

# HAPPENINGS

Donors and Supporters • Thank you from The Infants' Home to those who help make our work possible



Sam enjoys story time with Cindy (Educator) and a fellow classmate at Johnson House Pre-School



Sam and Florence in Primary School

## Sam Breaks Down Barriers

**Sam, now aged six, was born with Down Syndrome. His additional needs required medical support in many ways. He was placed in the NICU for six weeks, tube fed for the first six months of his life, had open heart surgery at five months old, and survived Leukaemia and Osteomyelitis at 18 months old. To say he's had a bumpy start to life would be an understatement.**

Sam's parents Natalie and Mat were living in the area at the time of his birth and heard about The Infants' Home through word of mouth. They were especially interested in the fact that The Infants' Home had an onsite nurse, accepted children with additional needs and was a mainstream early childhood organisation. Sam joined our program when he was just over a year old.

From the start, Natalie, Mat and Sam worked closely with one of our social workers, which Natalie considers a crucial element in their journey. From coordinating Individual educational plans with external therapists, sourcing respite services, and just being there to talk to, the added support was instrumental for Natalie and Mat, who had no family in NSW. The collaborative efforts of all

relevant professionals and therapists involved in Sam's development plan enabled everyone to be on the same page and to problem solve as a multidisciplinary team.

Our educators became advocates for Sam during his time in our educational programs, they would help other children in the program to see Sam as he was and learn to share space and time in real and meaningful ways together. For example, as Sam learned sign language, so too did the other children. Sam, over time, came to develop reciprocal and true friendships. He developed a real sense of belonging and was able to be part of the group. Amy, Sam's focus educator at Johnson House, recalls:

"Some of the children got really protective of him, knew his moods

**"I think The Infants' Home has helped Sam in so many ways but being such a source of support for us as a family has been invaluable! It really is such beautiful community spirit."**

NATALIE (SAM'S MUM)

and told other children to back off when they needed to. They didn't see him as 'the boy with Down Syndrome'."

Sam started school this year with Florence, his friend from Johnson House. Natalie thinks that despite Sam's perceived limitations, the integrated services at The Infants' Home and the dedication of his educators, all helped achieve Sam's milestones.

**You can help** ensure the continuation of our programs for vulnerable children and families. To donate, please use the form on the back of this newsletter, visit [theinfantshome.org.au](http://theinfantshome.org.au) or call 02 9799 4844.  
**Thank you.**



**Ceremonial sunset on HMAS Sydney IV**  
**Right: Guests on board**



## A Fond Farewell to HMAS Sydney

The Infants' Home enjoyed a wonderful year of partnership with HMAS Sydney in 2015; our 50th and final year as their adopted charity before HMAS Sydney IV was decommissioned in November.

In addition to volunteering for many working bees on site in Ashfield, the Captain and crew kindly hosted two events to help raise funds for our ongoing work with children and families. Thank you to those friends and supporters who were able to join us for cocktails and canapes on board the ship's flight deck in September and October. Everyone had a wonderful time: guests had a rare chance to tour the ship's impressive facilities and all agreed that the Ceremonial Sunset was very special. One guest stated:

*"We all enjoyed the evening very much, lots of nice people and the Naval crew were most friendly and hospitable. We would like to thank all involved most sincerely."*

The November 8 decommissioning ceremony was an impressive occasion; the crew resplendent in their immaculate white ceremonial dress, 'lining the decks' for the last time and marching whilst the navy band played, with the Harbour Bridge and Opera House as backdrops. Australian Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove noted in his speech that the ship has served Australia with distinction and was the pride of the Australian Navy. Hundreds of crew, their families and guests, including The Infants' Home, were honoured to be part of the historic event.

We wish the captain and crew the best of luck in they move on, and look forward to maintaining our connection with the commissioning of HMAS Sydney V in years to come.

### Would you like to be our Event Partner?

Fundraising events and partnerships are a great way in which community and corporate groups help raise funds in support of our programs and projects. If you would like to support us by donating a venue or prizes, organising an event or providing people power to help at events, we would love to hear from you and welcome your ideas. Examples include holding a trivia night or a workplace or team event, like the Strathfield Rotary Stroller Derby 2016! (See back page). Please contact Anne-Marie Byrne: 8719 5002 / [abyrne@theinfantshome.org.au](mailto:abyrne@theinfantshome.org.au) to discuss further.

## Celebrating Diversity and Unity on Harmony Day

Australia's diversity is celebrated on Harmony Day, a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home. To celebrate with children and promote a sense of belonging, The Infants' Home organised craft activities with orange paper, as the colour orange represents harmony. Children traced their hands on paper, cut out and joined them all together to signify a sense of unity. Staff and children also celebrated by sharing cultural dishes and treats.



**Children and staff share a feast of naan bread on Harmony Day and beyond**



## Exceeding National Quality Standards

The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), is the governing body for all early childhood facilities across Australia. They regularly conduct assessments to ensure standards against the National Quality Framework (NQF) are being met.

We are very proud to say that Gorton and Murray Houses (assessed in late 2015) as well as Johnson House (assessed early 2016) were all assessed as Exceeding National Quality Standards. The seven categories by which all Australian early education and care centres are measured include education programs and practice, children's health and safety, staffing arrangements, relationships with children, collaborative partnerships with families and communities, leadership and service management.

## Children's Carnival 2016

Our bi-annual Children's Carnival is on Saturday May 21st, 10am-3pm. Held on our beautiful grounds in Ashfield, it is a fun and accessible event with activities for the whole community, including children's entertainment, rides, a magic show, raffle, chocolate wheel and petting zoo. Food and market stalls will add to the festivities, including The Infants' Home's famous International Food Stall showcasing the multicultural treats of our staff and families. We hope you can join us.

