



L-R, Ben Wallace, Hon. Jennifer Rankine, Susan McInerney, Robert Martin and Roy Arnold

December - January 2010

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Minda leads the way in respect, inclusion and choice

Removing barriers and embracing respect, inclusion and choice was the major theme of Minda's Open Mind seminar, held at Brighton on Wednesday 30 September.

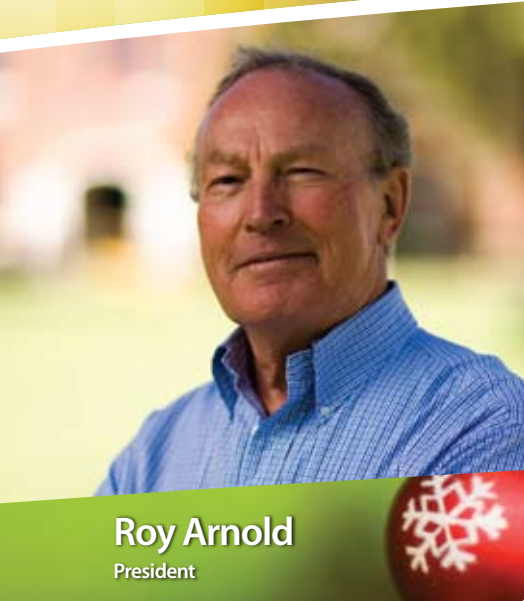
The day was organised to formally acknowledge Minda's commitment to the guiding principles of the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The first disability organisation in Australia to adopt the guiding principles, Minda was pleased to host Ben Wallace, State Manager of the South Australian Office of the Department of Families, Housing, Community, Services and

Indigenous Affairs at the seminar. Mr Wallace attended on behalf of Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities, the Honourable Bill Shorten, to officially recognise the organisation's commitment to the Convention.

Over 300 people attended, with the guest list including individuals living with intellectual disability, staff in the disability sector, Chief Executive Officers of various disability support providers, local and federal MPs and the Minister for Disability, the Honourable Jennifer Rankine.

Continued page 3



Roy Arnold
President

We have again reached that point in the calendar when our thoughts turn to the approaching Christmas festivities.

It is appropriate at this time of the year to thank all the members of the Minda community for their contributions over the past year. My thanks extends to donors and supporters, Association Members, family members, fellow Board Members, staff and of course, volunteers. We really appreciate everything you do.

On Sunday 22 November, Minda held its Annual General Meeting. At the AGM I presented on Minda's performance over the last year and set out our plans for the future, with many achievements including the adoption of the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the adoption of a Person Centred Thinking approach and the endorsement of a 'Policy of Choice'.

I would now like to speak more to the latter policy - that of a commitment to choice. By adopting the Convention's guiding principles, Minda has committed itself to providing a

From the President

lifestyle that gives the individual the central role in determining what they want to do now and in the future. The Board endorsed the Policy of Choice to ensure that the individuals supported by Minda will have the choice to live in the location of their desire - be it community living (away from Brighton) or at the Brighton site.

In support of this policy and in implementing a more person centred planning approach; Minda will provide individual plans (person centred plans) for each person and through Active Support, will provide meaningful employment and activities for people living with intellectual disability.

In addition to its commitment to an individualised approach to support, the Board also pledged commitment to best practice during the year, which saw the development of the Board Improvement Plan. Importantly, this has acted as a sounding board for our activities, which will further enhance the strategic governance of Minda.

Still on Board, I am pleased to welcome three experienced people to the Board, who will bring new blood and fresh thinking with their complementary skills: Kate Thiele, Richard Bruggemann and Robert Crabbe. On behalf of Minda, I wish to express our thanks to Tony Innes, who is leaving the Board after four years of devoted service to pursue other opportunities.

Tony has taken a keen interest in Minda and has been a valuable asset to the Board. I wish Tony all the best for the future and reiterate my personal thanks for his efforts.

I can say with confidence that the past financial year has been one of great productivity for Minda, with some rather major milestones reached that will define the future of the organisation for many years to come.

There will undoubtedly be new challenges, new opportunities and new uncertainties for Minda and the disability sector in 2010. Having said this, Minda, as an organisation, will continue to raise its profile out in the community and will continue to build on its successful track-record, leading the sector for best practice.

Most significant in these opportunities is that of establishing a Master Plan, which will achieve a balance in remaining a delightful home for many of the individuals we support and appropriate commercial opportunities to provide sustainable income to ensure Minda's future.

In closing, I would like to thank Susan McInerney and the Executive team for their efforts in responding to challenging circumstances over 2009. Their hard work and dedication has resulted in an outstanding set of results in the last financial year.

