

YWCA HUNTER REGION INC

90th

2011/2012 ANNUAL REPORT



YWCA Hunter Region Inc.

Exists to support, empower and
connect women and families
for a stronger community

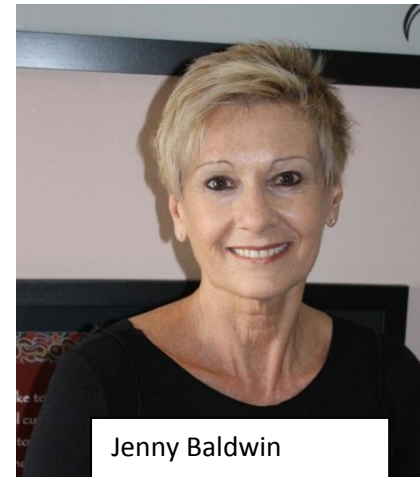




Y President and Executive Director's Report – Ruth Hallett and Jenny Baldwin



Ruth Hallett
President
Board of Directors



Jenny Baldwin
Executive Director

We are delighted to present the YWCA Hunter Region Inc. 2011/2012 Annual Report to our members and supporters.

This Report aims to provide Hunter members, stakeholders and our many supporters with an overview of our performance in 2011-12, but it is also aims to provide a glimpse of where the YWCA Hunter is aiming to be in the near future. We are excited about what the future may bring for Y Hunter and we hope that you will feel some of this

enthusiasm and move forward with us as we continue to strive to connect and empower the women in our society for a better future for them and their families.

In July 2012 a delegation of 37 YWCA Australian women attended the 27th World YWCA Council and 4th International Women's Summit, held in Zurich, Switzerland.

2011/2012 was a year of renewed commitment to the future growth of the organisation and developing a strategic plan to realise the vision for the Hunter: A year of changes and of anticipation for what the future can be for Y Hunter!

The five key highlights for us this year have been:

- **Strategic Planning Workshops and a renewed emphasis on a vision statement**
- **Recruitment and appointment of a new Executive Director**
- **The launch of Every Girl in the Hunter**
- **Gaining accreditation under the new accreditation scheme for Vacation Care**
- **Providing Children's Programs, Health and Wellbeing Program and Safe Accommodation for Female University Students**

Strategic Planning Workshops commenced early in the year. External consultants, *Capacity Builders*, were engaged to assist us in developing our Strategic Plan. Stakeholders and Members were invited to attend and be involved in the Strategic Planning Workshops to determine the needs of the community and future direction for YWCA Hunter Region. The workshops provided clarity for us to build our capacity and realise our vision.

It was decided that *YWCA Hunter Region exists to support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community* - We had a new mission statement to work toward.

We identified 5 signposts to ensure our progress and growth as part of the strategic plan:

1. Building Profile & Marketing
 - to increase awareness and engagement
2. Developing Programs
 - to meet the needs of women and families in the community

3. Investing in Our People
 - so we have stable management, competent board and trained staff/ volunteers
4. Partnering and Increasing Membership
 - to connect individuals, churches, businesses and others to the need
5. Sustainability
 - to ensure longevity and growth

Developing our strategic plan has assisted us in aligning our whole organisation with the vision, so that meaningful growth towards stated outcomes can occur.

Following our Strategic Planning Workshops, our next project was to recruit an Executive Director, due to Pamela Hallett, our former Executive Director of seventeen years, retiring. We are extremely grateful to YWCA Australia for the excellent support and assistance they provided to YWCA Hunter Region throughout the recruitment process. In particular, Vice President, Cara McFadden's professionalism and wealth of knowledge was truly appreciated and instrumental in a very successful recruitment process. The attitude and productivity of our own Board was positively impacted by her involvement.

And most importantly we want to thank Pam for her many years of dedication to the Y both as a Board member and later as the Executive Director. Pam continues to support the Y as a valued voting member of the organisation. We wish her as much blessing in her retirement as she gave to the Y in service over the years.