**If you would like to donate goods or help out on the day, please contact Ann-Marie Bennie: [abennie@theinfantshome.org.au](mailto:abennie@theinfantshome.org.au).**



the infants' home  
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

**The Infants' Home is a leading provider of:**

- early childhood education and care,
- early intervention and
- clinical health services for children from birth to school age.

Each year we provide services for over 2,500 children and their families. One third of these services are directed to children and families with additional physical or emotional needs, or those living in vulnerable circumstances. For 141 years The Infants' Home has been a dynamic and innovative organisation, championing the rights of children, women and families.

Our services include:

- Early Childhood Education and Care centres
- Family Day Care
- Supported playgroups
- Parent education and family support
- Postnatal Clinic
- Allied Health Clinic
- GP Clinic

Our programs are funded through Government, Trusts, Foundations, Corporations, local clubs, business and donors.

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.  
Please see donations form overleaf.  
Established 1874  
Patron: Mrs Linda Hurley

### Contacts:

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<http://www.facebook.com/theinfantshome>

**Leaving a bequest to The Infants' Home will ensure that each child is given every opportunity to reach their full.**

## New Mud Kitchen Up and Running

Many of our centre's projects are child initiated and directed, and the new mud kitchen in Robinson House is a prime example of this.

It all started when one of the children in the pre-school program at Robinson House was finding it hard to settle in to her new environment and was missing her Mum and Dad a lot. Educators noticed that pretend cooking with sand, mud and leaves in the playground was that the one thing that made her happy and calm. Other children would join in and 'cook' with her, and a conversation began between children and educators on what cooking is like in each child's household.

To develop the new play area, each child voiced their vision of what a kitchen looks like, and many parents donated cooking tools and utensils. Robinson House has a fantastic new mud kitchen as a focal point for creative play, by the children, for the children, as a result of this collaboration.



## Rali Foundation visits The Infants' Home

In March we were honoured to host a visit from Alison Stagg, Julie Soper and Marilyn Chambers from The Rali Foundation, who support our Transition to School program. This crucial program supports children with vulnerabilities or complex needs and their families in the 6 months prior to and after starting school, to help ensure children settle in to a new routine and are ready to learn in their new environment.



**Ralph and Alison Stagg from Rali Foundation joined us on board HMAS Sydney IV in 2015**

## Developing a New Allied Health Clinic

The Infants' Home strives to meet the myriad early childhood support service needs of our local community and beyond. We have plans in place to expand our Allied Health clinical services onsite in Ashfield to address an identified gap. This new Sydney Child Development Clinic will operate in partnership similar to the Your Doctors GP clinic, and will provide a number of professional services that can be accessed by the wider community. We look forward to sharing progress on this project with you in the coming months.

## How you can help

Every contribution helps a child. If you would like to support us, please send this form with your donation to:

**The Infants' Home, 17 Henry Street, Ashfield NSW 213  
ABN: 71 174 918 661**

**Yes, I would like to make a difference to children and families.**

**Please accept my gift of:**

\$50  \$100  \$200  \$500

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please find enclosed my:**

cheque/money order OR please debit my  Visa  Mastercard

Number:


Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**You can donate online, visit [www.theinfantshome.org.au](http://www.theinfantshome.org.au) and click on the 'Donate' button.**

**Yes, I would like you to debit my credit card \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month.**

Expiry date   /

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (H) \_\_\_\_\_

(M) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes, I would like to give a lasting gift. Please send me information on leaving a bequest.**

**Yes, I would like to know more. Please send me information about your services.**

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible. A receipt will be issued on all donations. The Infants' Home respects your privacy. We do not disclose personal contact information without permission.

**Please remove my name from your mailing list.**

## Kitchen Project to Commence in 2016

Over the past 18 months The Infants' Home has been raising funds to fit out a new kitchen facility to enhance our nutrition education programs and help us better support children with complex nutritional needs. In that time, we have also developed a model of service delivery and engaged with a specialist catering partner to best ensure quality in service delivery. These plans and the partnership will be finalised in the coming months in order to get the kitchen operating as soon as possible. We thank all who have contributed towards this project and look forward to sharing further news on our kitchen in future.



## Introducing the Strathfield Rotary Stroller Derby!

Rotary Club of Strathfield will hold an exciting new community fundraising event this year, and have kindly named The Infants' Home as co-beneficiary. The 'Strathfield Rotary Stroller Derby' will be held on Sunday October 9th at Sydney Olympic Park in Homebush, and will feature fun family activities including a 3km walk, a baby stroller fun run and more, with prizes for most original stroller and most coordinated family. There will be a petting zoo, face painting, craft and food stalls. It's a great opportunity to get outside and have fun with the family this Spring.

You can like us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/theinfantshome>) for news on this event and others or contact Strathfield Rotary to get involved: [info@strathfieldrotary.org.au](mailto:info@strathfieldrotary.org.au)

## In Memory of our Friend Gladys

Gladys Richardson was The Infants' Home General Secretary from 1970-1982. Her passing in February at the grand age of 91 marked the end of a wonderful life.

Meryl Burn, our Early Childhood Consultant of 35 years, attended the funeral on behalf of The Infants' Home and in honour of Gladys' recommendation that a position be created for an early childhood nurse and that Meryl apply for it. Meryl has been with us ever since, providing integral support services for children and families.

Meryl remembers: "Gladys was our great supporter even in retirement; helping out in the front office, with payroll tasks, general administration or preparing Board reports when we were short staffed. She was also an amazing cook and the cake stalls at our fetes were always popular with Gladys' contributions."

Gladys' daughter Kerrie volunteered at many fetes and says that The Infants' Home had a very fond place in her mother's heart, as Gladys does in our history.



**Vale Gladys Richardson  
(1924 to 2016)**