I look forward to an equally successful 2010 and wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Cover story

Minda leads the way in respect, inclusion and choice

In celebrating Minda's commitment to the Convention, the Open Mind seminar focused on promoting the full participation and equality of persons with disabilities. Attendees were eager to hear from the distinguished line up of guest speakers, particularly internationally acclaimed UN advocate, Mr Robert Martin.

Mr Martin has been a leader in the self advocacy movement for 25 years and is currently working on the rights of people with learning difficulties or disabilities with the United Nations. Mr Martin delivered a moving and powerful presentation about the rights of individuals living with intellectual disability and about the need to engender widespread community understanding and acceptance to achieve the full inclusion of all people with disability into society.

Robbi Williams, CEO of the Julia Farr Association, gave a presentation on 'choice and control of the individual' and the seminar wrapped up with a session focusing on Active Support, which featured speakers from CARA, SCOSA, Leveda and Disability SA.

Although Mr Shorten was unable to attend, he expressed acclamation to Minda on adopting the guiding principles of the UN Convention, writing: "Adopting the UN Convention was a sign of the Rudd Government's commitment to increasing opportunities for people with disability. People with disability too often find themselves being treated as second class citizens or living lives of internal exile in their own country. I applaud the work of Minda and similar organisations that are fighting for the right of people with disability to a life of dignity and fulfilment."

Minda appreciates Mr Shorten's tribute and the ongoing support he and the Department provides Minda.

When addressing the guests, Minda's CEO, Susan McInerney, said that Minda was positioning itself as a lead agency in Australia by adopting the principles of Convention.

"Minda's adoption of the principles of the Convention will enable the organisation to raise greater awareness of disability issues and

foster a more inclusive society by helping the general public understand why ensuring human rights for people with disability is important," she said.

"I believe the benefits to individuals, their families, the community and the organisation itself will be evident. We will be more effective at carrying out our mission and able to respond at all levels to enable the person to be truly embedded as part of their community. I fully expect there will be increased motivation in staff and significant positive changes will occur in the lives of individuals," she said.

Thank you to all guest speakers, attendees and volunteers who made the Open Mind seminar such a success.

Open to the public, Minda's Open Mind seminars focus on current best practice and cover topics specific to the disability sector, with the main intent of enhancing the lives of people living with intellectual disability.



We Can Do It



Susan McInerney
CEO

As we approach the end of 2009, I would like to reflect on the many successes Minda has achieved over the past twelve months.

From the CEO

Minda has focused on progressing its vision and making sure all services live by the core values of respect, inclusion and choice.

Following the Minda Board's adoption of the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the organisation has adopted the philosophy of Person Centred Thinking and implemented an approach that ensures individuals lead ordinary and meaningful lives.

Further to this, management, in conjunction with the Board, spent considerable time preparing and launching the 2009 - 2012 Minda Strategic Plan, which will ensure Minda continues to lead the way in the disability sector. The plan focuses on the key areas of support, safety, staff and sustainability.

The strong focus on developing new flexible, innovative support models that are constructed around the individual will steer Minda towards becoming a leader of best practice in the disability sector in 2010.

Minda has expanded opportunities for community education and 2009 saw the renewal of the Minda lectures in the form of three Open Mind seminars presenting a range of prominent speakers from the disability sector. These are set to continue in 2010 and I would encourage you all to keep an eye on the Minda calendar of events. Also, on page 8 read an interview with Open Minds speaker and international self advocacy advisor, Robert Martin.

We have taken further measures to ensure a sustainable future and position the organisation as a leader in the disability sector.

This included reinvigorating the Minda brand with the launch of a new logo and the development of a new corporate website.

Throughout 2009, Minda continued to raise awareness and support through various events including the annual Corporate Golf Day, sponsored by Adelaide Development Company, raising nearly \$20,000 (see page 9).

We also celebrated the third successful Black Tie Quiz Night presented by Kelly and Co. Lawyers and sponsored by Boileau, which raised \$56,000 (see next page). Proceeds will go towards furnishing 14 new community homes due for completion in December 2010.

These are only a few of the wonderful sponsors who have supported us throughout 2009 and I would like to acknowledge all the corporate sponsors and donors who have made these events possible and contributed to a successful year.

I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the 363 volunteers who generously donated 8,500 hours of support to Minda.

The next 12 months are sure to be equally productive and exciting as we continue to evolve and reassert ourselves as the leader in the disability sector. I look forward to celebrating Minda's continuing achievements in 2010 and wish you all a very happy festive season and a joyous new year.



Spirited competition for a good cause!