After an extensive recruitment process, the YWCA Hunter Region was extremely happy to appoint our current Executive Director, **Jenny Baldwin**. Jenny comes to us from running a school for teenage mothers and her passion for social justice, empowerment and the plight of young women in our community is well known in the Hunter. We are very excited that we have Jenny as our Executive Director, and are looking forward to working with her to achieve our Mission.

2012 has seen the launch of the *Every Girl* Program in the Hunter. We believe that the program has tremendous potential to impact the lives and futures of the young girls who participate. We look forward to an ongoing relationship with the schools participating and delivering *Every Girl* to every student as they move into the appropriate ages.

YWCA Australia:



President and Executive Director's Report –Caroline Lambert & Yvette Park **Women leading change in local, national, regional and international communities**

This year YWCA Australia has worked to strengthen YWCA connections nationally, regionally and internationally.

A major innovation has seen us working with our Members to create Every Girl – the transformative self-esteem program for girls 9-14 years of age. The first pilot was held in Queensland in late 2011 to rave reviews. Excitingly, we ended the year with the announcement of \$150,000 of Australian Government funding to roll the program out into ten schools across Australia.



In July 37 YWCA Australia Members joined with YWCA members from across the globe at the World Council Meeting. YWCAs from across Australia presented six workshops during the meeting, and celebrated the global launch of the World YWCA Pacific Young Women's Leadership Strategy. World Council saw Susan Brennan voted back onto World Board as a Vice President, following on from an amazing term as World YWCA President. Roslyn Dundas was also elected to the World YWCA Nominations Committee.

YWCA Australia has lobbied the Australian Government to increase the funding available for the provision of affordable housing options. We have also participated actively in a range of reforms targeting the Not-For-Profit sector in Australia and the regulation of national community housing structures. YWCA Australia also contributed to successfully advocacy which ensured that Respectful Relationships funding targeted a lower age group. A key initiative during the year was our partnership with Women on Boards and the Australian Council for Social Service – with whom we conducted a survey of gender diversity on community sector boards. Over 600 responses were received and we are looking forward to launching the report next year.

YWCA Australia has continued to manage the Equality Rights Alliance and auspice the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance – both of whom have had strong years informing policy debates on women's issues.

In partnership with the World YWCA we led the delegation to the civil society meetings held during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth in October, including welcoming Penny Williams, the Australian Government Ambassador for Women and Girls at the Australian launch of the Pacific Young Women's Leadership Strategy. YWCA members from across Australia also made tremendous contributions to the World YWCA advocacy at the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March this year, including an exciting opportunity for Marnie Grogan, who attended CSW with the support of the Una Porter Fund for young women, when she addressed the CSW on behalf of the Young Women's Caucus.

In July we welcomed over 70 staff and volunteers from Member Associations across the country to our Program Meeting, hosted at YWCA NSW Hotel Y. Across Australia Encore has also thrived with contributions from Member Associations to keep the program running. We have been fortunate to secure funding nationally that has enabled updates to the website, the exercises and to ensure that the program is meeting the safety standards expected of a high quality program like Encore.

The YWCA Australia Board has been working exceptionally hard this year. The Policy Advocacy Protocol adopted in November is strengthening our work with Member Associations. Governance practices around quota were codified at AGM. We have been working with Members to prepare for Convention, which will be held in Albury-Wodonga in November 2012. Board will present a resolution on Constitutional Amendments and the Strategic Directions 2013-2016. An important piece of work has been to finalise a review of funds held on our Balance Sheet, and we are looking forward to being able to fund a range of small projects each year from our named Trust Funds – targeting local, national and international activities, a fitting tribute to the many women who have given money to the YWCA over the years

Y Vision

Strengthened by the Christian faith and enriched by our worldwide membership of women and girls the **YWCA Hunter Region** exists to support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community.

The Y Hunter is part of a national and international movement, a global network of women and girls, which promotes women's leadership and gender equality. In the Hunter, the Y has been supporting and working with women and their families since 1880.

