

Kelly's Welcome

And just like that we are at 2020! So welcome to our first newsletter of the year.

When I look back at 2019 and how hard we, as an organisation, pushed for social change with our activities and events throughout the year, I am heartened by those in the community who offered such strong support not only to Nova, but to the issues that impact on women and children. So thank you for being alongside of us!

The team at Nova work tirelessly to assist women and their children to obtain safe shelter and long-term housing solutions. This they achieve, in the midst of entrenched structural barriers such as gendered poverty, gender inequality and bureaucratic red tape, which can be, at its most extreme, persecutory to those seeking assistance.

So I would like to extend my gratitude to all the women that work at Nova.

The honouring of the women at Nova leads me to our first event of the year: Nova for Women and Children's International Women's Day Breakfast.

So what would I hope for women this year?

A community that says No to Violence; a community that says homelessness is unacceptable in our society; and a community that says 'not on' to the growing numbers of our older generation of women living in abject poverty. We at Nova will continue to strive for social change at all of these levels and we know you will join us in the fight. So let's make 2020 a social justice year together.

By Kelly Hansen - CEO

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In Recent Times

Vale Jill

In early December 2019 we said farewell to Jill Emberson. An extraordinary woman and passionate journalist who never gave up fighting for a better world and a better Hunter. Jill refused to die quietly and became a voice for better funding for ovarian cancer.



"I need to be a voice, I couldn't sleep well at night knowing I didn't use what I could to tell the story of this cancer."

In January 2019 Jill was acknowledged for her advocacy and journalism and was awarded Newcastle's Citizen of the Year. We at Nova are proud to have known such a wonderful advocate and role model for women, and our deepest condolences go to Jill's husband Ken and daughter Malia. Jill, your voice will be remembered forever.



Our Recent Bushfires

With so many devastating fires impacting so many communities over the Christmas/New Year break it felt empty coming back in 2020 and wishing each other a Happy New Year.

Many communities in southern and eastern Australia have been impacted by long-term drought, widespread bushfires, a recent cyclone, anticipated flooding, and now face the prospect of rebuilding from the ground up. Many of these communities will be heavily reliant on support from local community organisations, and all levels of government.

It's often the worst of situations which brings out the best in people, and it's been extraordinary to see how so many people have come together to respond to the bushfire crisis with the community, digging deep to support others in their time of need. Victims, volunteers and support services will feel the impact of these disasters for several generations to come.

Safe Steps during COVID-19

Nova for Women and Children will continue to provide assistance to women and children. We are however, taking the advice of health authorities to modify how we will provide support during this time.

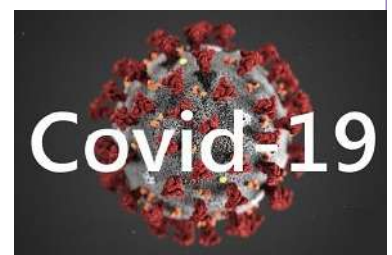
Nova will be limiting face-to-face contact to essential meetings only. Essential meetings will go ahead UNLESS you have;

- ◆ Travelled overseas in the last 14 days, or, Have had contact with someone who has travelled overseas
- ◆ Have had contact with someone who has a confirmed case of coronavirus
- ◆ Symptoms such as fever and/or cough, or any other flu-like symptom

All other contact will be provided by phone, Facetime or WhatsApp.

It is important you stay safe during this time, please contact us if you are requiring support or require any further information. If you do have any symptoms or concerns that you might have the coronavirus, please contact the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080.

Nova is keeping up to date on COVID-19 facts via: www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au, www.health.nsw.gov.au, www.health.gov.au or www.who.int



Introducing Our Staff

Meet Lee - Nova Operations Manager



How long have you been at Nova? I've been with Nova for 5 ½ years, firstly as Newcastle West Manager and for the last 3 ½ - 4 years Operations Manager.

