



Hello Canberra!

There's a lot to tell you....

We live in the McCall Gardens Community.

There are about 50 of us all up.

Some of us will tell you about getting older.

It is about now, and the future.

Storytellers from McCall

Some things that matter

More than 50 years ago a group of parents started McCall Gardens .

They wanted it to be safe.

They thought people might get bashed up on the outside.

It's an institution.

There was no help for people with intellectual disability in the community.

Parents called McCall "A home for life".

People were meant to stay here and be cared for always.

Lots of men came here as teenagers.

Some have been in institutions since they were kids.

- So, what about when they get older?
- What choices are there for them?
- Who will make the choices?

To start with, the men speak out about what matters to them **now**.

Allan



Allan is 67 years old. He has a photo in his room of him and his sister. They were much younger then.

“ I had red hair but I’ve got grey hair now”

Allan has a girlfriend. They have been together for a long time.

She doesn’t come to visit, Allan goes to visit her.

“She’s got a walking frame”, explains Allan.

Allan loves animals. He likes McCall’s pet cat, Thomas.

When Alan sits down, Thomas goes to sleep on him.

“He keeps me company. I’ve always liked cats”.

Allan points out noisy parrots in the tree close by.

This brings back memories of parrots he saw on a holiday to the Gold Coast.

“ I fed ‘em one day. We held this dish out and they all came down on my head. They come down by the thousands!...”

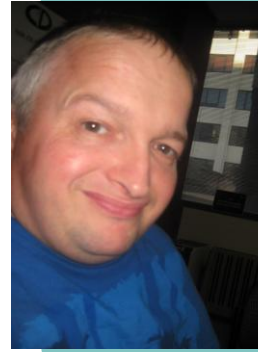
“There they go! Look at ‘em!!”

love and company

following passions

my sister

Chris E



Chris has a painting of people on the beach in his bedroom.
He says “There’s Kay at the beach! And me at the beach!”.
There are lots of photos of his family on the wall.

He thinks Visiting Sunday at McCall is important.

Family visits

“That’s when the people come....all the mothers and fathers”.

Chris also visits his parents who live far away.

Having enough to do is also important.

Chris likes to do his job in the McCall kitchen.

“ See what I do, every day and every night? Knives and forks and spoons and spoons and saucers and plates”

Chris doesn’t cook at McCall, the staff do that.

When there’s not enough jobs on at work, Chris likes to be busy.

“I can’t sit here, stay here and do nothing! We haven’t got no work to do.
I do puzzles every day”

responsibility

I can’t sit and do nothing!

Chris H



It's a sunny, blue sky day. Chris H is out walking.
He tells the story of his motorbike accident:

Grief

“It poured and poured and poured that day.”

It poured the night of your accident?

“It certainly was.... Boom, boom, boom!”

Because of the accident, Chris has a brain injury.
He goes walking every day. This looks like it helps him to feel good.
He walks down the long driveway, and back again.

Before his accident, Chris had his own business.
He keeps some of his old business cards in his wallet.

“ I was a painter, a painter, a good painter. Don't remember”
Chris points to a picture of a man up a ladder, painting a wall.
“That's a good one”.

Adapting

Meditating

Mark S



There is music and noises in the hallway at McCall.
The Seekers are playing next door as we walk past.

Mark puts his key in the lock. He opens the door to his room.
He sits down and turns on the computer.
Then Mark clicks.

Roxy Music's "Avalon" floats into the room.
It's a cool sound.

Mark pulls drawers open and they're full of CDs.
He makes most of them on his computer.
There's a whole box more on the bed.

Mark has created a different world in here.

my music,

learning skills

creating my world

David



Lots of men here have shared rooms.

Not long ago, Dave and other men moved into single rooms.

He says it's good to have your own room because "you got privacy".

Dave's family mean a lot to him.

They've been strong for him when he was very sick.

He talks about some of the good memories of being with them.

"We went to the old pub a long time ago for my birthday.

Dad took me away on holiday.

We had breakfast and toast and bacon and eggs for breakfast, and cereal."

Dave wants people to know that he's a good worker.

He also says that "Relations", or family, are very important as you get older.

privacy

recovery

Family support

Pride in work

Peter



Peter visits his mum every 2 weeks.

He worries about her now because “She’s on her own all the time”.

He says he misses his family.



Peter spends a lot of time making amazing Lego buildings, like this castle.

Some days Peter feels good.

He can think about what it would be like to make changes in his life.

On other days he feels bad, and can’t think about that stuff.

“Sometimes you’re not feeling too good, sometimes, and that.

It’s unbelievable what it does to you.”

He likes the view from McCall, and says “this is the place I like to live in”.

feeling stable

Giving support

creating my world

Storytellers from Ivy Ave

Some things that matter

Five of the men from McCall had a chance to move into a house in the community.

Most were aged between 40 and 50 years old.

They are supported by staff from McCall .

That was 7 years ago. This is what matters to *them*.

Philip V



pride

Philip has racks of DVDs, and a great collection of model cars in his room.

Like many of the men, he also has a collection of sporting trophies.

He is 61 next year. Is this old or young?

“ Young!” he says.