The 2009 winners of the Black Tie Quiz Night from Ian Berry Insurance

It was the ultimate test of cerebral skill on a glamorous scale when supporters of Minda came together on Friday 13 November at the third annual Minda Black Tie Quiz Night, presented by Kelly and Co. Lawyers.

Over 270 guests frocked up to enjoy a night of good-natured competition at the Sebel Playford along with excellent food and wine, accompanied by entertainment from the internationally acclaimed Tutti. Ali Carle from Triple M, who continues to be a keen supporter of Minda, hosted the event.

Kerri-Ann Messenger, who resides in community accommodation, spoke about her life living in Reynella and then presented her moving poem entitled 'The Hard Place (My Disability)'.

The team from Ian Berry Insurance were the winners on the night and impressed with their knowledge in the quiz categories of geography, history, general knowledge,

art and sport. The team from Epac Salary Solutions were awarded the 'wooden spoons'.

The live and silent auctions boasted an exciting range of items. Altogether the impressive amount of \$56,000 was raised with proceeds going towards furnishing 14 new community homes for individuals living with intellectual disability.

Thanks must go to sponsors of the Black Tie Quiz Night including gold sponsor, Boileau, silver sponsors; Brock Urban Projects, Neil Hahn Wines and Epac Salary Solutions and bronze sponsors; Bank SA Crimestoppers, Santos, Macquarie Private Wealth and Phil Hoffmann Travel.

Minda would also like to acknowledge the generosity of the many donors of prizes and auction items, as well as the hard work of the volunteers who worked tirelessly in preparation for the event and on the night, delivering a seamless and enjoyable evening.

Guests at Minda's Black Tie Quiz Night were treated to a superb selection of wines donated by Neil Hahn Wines. For those who are interested in enjoying more of this fine drop, enclosed is an order form exclusively for readers of Vocal Point.



Coopers grant delivers early Christmas

The Christmas holiday season will be even brighter this year with a fantastic new range of toys, equipment and teaching aids available at Minda's Vacation Care Program, thanks to a generous donation from the Coopers Brewery Foundation.

The grant, totalling just under \$6,000, will benefit over 80 families. The purchase of the equipment will also allow Minda to loan items for short periods of time, similar to a Toy Library borrowing scheme. This will increase the number of those who would benefit from the funding to around 250 families.

Minda Chief Executive Officer, Susan McInerney, gratefully acknowledged the generous contribution, "This donation from Coopers

Brewery Foundation will immediately benefit children living with intellectual disability and other young people with a disability who access Minda's Vacation Care Program and enable the program to offer more places," she said.

Minda's Vacation Care Program operates out of Ashford Special School and supports approximately 20 children, aged between 5 and 21, every day. It is currently one of the very few choices available for adolescents, especially those over the age of 15.

In the majority of cases, children participating in the program are unable to access other mainstream Vacation Care programs.

Being able to develop the program with additional equipment and resources will minimise risk to both staff and children. Participants of the Vacation Care program benefit from the opportunity to interact with their peers, make friendships and socialise and network with other children and families.



Minda awarded for commitment to training and employment opportunities

Minda has won the CRS Australia 2009 SA/NT Employer award, which acknowledges the organisation's commitment to providing training and employment opportunities to CRS Australia job seekers.

Minda was presented the award by Trevor Wilkins, SA/NT Divisional Manager of CRS Australia, in Adelaide on Wednesday 4 November. The ceremony recognised those employers who have shown exceptional commitment to providing training and employment opportunities for people with a disability, injury or health condition.

In the past 12 months, over 30 CRS Australia job seekers undertook a Certificate III in Disability Services, run by Minda's South Australian Learning Centre and are now trained to work in the disability care sector. Fifteen of these job seekers have already gained employment in the industry.

Margaret Carmody, General Manager of CRS Australia said, "By Minda providing job opportunities for people with disability, many lives have been changed. These job seekers achieve independence, increased confidence and satisfaction, financial benefits and opportunities to learn."

"I congratulate Minda for helping our job seekers to achieve their goals, fulfil their potential and contribute to their community," she said.

CRS Australia, formerly known as the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services, is part of the Australian Government Department of Human Services and provides vocational rehabilitation and assessment services, injury prevention and injury management services to employers.



Minda and Tutti, creative collaborators

For 12 years, Minda has enjoyed a complementary business partnership with Tutti, Adelaide's award winning community, arts and cultural development organisation. The relationship began in 1997 when Minda provided a space for Tutti's original choir to rehearse. The choir grew rapidly and in 2004 Minda agreed to partner Tutti to launch the 'Tutti Arts' program for school leavers in the choir eager to pursue a career in the performing arts. In 2005, the program expanded to offer visual arts and in 2007, film-making and animation. Today, Tutti Arts provides over 30 disabled artists aged 19-31 with professional skills development that supports their access to local and global performance and exhibition opportunities.

