



SUPREME COURT OF VICTORIA FUNDS IN COURT NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2015

Funds in Court beneficiaries update

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Editor:
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Beneficiary Focus Group - August 2015

**By Julie Fredrickson,
Co-ordinating Client Liaison Officer**



**Kathryn, Ruth, Glenn, Ross,
Rebecca, Nirosha, Yeksan, Sheridan,
Chris and Stanley**

The 8th annual Beneficiary Focus Group was held on 5 August 2015 at Funds in Court. Given the poor weather conditions it was fantastic to see beneficiaries attend the event. Gary Georgios, General Manager (FIC), opened the event. Miranda Bain, Director, Strategy, Government and Community Relations facilitated the day.

This year we had the pleasure of Louise Vernieux, Clinical Neuropsychologist and Clinical Psychologist, presenting to the group. Her attendance provided an opportunity to “have a chat” in an informal setting, with Louise more than happy to answer any questions posed to her. Feedback about her attendance was very positive.

We also invited Volunteering Victoria to present to the group. Simon Zavros-Orr from Volunteering Victoria spoke to the group about the benefits of volunteering and also showed the group how to access volunteering websites.

It was wonderful to see that many of the beneficiaries already volunteer their time with many of them having permanent work as volunteers.

The beneficiaries are always warmly welcomed to Funds in Court and their respective Trust Officers, the Beneficiary Services Manager and the Client Liaison Team always look forward to catching up with the group when they break for lunch.

The day is always filled with light hearted banter, reflective stories and generally provides a forum for our beneficiaries to share their experiences with others. We are very appreciative of those beneficiaries who attend, enjoy the day and provide feedback.

We are already thinking of next year's get together and welcome new attendees. Everyone has a story to tell and share and what better way than attending the group.

Should you be interested in being included in the Focus Group 2016, please contact either Janine or Julie on 1300 039 390 to ensure that we include you in the mail out.

**Variations to Victims of
Crime Assistance
Tribunal Award
By Amanda Weeks,
Legal Officer**

If you received an award from Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal [VCAT] and those funds are now held by the Senior Master, you may be entitled to further funds from VoCAT for expenses such as:

- Extra counselling (advice and personal assistance)
- Medical expenses
- Holiday expenses
- Educational expenses
- Safety related expenses.

If you require additional funds for these expenses, you can discuss this with your Trust Officer before you contact VoCAT.

If you believe you are entitled to further funds, please contact VoCAT. You will need to make an application to VoCAT to vary your original award to provide for further funds. When you contact VoCAT you will be advised of the steps you need to take. If you require assistance completing your application form, your Trust Officer can help you with this.

Your application to vary your original award should be sent directly to VoCAT. You can find VoCAT's address on your original VoCAT award. If you do not have your original award, contact your Trust Officer. He or she will be able to provide you with the contact details.

If you were under 18 years of age when your original VoCAT award was made, you can make applications to VoCAT to vary your original award up until you turn 24. If you are unsure if this applies to you, please contact VoCAT.

There is no limit to the number of applications you make to vary your award.

If you have any questions, please contact VoCAT on 1800 882 752.

Courts Open Day - 16 May 2015

By Amanda Weeks, Legal Officer



Varsha Racha, Human Resources Advisor, Shalini Kumar, Legal Administrative Officer, Sally Pacione, Business Support Officer, Parita Vimawala, Trust Officer and Amanda Weeks, Legal Officer

Sally, Varsha, Parita, Shalini and Amanda participated in this year's Supreme Court Open day which was held on Saturday 16 May 2015. This was a record for Funds in Court's participation topping last year's record of three Funds in Court staff in attendance.

We staffed the Funds in Court information stall, as well as the Supreme Court information stall, and who better to greet the public than the smiling faces of the Funds in Court team.

It was a brisk autumn day, but the sun shone brightly which lifted everyone's spirits for Melbourne's annual Supreme Court Open Day as part of the Victorian Law Foundation's Law Week. We arrived early in the morning to set up the table with our pamphlets, posters, DVDs, and of course the Minties. The entry to the Supreme Court building was a revolving door, people continued to come through and witness the glory of the Supreme Court first hand.

The dungeon tours were as popular as ever being fully booked prior to the Open Day, as were the heritage and history tours that were fully booked by lunch time.

Those people who could not make it onto a tour attended the library. Roughly 500 people visited the Supreme Court Library throughout the day. They examined the Court's World War I display, Justice Redmond Barry's hand-written remarks from outlaw bushranger Ned Kelly's sentencing, and a judge's robe display.