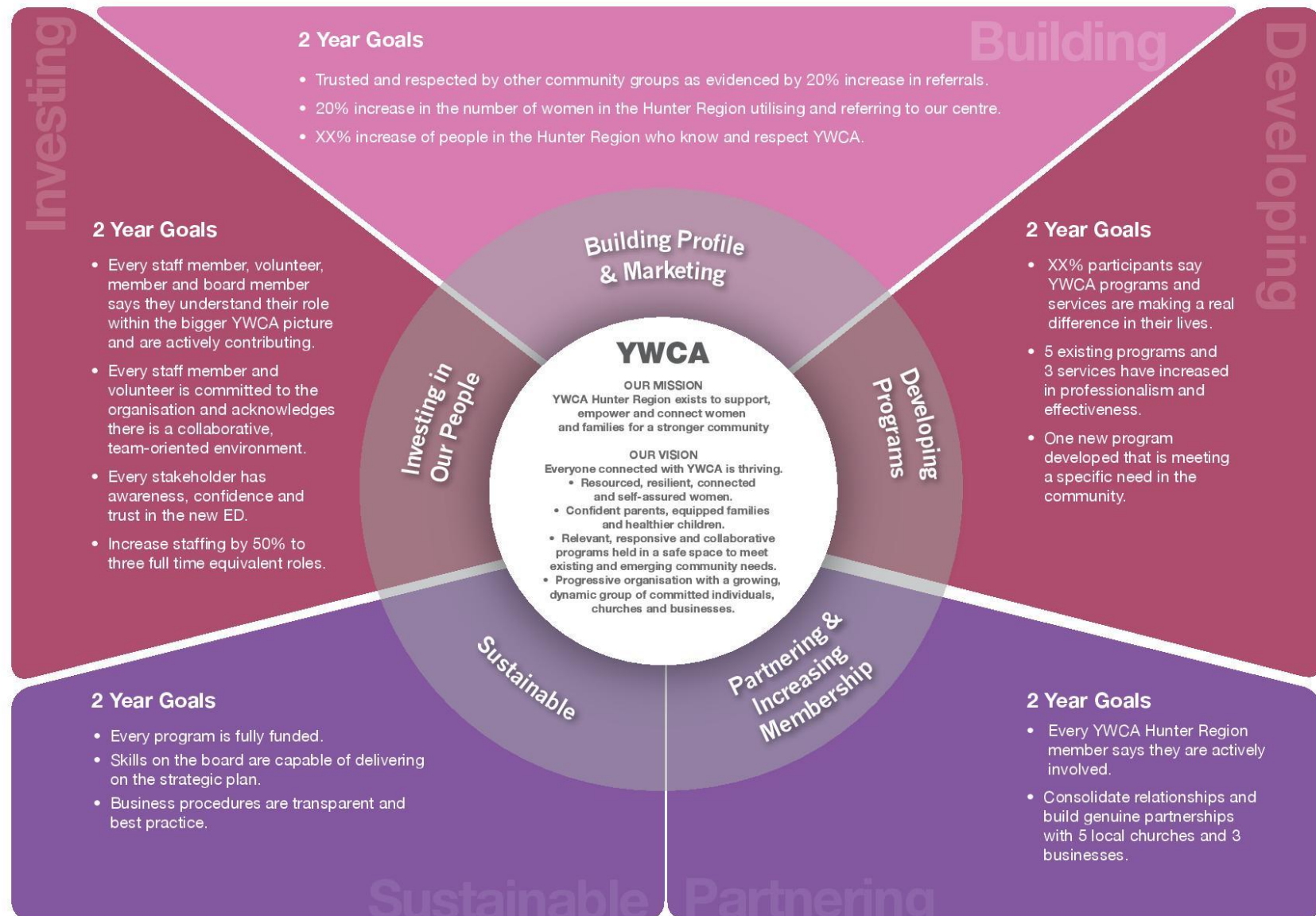
The **World YWCA** is a global network of women and young women leading social and economic change in over 120 countries. It advocates for peace, justice, human rights and care of the environment, and has been at the forefront of raising the status of women for over 150 years. The World YWCA develops women's leadership to find local solutions to the global inequalities women face. Annually the network supports 25 million women and girls.

For over 125 years, **YWCA in Australia** have been developing the next generation of women leaders, and providing services which meet the needs of women and girls, their families and communities. YWCAs in Australia provide strong leadership, mentoring and opportunities for women and girls; advocacy with government and programs and services that support women and girls, their families and communities.