A little about my work history: I've worked in this field for almost 30 years. My first role was at Bonnie Women's Refuge in Sydney as a Child Support Worker after studying OOSH management at TAFE. I was there for 3 years before moving HOME to Lake Macquarie. I worked with Mission Australia at the Proclaimed Place located in the very building I'm in now and from there went to Eastlakes Women and children's Refuge for a few years, whilst casual with Mission Australia, then Newcastle Adult Accommodation Support Service. I had a brief stint at Hunter Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service before returning to full time employment with Mission Australia as a Case Worker, Team Leader and finally Service Manager before a mass redundancy. I went to Catholic Care as a Project Officer for a "Young Dad's" project which sadly never got off the

ground and was offered an Operations Manager parental leave relief position and was there until I resigned in 2014. I had a few weeks off and here I am.

Who/What inspires you? So many – Jill Emberson; right up to the end of her life she was advocating for more funding for ovarian cancer research. She was also a fierce promoter of social justice, a wonderful, strong woman. Lucy Kaboosey (Facebook name); mother of 4, member of Kurrajong Heights Rural Fire Service, manages Four times the madness Facebook page – she is just so unapologetically authentic!

The women who come to Nova *who are in crisis and work through a system that's set up to punish the most disadvantaged*. These women keep going, doing everything they can despite setback after setback to make a life that is settled, safe and happy for them and their children. My colleagues who go above and beyond to support the women and children, fighting a broken system and do so with empathy and respect. My daughter, who left everything she knew, (all her friends and family) to move to a town a long way from home chasing her career goals.

My hobbies/interests outside of work. Spending time with my family and friends is a priority. I'm extremely lucky to have the same close group of friends since school, the women of that group are my tribe and I love them dearly. The beach is my happy place, a swim in the ocean cleanses my soul like nothing else. I like to walk especially where there is water and I have just started Go Go fitness – lots of fun. I love to read and listen to music. Going to outdoor concerts in summer has been a regular thing for a number of years (I recently read it can add 9 years to your life – got to be happy with that). I am a keen supporter of the Knights and have season tickets this year.

My favourite Movies: Forrest Gump, Bohemian Rhapsody, Remember the Titans, Awakenings, A Star Is Born

Music: I recently saw Elton John and Cold Chisel, heading to the Red Hot Summer Tour this month and looking forward to James Blunt and Rod Stewart. I love Carol King, James Taylor, David Bowie, ACDC, Tracy Chapman, Adele, and lots more. One of my fav albums to listen to is an old Surfing movie soundtrack "Morning of the Earth".

Books: To Kill a Mockingbird. Anything by Jodi Picoult, Bryce Courtenay, Lynda La Plante, John Grisham. I'm currently reading "See what you made me do" by Jess Hill - it's very confronting.

TV shows: I can't deny I'm addicted to Home and Away - frustrates me at times, so I take a break, but always go back. Can't wait for the next season of The Handmaid's Tale which can be so hard to watch and I like crime shows.

Family: A husband of 35 years, 2 adult children, daughter in law, 4 grandchildren, the loves of my life who make my heart sing every day. A much loved fur child Moet a German Shephard, 1 brother, 1 sister and my Mum.

Something I'm looking forward to: A trip to Broken Hill in April and lots to cheer about from the Knights in 2020. Also I'm going to maintain a good work/life balance for longer than 1 month.

Trisha House

“Change only happens when ordinary people get involved, get engaged, and come together to demand it.” Barak Obama 2017

The origins of Trisha House were born from a community meeting that Nova held to encourage a community response to homelessness in Newcastle, specifically to discuss the safety of women and children who had no shelter. From this meeting Respectus was formed, a group of committed members from the community who wanted to make a difference for women and/or children experiencing homelessness or escaping domestic violence.

As part of Respectus, Sue Davies and I spoke at many community meetings run by Lions clubs and Rotary throughout Newcastle. The support and encouragement was heartening and we had many volunteers committed to renovating and/or assisting in finding a property that could be an alternative to the Motels often used for Temporary Accommodation that were not safe or were not suitable for children.

