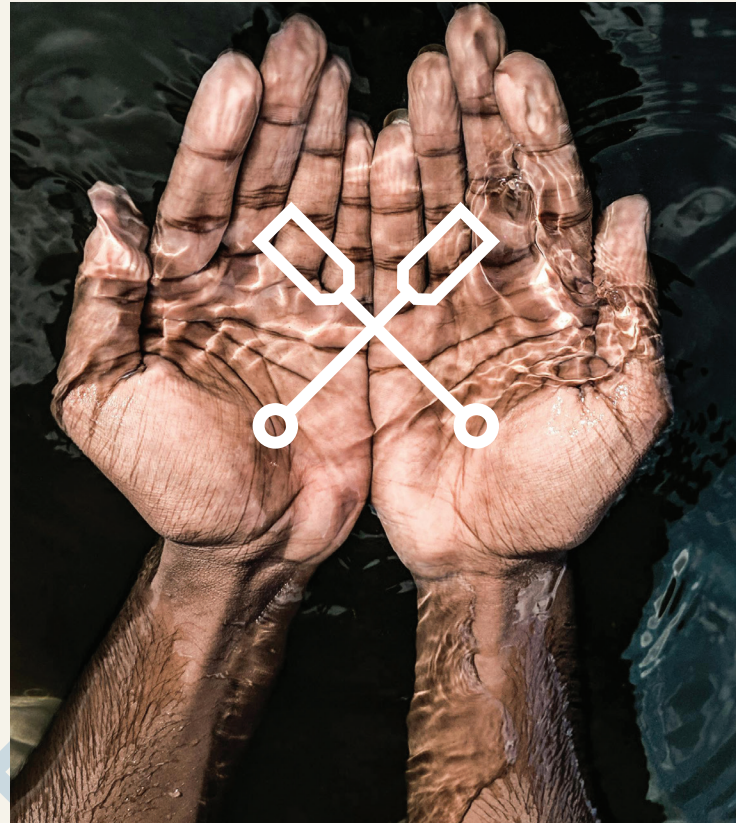
## Mary MacKillop Conference

Lifeboat continues to be most grateful for the support of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, especially through the Geelong-based Mary MacKillop Conference. The work and support of the Conference runs alongside the work of Lifeboat and is most supportive for all that Lifeboat represents. In particular, the occasional sharing of a major financial burden to a client has proved especially helpful for clients in significant need e.g. major car repairs etc., and also where clients live in more distant locations and person-to-person contact has not been possible for our Client Support Officers, and St. Vincent de Paul members have stepped in to assist.

So as Lifeboat moves along its eleventh year of service to our respected and valued clients, we thank everyone who has been part of this work, and has enabled the work of the Lifeboat Geelong Foundation to continue.

Fr. Kevin Dillon AM  
Chair

Lifeboat Geelong Foundation  
March 2024



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# Lifeboat Geelong

FOUNDATION



## How to donate

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### PAYMENT DETAILS (tick your method. e.g. ☑ )

By Direct Deposit to Lifeboat Geelong Foundation

BSB: 633 000  
 Account: 1602 40438  
 Reference: Your Name  
 or indicate:

By Cheque or money order (enclosed).

or indicate:

By Credit Card     Visa     Mastercard

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_ \_\_ / \_\_ \_\_

Cardholders Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Tick to be provided with a receipt.



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