Y Hunter Values:

A Christ-centred foundation	For over 90 years, being motivated by God's love for people and seeking to express this through Christ-centered leadership
Women and families	Investing in women to transform their world – their lives, their family and their community
Excellence and integrity	Delivering quality, consistent services in the context of transparent, professional business practices that creates trust in the community.
Quality relationships	Building relationships between women and families that foster resilience and connect them to the community.
Inter-generational care	Providing services that empower and care through every stage of life.

Strategic Plan



YWCA Hunter Region Exists to support, empower and connect women and families for a stronger community.

Y Hunter Board 2012:



The Board of Directors comprises women from diverse backgrounds who all share a common passion for social justice and supporting young women to fulfil their potential.

PRESIDENT *Ruth Hallett

VICE-PRESIDENT Katrina Gulbrandsen

BOARD MEMBERS Sue Mackenzie, *Amy King, Rebecca Swannack (Resigned 2012), Dianne Sharpe (Resigned 2012), Jenny Baldwin.

We are very grateful to Rebecca and Dianne for their dedication to making a positive difference to the women of the Hunter through their commitment to the Board. They both contributed significantly in the process undertaken with the future strategic direction during 2012.

The Board is currently seeking new Board members to fill the positions vacated by both Rebecca and Dianne.

*Denotes young women (aged 30 years or under) at time of appointment. The YWCA Hunter maintains a commitment to 30 per cent of Board appointments are held by women aged 30 or under.

*This past year has been one of preparation (for the retirement of our long serving ED, Pamela Hallett), of looking forward and of re-defining who we are and who we want to be. It has been challenging and exciting! I am positive that the YWCA Hunter Region will continue to grow and work together with its members and community partners to make a positive impact on women's lives in the Hunter and the world! **Katrina***



I am passionate that YWCA Hunter Region reach out to women, children and youth and listen and work with them in full partnership to see them reach their potential in life. It is my desire that we continue to *invest in women to transform their world – their lives, their family and their community*. I believe that our organisation has the ability to be genuinely responsive and build bridges of understanding to help those in difficulty and achieve this. **Ruth**

Y Staff Team

Jenny Baldwin EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Staff:

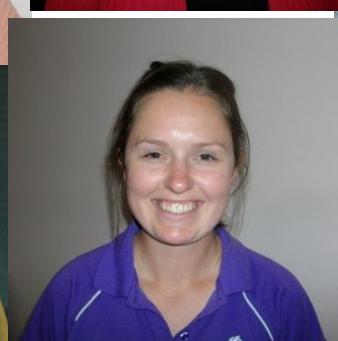
Nina Aubin
Deirdre Balcombe

Lynette Edwards
Katrine Kennedy
Sandra Woods

Marc Coppard
Tess St.Claire
Kate Huckle

Elise Dunford
Hannah Van Netten
Sarah Downey
Gary Pomplun

Volunteers:
Lynette Petite
Jennifer Sumner



Y Youth Programs

'I am learning through play for I will make a difference one day'.

With the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child and the child's right to play clearly in our minds we continue to focus so much of our energy around our children's and youth programs.

As these programs continue to be a strong focus for the Hunter we see numbers of children swarming through our doors to participate in Kindergym classes, Playgroup and Vacation Care. The Preschool that rents rooms on our premises also brings a hive of activity, families and joy into our building. On all these days the building seems to be constantly full of laughter and noise.....we see this as a blessing. We have managed to maneuver successfully through the National Quality Framework to re-enforce the quality service that we provide for our work with children.

Y Kindergym

Lynette Edwards, our qualified Kindergym instructor, with her tireless energy, continues to motivate both the children and the parents in our Kindergym program. Two sessions run each Tuesday to cater for the 40 to 50 preschool aged children and their parents that attend the program weekly. The program helps children from an early age to maximize their learning potential and develop their gross motor skills. It provides an opportunity for valuable insights into early childhood development while having lots of fun in the process.



