



Real Men Cook 2014

Real Men Cook for Odyssey is always one of the most anticipated events on the Odyssey House calendar. This year's sell-out event was held at the renowned Glass Brasserie at the Hilton Hotel, Sydney.

Our talented contingent of 'celebrity chefs' all gave tremendous support to help raise money for Odyssey House's Parents' and Children's Program. This is a vital program, one of only a few in Australia that caters for men and women with dependent children, enabling parents to undertake treatment while their children live with them.

The celebrity chefs for the day included comedians Mikey Robins, Jono Coleman and Vince Sorrenti, wine expert Huon Hooke, The Sydney Morning Herald chief restaurant critic

Terry Durack, chef Craig McIndoe, Wealth Enhancers CEO Finn Kelly, media personality Mike Munro, Waratahs player Jeremy Tilse, AFL player Tom Hill and former basketball great Sam MacKinnon. Our MC was Channel 10's Sandra Sully, who did a wonderful job.

Guests heard a very emotional and touching speech from Odyssey House resident, Samantha, whose story is featured in this newsletter.

We thank everyone who donated auction items and supported Real Men Cook for Odyssey. Also a special thanks to our principal sponsor Chris Gray, founder and CEO of Empire, as the event would not be possible without his continued generosity. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year for this popular event!



New Patron

For many years Odyssey House was fortunate and honoured to have Governor of NSW, Dame Marie Bashir, as our patron. Her support for Odyssey House and her contribution to NSW were outstanding and we wish her well in her retirement.

His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Governor of NSW has recently accepted the invitation to become Odyssey House's new patron. We look forward to welcoming His Excellency to Odyssey House and to a long and rewarding relationship.

ASX Art Union Tickets

Odyssey House is again a beneficiary of the ASX Thomson Reuters Charity Foundation and will be selling Art Union raffle tickets with the proceeds supporting Odyssey House.

This year there is over \$62,419 worth of prizes available, purchase tickets in the raffle for the chance to win:

1st prize - Lexus CT200h Luxury - The world first Luxury Hybrid Hatch valued at \$45,839

2nd Prize - Autore South Sea Pearl Diamond and White Gold Pendant, valued at \$13,500

3rd Prize - Captain Cook Murray River cruise for 2 people, valued at \$3,080

To purchase tickets simply follow the link <http://artunion.asxreuterscharity.com.au/console/rafflepages/320> or fill in the included card and return to Odyssey for your tickets to be posted or emailed to yourself.

* \$20 per ticket or 6 for \$100, draw closes 25/2/15

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December 2014



'A Calm in the Sea of Addiction'

odyssey NEWS

Samantha's Story

Drug dependence affects people from all walks of life and can reach across generations, yet Samantha's story of overcoming alcoholism shows your past doesn't have to shape your future.

"I was the eldest of three children in a privileged Sydney home with housekeepers, private schools and travel. My father was well regarded in the community, sitting on Rotary boards and on the council.

"From the outside we looked like the perfect family, but unbeknown to anyone, my father was a severe alcoholic. He abused me regularly until I was a teenager, and he verbally and physically attacked my mother. I thought this was acceptable, normal behaviour.

"I was a gifted child and my parents pressured me to do well at school. I also got involved in sports as a way of being noticed and accepted by others; I always wanted people to like me. I think this stemmed from the fact that my father had suddenly stopped abusing me and I thought this meant he no longer loved me, which I struggled with.

"I met my future husband, Matt, while studying for my bachelor of education. We had a love/hate relationship, yelling one minute then completely smitten the next.

"After completing university, I was devastated by my mother's diagnosis with cancer. Instead of pursuing my teaching career, I looked after her and took over her childcare business.

"Matt and I got married (my mother was too ill to come and my father chose not to attend) and I fell pregnant on our honeymoon. It was exciting at first, but life became a struggle as I tried to control everything in my life: preparing



for parenthood, caring for my mother, working full-time, trying to make my marriage work, and dealing with my father and our tumultuous relationship.

"It all came crashing down when my mother passed away just before my baby was born. This is when my drinking, anxiety and depression truly began.

"Over the next few years my drinking got heavy. One night in an intoxicated rage I told Matt about my father's alcoholism and abuse. Matt wanted me to stand up to him but all I wanted was the love I deserved.

"I thought our marriage was going to end... until I found I was pregnant again. I stopped drinking and we had a healthy little girl. Unfortunately this happiness was short-lived. Our fighting began again and so did my drinking, and the marriage broke down.

"I moved to a farm with my sister, living in a separate house. I was terribly depressed and unhappy with my life. I was drinking every day, but I was very sneaky and hid my drinking for years. At the peak of my problem I was drinking

five to six litres of wine every day.

"One morning, I crashed my car and was caught high-range drink driving. This was when my sister decided I needed help for my alcoholism and to learn not to depend on her, as I had since our mother's death.

"I knew I had to stop drinking, stand on my own feet and move on with my life. Odyssey House was the place to do it.

"It's taken 15 months of treatment, but I recently graduated from Odyssey House. My children and my sister are proud of me, and I am proud of me. I am hoping to update my teaching degree and move on with my life, clean and sober. I couldn't be happier."

Your donation will help people like Samantha overcome their addiction. Donate online at www.odysseyhouse.com.au

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A note from the CEO's Desk

The pace at which we live in today's society is rapid, almost mercurial. That's why the past year has gone by so rapidly, but with many key events by which to take pause on our journey. It started with our annual staff retreat to set the direction the organisation would follow over the coming year. Our regular fundraising events began in May with our Corporate Luncheon, featuring guest speaker Jennifer Westacott, CEO of the Business Council of Australia. In October Odyssey House was one of the beneficiaries of the Australian Fund Manager Awards. Then in November, we held our annual Real Men Cook for Odyssey House fundraiser.