A BBQ and hot coffee were available in the forecourt of the County Court to warm the hands and bellies of the public who visited the Supreme Court, County Court, Magistrates' Court and the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. County Court Judges looked like everyday people turning snags over on the hot plate for the public, while the Magistrates' Court held mock trials for the public to experience.

There were roughly 750 people who walked through the hallowed halls of the Supreme Court and most people attending were very interested to know what Funds in Court do and who the Senior Master was. For most people it was the first time they had heard of Funds in Court or the Senior Master.

We were all happy to greet the public and to inform them of all our wonderful beneficiaries, and the important work we do to assist them, and of course we made sure to offer them a tasty Minty.

All in all we had a great time representing Funds in Court and the Supreme Court of Victoria. We look forward to doing it all again next year.

Funds in Court - Staff Silent Auction - October 2015

By Carol Anderson, Associate to Judicial Registrar Wharton

Funds in Court has had a long time philanthropic agenda that aspires to helping others. Our staff have been organising and participating in various fundraising events for many years. The events included raising funds for numerous charities including Cerebral Palsy, Jeans for Genes, Stress Down Day, Movember, Foodbank, Children's Protection Society, Doctors without Borders, Sacred Heart Mission and many others.

The first silent auction was organised by FIC staff in 2011 and is now an annual tradition. The preparations for the upcoming silent auction in October 2015 are underway.

There were two Funds in Court Silent Auctions for Charity in 2014 (in total raised **\$4,965.00**). The first one was called the iPad Silent Auction, which was run in August. The iPad that was up for auction had been won by a staff member of Funds in Court in a competition run by STC Cleaning at the Acquired Brain Injury National Conference in Bendigo. This iPad was then most generously donated to the Silent Auction and it raised \$400.00, which went to the Njernda Aboriginal Corporation and their Acquired Brain Injury Group, who do so much good work for their community.

The main Funds in Court Silent Auction for Charity 2014 culminated on Friday, 26 September 2014. All 285 items that were up for auction were donated by the staff, their families, friends and some of our beneficiaries. Some of the donated items were handcrafted and created much interest. The successful bidders acquired some uniquely beautiful items. In all there was a wide range of interesting goods that were auctioned off and every single item was sold to our highest bidders.

The Silent Auction was of great interest and staff participated with much enthusiasm.

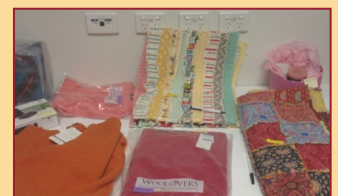
There was a lot of spirited bidding and it was all a lot of fun, which was great for staff morale.

One of the things that makes the Funds in Court Silent Auctions such a success is the realisation that each and every bid and the amount of that bid, makes a difference to the charities who benefit from these fundraising efforts.

The total raised by the main Silent Auction 2014 was \$4,565.00.

The charities which have shared in this amount are:

- **Youth Projects**, who work with homeless young people and run a medical clinic for them.
- **UNICEF Australia**, who help Aboriginal children, and children such as those in war torn Syria, or those who are affected by the ebola crises in West Africa.
- **Servants Community Housing**, whose policy it is to provide housing for low income adults in a spirit of respect, dignity and hope.
- **Lort Smith Animal Hospital**, which is concerned with animal welfare, and helping the animals of poor people with veterinary assistance.
- **The Orang-utan Project** who help the survival of the species by looking after orphaned baby orang-utans.



Technology has advanced so much but is it for the best?

By Dianne Farmer, Beneficiary

Everything is changing too fast!

Paying for a train trip now requires a card. You can put money on that card at a station, then hold the card on a screen as you walk through the platform gate and again when you arrive at your destination. If you forget to swipe the card on arrival, you continue to be charged. When I grew up, we used to go to a counter, say which station we wanted to go to, say whether it was a single or return trip, then pay the attendant who would then give us a ticket to travel with. When at the destination, we handed the ticket in to a station attendant so we could walk out the gate!

Mum had a laundry with a trough, a wringer and a machine that only did a basic wash. The rest was manual. Now, the washing machine does it all, with many different cycles to choose from. There are top and front loaders, spin cycles, fast wash, delicates, woollens, pause and many more buttons to choose from!

We used to walk, bus or train it everywhere. Having a car was a luxury. When I was at school, our lives changed. Dad bought an F.J. Holden. To us it was like a Mercedes! Nowadays, every adult has a car and some, even two! Cars have seat belts, airbags, DVD screens, temperature gauges and so much more. The cars were not able to do the speed of today's cars.