Philip sounds proud when he talks about all the things he does here.

“I cook here, Thursday. Steak!”

He and his housemates plan the menu and take turns to cook.

Philip is a very active member of the household. But when Philip wants peace and quiet, he can go into his private space and shut the door.

Philip really wanted a chance to live in this house.

He didn't wait to be asked. He showed staff just how much he wanted it.

(read more about this in “Decision-makers”)

determination

zest for life

independence

Philip M



On Philip M's wall is a picture of the Harbor Bridge and Opera House. They are glowing in the dark, their lights shining on the water. " I've often seen it at night, it's very, very beautiful! I like it at night."

There are photos of Philip's family, too, from long ago. There is even one of Philip as a little boy.

Men get older at McCall, and they sadly pass away. Philip says the Lord's prayer at their funerals. He says "I always think that the Lord is looking at them, you know".

beauty

Philip goes to a day program.

When he thinks about life without his day program, he says with feeling: "Life just wouldn't be the same without my friends. I can't do without my friends...."

faith

close friendships

challenge

Jon

satisfaction



Jon was born on Christmas Day and is 58 years old.
He proudly shows off his medals from ten pin bowling.
He can't stop smiling.
Soon he is going to Adelaide, to the Special Olympics.
His bags are already packed.
Jon says he's going on the airplane "by myself!".
The other guys will stay at home.
It's important to do your own thing.

On the wall is a poster of another man who did his own thing.
"That's Big Elvis, love!".

fun!

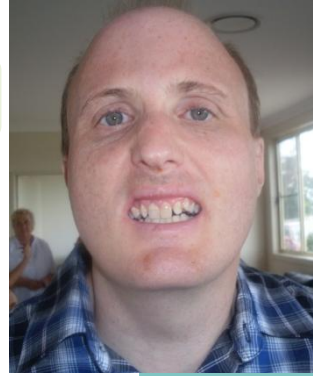
"Jon, we're making a video and sending it to the politicians in Canberra.
What do you want to say to them?"
"...I'm so happy!" says Jon

Is there something that you want them to change?
" No love, I want things to stay the same as they are".

Later everyone's gathered in the kitchen.
Elvis' music gets everyone tapping and swaying.
Jon shows off some fancy footwork.

There's often fun around Jon.

recognition



Mark R

Mark is a big footy fan and goes for the Parramatta Eels.
He likes being part of the crowd, cheering on his team.
Watching it on TV is not nearly as good.

Bowling is another love of Mark's. He's good at it and wins medals.
It's a great moment when they are placed around his neck.
He wears them around and people say "Congratulations!"

One of the things Mark would like to learn to do is catch the train by himself. He'd like to take trips to the city.

Mark also likes going to the disco. He'd like to find a girlfriend there.

When asked if he'd like to move back to McCall, he says "No! No good!"
He likes his busy life at Ivy Ave.

He's in control of going out and doing the things that are important to him.

In fact, Mark has a lot of living to do and doesn't like to be bored.
He looks forward to holidays because they're about "the good times!"

Being part of the crowd

Love and good times

sharing interests

Mark J



One of the first things you find out about Mark is he really loves cars. He has a model car in it's pack, ready to start tinkering on.

When Mark talks about his family, it's clear he shares his love for cars with his brother.

He tells of John's racing car in the paddock, waiting for a spray-paint. It runs in the family!

Another passion is music.

Johnny Cash is singing "A boy named Sue" as we talk.

Not long ago Mark saw a concert about The Man in Black.

Next he will see Lee Kernigan play at Penrith Panthers with a friend from the house.

Mark is really excited.

There are photos of Mark's 50th birthday on the dresser.

He had a cake shaped like Elvis' guitar.

Mark talks a lot about the things he is interested in.

He's really excited to share his news and his loves with people.

When asked if he'd like to move back to McCall Gardens, he is pretty straight-forward. "No!"

music heroes

getting out and about

Decision-makers

Having real options and the right support

sensitive support

Men from McCall and from Ivy Avenue talk about some decisions and choices they have made.

Sometimes other people have made the decisions.

Some men have waited a long time for their chance be in charge of own lives.

Philip M had worked for some time.

It had become very stressful for him.He felt harassed by another worker. Staff supported Philip through his decision to retire and go to a day program instead.

“ So in the end I thought to myself...well, I've had enough.

Actually Jo came and said would you like not to work anymore, and I said..... yes!”

having options



**What if there is nothing to do when you retire early?
This happens to people who are 'in between' systems.
How do you build a new life?**

self-determination

Philip V was very clear about a chance to live in the community.

When people started moving into the Ivy Avenue house,

Philip had not been offered a place.

But then one of the housemates changed his mind.

Philip saw his chance to show people what he wanted.

He didn't wait to be asked.

Philip had his bags packed and was waiting at the gate, ready to go.

He tells the story with Jo:

“Like...move...here!” he said. So Jo started working out what to do.

“I said I'd better go and speak to people to see what we can arrange”.

They rang Philip's brother, Jeff, who said was a great idea.

Philip's bag was packed with all his special things.

He had his writing and drawings with him.