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Y Playgroup

Playgroup continues to draw a throng of children each Thursday morning during the school term. So much so that we are considering the need to offer a second playgroup session in 2013. Thirty children together in one room seems to be all anyone can handle (so the parents inform us) so the extra session should allow numbers to peak at 30 for each and it will allow for growth as well. Deirdre Balcombe has been responsible for organising and facilitating the Playgroup.

The program addresses the importance of both free play and the structured play that lays the solid foundations for the school years ahead. It also gives the mothers, many of them stay-at-home mothers, the opportunity to meet with other mothers over a cuppa. Often a life saver:

"I have been coming for 10 months to playgroup and this place honestly saved my life. I came to Newcastle from Europe, have no family here and most of the friends and support we have now we acquired here at the Y playgroup. I love how international it is, how there are kids speaking other languages and my daughter has made so many friends"

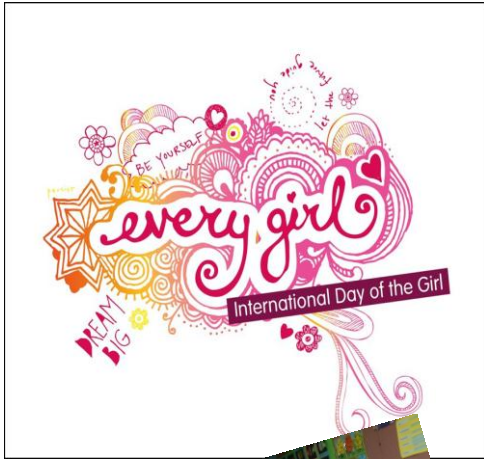
"This just provides a great opportunity for kids to learn off kids. This is where my kids really learnt to wash their hands before eating together. I just love 'pack' learning!"

"We just moved to Newcastle two months ago. One of our first visits to the local playground we met a mother with three small children who offered us a few tips on places to go – our favourite of these by far has been the YWCA. My daughter loves the trampoline and it has been a great place for making new friends....for both of us!"



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YWCA *Every Girl*



Every Girl is a new national young women's program developed by YWCA Australia. It is a program for girls aged 9-14 that develops positive self-esteem, social skills, team building, leadership development and resilience. It provides girls with the tools to realise their full potential, build upon their strengths and participate fully in their community, achieved through an underlying core objective of developing citizenship. This program has the potential to foster a generation of women in Australia who are resilient, connected to their community and feel empowered to speak up about issues of importance to them.

The Program is founded on research illuminating that poor self-esteem is on the rise among girls. This is having a profound effect not only on their development now, but also in the long term on the achievement of gender equality. YWCA Australia has identified early intervention as vital to improving girls' self-confidence, social skills, leadership and community engagement.

Every Girl uses a strengths based approach and a human rights framework to connect girls to their community and to influence community change through weekly sessions that equip them to address the critical issues they confront in their daily lives.

The eight weekly modules use various learning styles including arts, music, logic, craft, public speaking and introspection to ensure that each participant is engaged, empowered. The girls interact with their community through an event they plan and execute over the eight weeks program.

In June 2012 YWCA Australia announced they had received funding through the Federal Office for Women to run the Every Girl program in 10 schools across Australia. YWCA Hunter Region has been invited to run a program in 2012- 13. Two staff have been trained in the delivery and we commenced in Hunter Christian School in term 3 2012 and plan to start in Biraban Public School in 2013. Tracy Lynch is our trained facilitator and she is working together with Nina Aubin to deliver the program.



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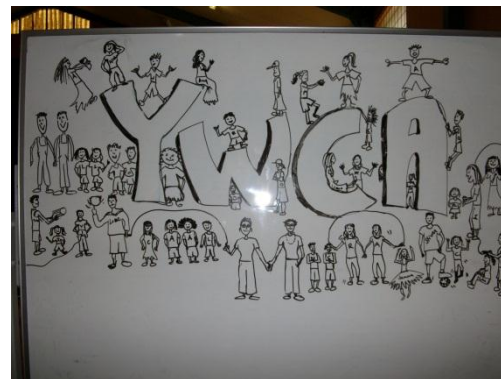


Y Vacation Care

The Vacation care program runs at the YWCA centre through each school holiday break –two weeks each break and three weeks in the January school holidays. The program offers affordable and fun holiday programs for the children of parents living or working in the inner city region. We are funded through DEEWR with parents eligible for the Government's Child Care Rebates.