My grandparents had a walk-in pantry with a special shelf. This shelf had a door. That was their fridge. The walk-in pantry door had to be kept closed so heat could not get in.

When they were finally able to get a fridge, it had one door, was small and had a tiny freezer. My parents had the same fridge and this was for a family of 4. Now, there are very large two door fridges, with freezers top or bottom, pull out shelves/baskets in the freezer and thermostats for the

temperature.

As a child, we eventually got the phone connected. It was one phone plugged into a wall socket. It sat on our hallway table which had a seat so that when you were talking, you could sit down. There was only one ringtone. Now we have mobiles, a choice of ringtones on phones, phones with cameras, phone with the Internet plus lots more!

We eventually got a computer. It was the size of a small screen TV and had a keyboard which was separate and sat in front of the screen. The screen was black and white. We could play basic games but we had no internet. Now, there is Google, Facebook, Messenger, emails, advertising and everything you can possibly think of. There are so many computers.

A black and white TV was a feature in our lounge room. It was a large piece of furniture with an antenna on top of it. It was black and white. Early when working, I worked in Swanston Street, Melbourne. Next to my work was a Rank Arena TV store. When colour TV was first released, the front window of the store was crowded with amazed people staring at the new colour screen. It was a major attraction! Now, TVs come in many different sizes, are flat-screen, have surround sound, and no visible antennas and of course, all are colour!

My grandparents had a radio cabinet, roughly 1m x 1m, which had in-built speakers, large turning knobs for sound and stations and it was literally a piece of furniture. These days, the smaller radios are better and they are totally mobile.

I have so many more examples of how things have changed and I am only in my fifties. I can't imagine what is coming in the future. Can you?

Farewell to Trish Blundell

By Julie Fredrickson, Co-Ordinating Client Liaison Officer



1948 - 2015

It is with deep sadness that we acknowledge the recent passing of Trish Blundell, formerly Principal Client Liaison Officer at Funds in Court [FIC]. Trish commenced work at FIC in 1994 and retired in July 2008. Many beneficiaries and their families would have met Trish during her time at FIC and would no doubt attest to her enthusiasm and passion for her work.

Trish was compassionate, kind and a wonderful advocate for the many beneficiaries of FIC. She was one of the very first Client Liaison Officers appointed and she not only embraced the role but she really did set the expectation and standards for future Client Liaison Officers very high.

Trish had a very gentle way about her; she loved her job and enjoyed every aspect of her work. She will be very sadly missed by all her friends and colleagues of FIC.

We fondly remember the many wonderful times with Trish, the laughs and the debates. While Trish very much looked forward to her retirement, she still kept in touch with friends and colleagues. Even in retirement, she continued to help others; a testament to the person Trish was.

It is no cliché when we say that Trish was one of a kind; in our eyes she was and always will be.

Funds in Court Website

The FIC's website was launched in 2011. The website allows FIC to have an up-to-date, user friendly web presence which provides useful information about FIC and its services to beneficiaries, families and carers, legal practitioners and other interested parties.

Current items of interest can be found on the homepage in the "Latest News" area. This is where you will also find announcements about:

- Office operating hours during public holidays and festive seasons.
- Posting of new or updated publications (e.g. information guides, Annual Reports etc).
- Publication of the FIC Newsletter.
- Upcoming FIC events such as Embrace.

The website is easy to navigate and is divided into different areas that can be accessed from the homepage:

- About Us
- For Beneficiaries
- For Under 18s
- For Legal & Other Professionals
- News
- Publications
- Complaints

Each area contains a wealth of information about all aspects of FIC's management of beneficiaries' funds. The Publications section of the website contains numerous information guides and booklets which can be downloaded. Many of these were developed for FIC by SCOPE in Easy English for people with Acquired Brain Injury.

There is also a comprehensive Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) area where you can find answers to questions such as:

- How are decisions made about how beneficiaries' funds are to be used?
- Will beneficiaries wishes be considered?
- How safe are beneficiaries' funds?

The website is intended as a comprehensive resource for all who are interested in the work of FIC. We are constantly updating and improving it so that it serves the needs of beneficiaries. If you have any suggestions about how we could further improve the website, there is a Feedback Form which you can complete and submit electronically. Alternatively, you can email Nanna Relina at fic@supremecourt.vic.gov.au.

www.fundsincourt.vic.gov.au

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contribution to:
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