Jo explains that when he lived at McCall, Philip used to carry all his important things around in a back-pack.

He didn't want anyone to take them.

Now he has a secure, private space to store his things.

“Do you remember how old you were when you moved to McCall?”

“16”

“How old are you now?”

“60” says Philip.

responsive support



**Why can't people have more chances
to live the way they want?
Why did Philip have to wait so long?**

ordinary dreams

Alan has dreamed of living in a house and marrying his girlfriend for a long time.

These things haven't happened.

When it comes to the big decisions about his life, Alan would like to have more control.

So what would have happened if you got married?

"I don't know, that's what I want to know...."

I was told I couldn't get married, that really was disappointing.

Well that's the way it goes."

Alan says he'd like to live in the community.

"I would if I had help".

What help would you need?

"Oh, just ordinary help..."

ordinary help



**Some people need a little help. Some need a lot.
Some in-between.
Why can't the help be just right for them?**

working out what you need

Peter's health is an important part in making big life choices.

He likes to feel safe and supported.

He says he would ask for help from staff and family to make a decision about where to live.

Why are the staff important to be around?

“Cause if I need em, if I took a fit and that, I've got the staff to help me.”

getting help when you need it



What if people with intellectual disability could get the right help with their health, wherever they want to live?

No –one makes a life decision to have a disability.

Chris didn't choose his either.

His motorbike accident, one rainy night, changed everything in his life.

Because of his accident as a young man, Chris has been living with his disability for a long time.

Now in his day program he is getting help to find old skills and pleasures, like playing the guitar.

more opportunities for quality of life

**What if we said someone was too old to try again?
What if we said it costs too much to help them?**



Achievers and contributors

getting better and better

Since making the decision to move out of MCall, the men at Ivy Ave have had more chances to challenge themselves in new ways. It's very hard for staff to support people to do this when lots of people live together.

Jon hadn't worked for 20 years.

Staff encouraged him to try again.

Now he has money to follow his love of ten-pin bowling.

Jon has just returned from Adelaide where he competed and won 3 medals.



Philip V decided that he wanted to work too.

Now he has more independence because he has his own money.

He has learned to bank and budget.

And because of Philip's ability and eye for detail, he is the quality controller in his section at work.

Philip has closer support now to learn to take charge of his own health.

He has lost weight by going to Weight Watchers.

Philip is now able to take a mature responsibility for staying in touch with his family and has his own mobile phone.

Since moving Philip has had speech therapy and has made terrific progress.

He likes to take part in conversations now.



Taking more control has really made a difference in Philip's life.

Planners

McCall and Ivy Men have hopes and dreams for the future.

Most are clear that there is plenty more life to discover.

They don't aim for life in a nursing home!

But it's hard to plan if you :

- haven't got any options
- haven't made your own plans before
- don't know what it's like to reach your goals and dreams

Some people may need a little more support to take part in a planning process.

Mark S

Where would you live, Mark, if McCall wasn't here?

"In a house".

What would your house be like?

"It would have a bigger bedroom with a TV, CDs".

Mark says he'd live there by himself, and he would clean it. He'd have some staff to cook.

Allan

What do you dream about?

“Hm, mm. About Pauline and me getting married”

Mark R

Mark likes the idea of living in a flat or a house.

He would like to live a girlfriend.

And he would like to take charge of banking and shopping himself.

When thinking about getting older, Mark would still like to do the fun things he does now, like dancing.

He thinks staying healthy is important because you can “do more”.

Mark doesn't like to be bored.

Philip Mac

“I would like to live here”.

Would you like to stay living here?

“Yes I would”.

What about when you get a bit older?

“ I'd still like to live here. I'd like to sort of do things for myself, like I can shave by myself, and shower by myself, get dressed by myself”

Later Philip says “I wouldn't pick a nursing home.... I'd pick a retirement village or something and sort of make friends with other people, you know, see what it's like, you know”

David

Thinking far ahead can be challenging.

Many of us don't like to think we're getting older.

And having a say about what will happen in the future may take some getting used to.

“Dave, in the future, when you're a bit older, what would be a really good thing to have in your life?”

Dave thinks for a moment, and sighs.

He finally says “That's a bit hard!”

Peter

Peter, what about the people who live here?

Where else could they live if McCall wasn't here?

“ Oh, McCall won't be going anywhere!”

Do people from McCall go to nursing homes?

“If we can't cope, if we can't look after them.....”

CHALLENGERS

What we think you can do next...

The men from McCall and Ivy Ave watched this video and then talked about it. They thought about what should happen next and said things like:

- This is very important.

- The government should watch our video

- I need a change in my life

- The government should think about change and having a good life

- I want help to move

- I need a little bit of help, but not too much

- We're all different

- We're all human

This is what else they said:

So the best thing the government could do?

“Money”

What are you going to spend it on?

“Houses”.

Where would the houses be?

“They could be um, up in....anywhere!.... They build em, we go into em, and all that ..”

Go into them? What would happen if you go into them?

“We live!”

This document is a summary of a video submission to the Senate inquiry on planning options and services for people ageing with a disability. There are additional questions posed in it as well. It is written in plain language so it can be more easily read and understood.

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