Respectus partnered with Nova in a premises that was in major disrepair and required a great deal of commitment and trust from both Boards. Respectus, specifically Lianne Dean and Clarice Hamling project-managed the ongoing renovations and coordinated volunteer groups such as Rotary, Lions Club and Sister Code. The whole team at Nova spent a day painting at the site and Leonie Young donated a beautiful kitchen. Phase one of the site was completed in 2017 and provides single women and women with children with temporary accommodation. Phase two was completed in 2018 and provides women with children, including women with up to six children, with temporary accommodation. There is also an office which accommodates a Team Leader and five to six support workers.

The amount of work, donations, and overall community generosity is difficult to capture in words, all I can say is it has been an extraordinary and emotional experience that has exceeded all expectations, I feel honoured to know so many individuals who are so compassionate and kind.

Such a site required an important name that held a strong meaning in Newcastle. Trisha is named after a woman who was tragically murdered by her partner.

Her sister was a member of our Flash Mob, and she has dedicated to the site the beautiful dress she created that pays homage to her sister, which also went on display during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence in November/ December 2016. The dress now takes pride of place in the Meeting Room in Trisha House.

The photos of the site and at the launch, which was attended by local politicians and media, of Trisha House provide best the strong sentiment that a shared experience of coming together and creating something extraordinary provokes.

Thank you to all that have been involved, it's a very worthy and satisfying endeavour to ensure the shelter, safety and support to those most vulnerable in our community.



Right is one of the new family rooms at Trisha House

Coming Up this Year...

Throughout the year Nova is involved in a range of events that are close to our heart, they support women and children or the community we all live in. In recent times we have been at the Newcastle Pride Festival, the Mental Health Wellness Walk, Reclaim the Night Events and of course our Women and Children Matter Rally.

If you see us out and about, please feel free to come say hello, we're always up for a friendly chat, or to offer assistance if we can help you. We also add most of our events to our [Facebook page](#), so feel free to join us there to keep up to date on what we're doing. Here's a list of things coming up, and our first event is our;

International Women's Day Event - Friday 6 March 2020

This was the first major event for the year for us, and once again was held at Merewether Surfhouse, with a breakfast overlooking the beach. With a great line up of three guest speakers, entertainment by Blue Moon Music and a delicious Hot and Cold breakfast, it was a great start to International Women's Day for 2020. Thank you to all that came along - we very much appreciate your support and hope you enjoyed the morning.

Later in the year there will be:

- ◆ Reconciliation week in May
- ◆ NAIDOC week in July
- ◆ The Wallsend Winter Fair, Homelessness Week, Hunter Homeless Connect and Pride Festival, in August
- ◆ Wellness Walk, Anti-Poverty Week and Reclaim the Night in October
- ◆ 16 Days of Activism in November/December
- ◆ Walk a Mile Koori Style (WAMKS) in December
- ◆ Women and Children Matter Rally also in December.



Christmas Donations

Last Christmas, Nova were so grateful to have received the help, support and assistance of so many wonderful people and organisations throughout our area. Donations of Hams, Christmas gifts for the Women and Children we support, Vouchers, Hampers and so much more, were such very welcome contributions and we can't thank you all enough.

Your donations are given to the numerous people we support, and your kindness and generosity has not only assisted them at what can be a very stressful time of year, but also put a smile on the faces of so many. This is just a small sample of that generosity.



OPENING HOURS

General Office Hours:

9am to 4.30pm

Monday to Friday

We are closed on weekends and public holidays.

Please Note:

The Newcastle office is closed to the public on Tuesdays, except for pre-booked appointments.

CONTACT US

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Novawomen1

AFTER HOURS

If you are a woman escaping domestic violence, requiring after hours assistance please

Phone: 1800 656 463

Our Values

Nova for women and children is based upon a feminist philosophy and is guided by the principles of social justice that are;

- Act with good intent
- Focus on strengths
- Promote collaborative, innovative and inclusive practice
- Embrace diversity
- Work respectfully

We will work with you to make sure you receive the best possible assistance to avoid becoming homeless or, if you are homeless, to access safe, affordable and secure housing.

We are committed to working with you in a respectful way that protects your dignity, is fair, and does not discriminate. **#WomenAndChildrenMatter**