I make a note of these events to highlight the degree we go to every year to raise much-needed funds to continue our life-saving programs. In addition, it highlights the tremendous support we receive from the general public and the corporate community.

That brings me to the holiday season, which comes around in what seems like the blink of St Nick's eye! We wish all of you – particularly those who may have benefited from the services at Odyssey House in some way – the best for this holiday season! To our supporters, we send our warm wishes for safe and happy holidays.

James A Pitts MA, CEO

Celebrate Recovery Day

On 12 October, Odyssey House staff and residents celebrated with hundreds of visitors including past and present staff, graduates, friends, family and supporters for Celebrate Recovery Day.



Celebrate Recovery Day is held annually to recognise the achievements of Odyssey House clients, educate the public about our work, thank staff and supporters, and mark our anniversary (37th this year). It was held on a gorgeous spring day with numerous stalls featuring woodwork, art and craft created by Odyssey House residents as part of their therapy, as well as multi-cultural displays, face painting and food stalls.

Always a highlight of Celebrate Recovery Day is the annual graduation ceremony, where clients who have recently completed the Odyssey House residential rehabilitation program are recognised. Paralympian Paul Nunnari was the keynote speaker, sharing his amazing and inspiring story about how he overcame severe adversity to make his life a really positive one.

This year a new award was introduced to recognise a graduate for their ongoing excellence after leaving the program. The award is an initiative of an Odyssey House corporate partner, specialist recruitment consultancy Morgan McKinley, and was enthusiastically accepted by graduate Lisa.

Are there historical treasures in your bottom drawer?

Is there any historical material relating to Odyssey House in one of your bottom drawers? Do you have any old documents, photographs, or other materials from a bygone era lurking in a suitcase in your garage or shed?

We are looking for anything that will help us prepare the history of Odyssey House in Australia. The project commenced recently and the research has already yielded a rich body of old newspaper clippings, newsletters, correspondence and other materials.

In any historical project, there will always been hidden treasures in people's homes, offices and other places. Often these treasures are unique and help the historians fill important gaps in their knowledge.

So if you can help us, please contact Odyssey House Fundraising and Marketing Manager, Alexandra Macaulay, or Tom Valenta, who is writing the history. Tom can be contacted at tvalenta@bigpond.net.au or 0412 373 951.

The Australian Fund Manager Awards

This year was the 16th Australian Fund Manager Awards, which acknowledge the outstanding performers and achievements in the fund management industry.

Held each October, the awards event is also an opportunity for the industry to show its support for selected charities, including Odyssey House.

We congratulate the award winners and formally thank the Australian Fund Manager Awards Committee and chairman Charlie Lanchester for their ongoing generosity to Odyssey House, and all the sponsors and fund managers who support the awards.

Grant benefits Art Therapy Program

Our Art Therapy Program received a welcome boost with the announcement that funds have been allocated through the federal government's Capital Grants Program to refurbish the ceiling of our large workshop at the Assessment and Referral Centre in Ingleburn. Work will commence in early 2015.



A message from the Chairman

It has been a busy year at Odyssey House. In all, 642 people participated in our withdrawal, assessment, residential or aftercare programs. We responded to an average of 2500 calls every month and conducted interviews daily at the Admissions and Intake Centre.

We launched our new website, offering better information and an online channel for people to engage with our services; further functionality will be added over time.

Our annual recognition ceremony and open day were a resounding success. Graduates and staff celebrating anniversaries, including James who celebrates 30 years with Odyssey NSW, were honoured with awards and hearty congratulations from attendees. Uncle Ivan of the D'harawal and Yuin people, local MP Bryan Doyle and Campbelltown deputy mayor Ted Rowell expressed

how impressed they were with the event and the contribution Odyssey House makes to the community.

In November, Jai Rowell, member for Wollondilly, Minister for Mental Health and Minister assisting the Minister for Health, visited the Eagle Vale facility and later was a guest at our annual Real Men Cook lunch. Jai observed that the residents he had met were the best advertisement and ambassadors for Odyssey House.

Our annual Christmas appeal is raising funds for much-needed air conditioning units at our facilities. With summer upon us, any support you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Doug Snedden, Chairman

WILL YOU FEEL THE HEAT THIS CHRISTMAS?

Odyssey House saves and improves the lives of people dependent on alcohol and other drugs. Our long term residential facility is based in Sydney's South West.

Summer is **HOT** in this part of Sydney. But, nothing stops in the Odyssey House community – we operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, no matter how hot it is.

Every resident is engaged in a variety of housekeeping, educational, vocational and community activities. Routine and structure is an important part of a resident's therapy.

A gift from you this Christmas will help us install air conditioning units in communal lounge and dining areas to provide some relief from the summer heat for our residents.

Odyssey House needs your support to help improve the environment in which our residents spend much of their time.

To support odyssey house please log onto <http://www.ohfundraising.org.au/event/christmasappeal14>

Or fill out the below donation form



Please help us this Christmas



Yes! I want to make a difference to Odyssey House to help those individuals and families affected by drug and alcohol misuse.

\$20 to help provide 3 nutritious meals for a child whose parent has entered the program

\$50 to provide a private counseling session

\$100 to provide 2 counseling sessions for a resident and their family to help them rebuild their relationships damaged by drug and alcohol misuse

\$ Other amount. A gift of any size will make a difference.

OR I would like to make a monthly gift to Odyssey House of \$

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible 09/14

Name on Card Visa M/C Amex Chq

Card number

Expiry date Signature

Please send me information on: Remembering Odyssey House in my Will I have already made a gift in my Will

Please remove me from the mailing list (Include contact details and return to Odyssey)

Contact details

Name

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Phone

Email

PO Box 459 Campbelltown 2558