Unfortunately the number of children attending has declined in 2012. We are averaging only about 30 children per day over the two week period where in the past numbers have been as high as 60 per day. A number of new vacation care programs have opened and this makes it a more competitive field. In 2013 we will be looking at a revamp and introducing changes if necessary to the programming and delivery.

Changes to accreditation under the New Quality Framework have been introduced and we have moved through the process smoothly, thanks to De Balcombe for her role in this. The Vacation Care Program is very fortunate to have extremely dedicated casual staff. Their contributions, enthusiasm and energy are of an exceptionally high quality and we just couldn't do it without them!!!



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Health & Well-being – Encore



YWCA's Encore is a free eight week program designed specifically for women who have experienced breast cancer to improve and retain mobility and flexibility in the upper limbs, confidence and general wellbeing. YWCA encore is a holistic program, helping to create positive self-esteem and body image and a positive attitude to life and health.

After breast cancer surgery and treatment, many women experience numbness, pins and needles, a loss of mobility and strength and discomfort in their upper bodies. Simple things like pegging the washing and carrying children can become difficult. **YWCA Encore** consists of specially designed gentle exercise, relaxation, support and information for women who have experienced breast cancer at any time in their life.

The exercises help strengthen arms, shoulders and chest and improve flexibility and mobility. The exercises can also help to improve general fitness and wellbeing, reduce the risk of lymphedema, aid the management of lymphedema and reduce fatigue associated with treatment.

The sessions also provide an opportunity for women to share their experiences in a safe and supportive environment and connect with other women in their local area who understand what it is like to experience breast cancer. Many great friendships have been formed at YWCA encore programs.

The YWCA Hunter ran 6 programs in 2012 – 3 at the beginning of the year and 3 at the end of the year. A total of 60 women benefited from the program as they attended at facilities at either Valentine or Waratah. Katrine Kennedy, Sandra Woods and De Balcombe facilitated the programs during the year.

The facilitators speak at Lake Macquarie Private Hospital Support Group; represent the Program at The Breast Cancer Forum annually; and keep a working relationship with the Breast Centre at Calvary Public Hospital in order to stay informed and promote the Program.

“It’s a fabulous programme and the girls are very helpful and caring, please can I do it again!!”

“Attending the program has given me permission to treat my breast cancer as a manageable condition, with gentle



recuperative exercises that also educate everyone on the how and why behind them. The instructors are so very supportive and encouraging."

Word association with the Encore ladies about Encore – ***"pool is divine"; "relief"; "encouraging"; "fun"; "relaxing"; "anticipation"; "good company"; "calm"; "not alone"; "support".***

One lady with lymphedema – ***"I have reduced 3.5 cm from my arm, 2 cm along the rest of my arm due to a combination of bandaging and 2 days a week and lymphedema physio. I would not have even gone to the lymphedema physio if it had not been for the information I received at Encore. Thank you"***

Low Cost Accommodation for University Students



The top floor of the grand old building in Dawson St, Cooks Hill, one block back from cosmopolitan Darby St is home to 5 international female students. The location is ideal for close proximity to Newcastle University city campus where the international students attend classes. The current young women are all from China and they appreciate the homely feel of the residence and the security that it provides them. The building currently accommodates 5 female residents; however we are looking to divide one of the larger rooms to make 2 smaller sized rooms in 2013.

The offices are located on the ground floor and it is nothing to come into the building in the morning to the aroma of delicious Chinese cooking.

It is not just a business but a constant delight to provide affordable accommodation for our international students who show so much appreciation for this service and a fascination with the Australian culture. It is our hope that we can enrich their lives as they most certainly enrich ours.

'I love living at the YWCA building in Newcastle. It is so close to all the good shopping and food place. To have no car is perfectly ok as I can walk also to the University City campus. And I can do so on my own at night as it is quick. The people are very lovely here also. Very friendly and helpful with all things. Also lots of things happening around here all the time so never get lonely and only sometimes homesick.'