It is rare for a large non-government organisation to nurture a small not for profit arts organisation and even more unusual to formally partner with one. This is testament to Minda and Tutti's respect and regard for one

another and, as the program has grown, the partnership has benefited both organisations.

Minda's support has been essential to Tutti Arts' development and sustainability and in return, Minda has been enriched by the growing expertise of participants in the program and Tutti's innovative leadership in community building through the acclaimed Tutti Choir.

Both organisations showed great foresight in partnering to create Tutti Arts. The program is the first of its kind in Australia and is right at the forefront of State and Federal government strategies to promote social inclusion through education and the arts. Many artists have attracted local recognition and there are an ever increasing number of invitations to perform and exhibit overseas.

The recent smash hit, 'Northern Lights, Southern Cross', performed in Minneapolis and involving three Tutti Arts performers,

is testament to the standard of work being achieved. The associated exhibition 'On the Edge' also featured the work of several visual artists and attracted excellent reviews. Tutti Arts performers will also feature as soloists during the Choir's WOMAdelaide performance in March 2010.

Minda's abiding values of 'respect, inclusion and choice' compliment Tutti's mission of challenging and changing public attitudes towards people living with disability.

The growth and success of the partnership goes to show that while Minda and Tutti are separate entities, they share a common vision as creators of a culture where all people, regardless of their abilities, are respected and valued and can build on their unique strengths as individuals.

For more information on Tutti, please call 8422 6510 or visit www.tutti.org.au.

We Can Do It

Meet self advocacy's leading man:

Robert Martin

As a person living with disability himself, self-advocate Robert Martin provides an invaluable voice for individuals living with intellectual disability.

Mr Martin has been a leader in the self advocacy movement for 25 years and has delivered presentations all around the world. He is now working for the rights of people with learning difficulties and disabilities with the United Nations and was recently made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit.

Robert visited Minda recently to speak at the Open Mind Seminar (see cover story) and during his visit, he provided an insight into his involvement with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Robert has been involved with the development of the Convention right from the outset, negotiating with governments and other members of the disability sector in the Asia Pacific and around the world.

When asked what the Convention means to him, Robert explained, "It means a lot... I see the Convention as a vibrant, living document but it also needs to be presented in plain language so that families and people from the intellectual disability community can understand what it means for them."

From the age of 18 months, Robert lived in an institution, Kimberley House, which was one of the biggest of its kind in New Zealand, accommodating approximately 1,300 people.

"I went there as a baby so I only remember the later years. We had to share a dormitory with 20 to 25 other people and there was little ownership of anything," he recalled.

Robert was 15 when he left Kimberley and moved back home for four years. He now lives with his wife, to whom he has been married for 22 years. They have their own house in the community with a cat and he is very involved in the Wanganui community where he lives.

"I play a lot of sport and am a member of the Rotary club. I also support my friends with an intellectual disability. If they have any issues, I'm there as a sounding board," he said.

Robert stated that people with intellectual disability need to be at the centre of the decision making process. "When Kimberley closed, [people living with intellectual disability] were the ones who interviewed potential service providers. That was a major step forward because we were not previously seen as capable, but I think we have now proved people wrong," he explained.

Robert is a strong advocate of community living and highlighted that when Kimberley closed, parents were initially very resistant but changed their mind once they learned that support would be available in the community. "I've seen many people come out of institutions in New Zealand, who have made giant strides. The families have said 'I wish this happened years ago!'"



Robert presenting at Minda's Open Mind Seminar

Robert is now looking to the future and acknowledges the younger generation will be the ones to carry forward the Convention's guiding principles: "I see it a bit like the Olympic flame, taking the mantle and passing it on and I say 'long may it live!'"

"There are some really great self advocates here at Minda who could be the fire lighters to start a new way of thinking. A new way of thinking of how to support and enable people with intellectual disabilities to be the best they can be," he said, in closing.

If you are interested in viewing Robert's presentation at the Open Mind Seminar, please contact the South Australian Learning Centre on 8422 6530.

A successful day on the green



Upcoming **minda** events

Glenelg Golf Club Ladies Day

Once again the Glenelg Golf Club Ladies Day is approaching on Tuesday 23 February.

With proceeds from the Golf Day going to Minda, we are putting the call out to any culinary creators to start preparing delicious goodies for the trading table. If you are able to supply jams, chutneys, cakes, slices or any other hand crafted items, we would welcome your support.

Please keep in mind that health legislation requires all perishable homemade goods have correct ingredients and 'date prepared' labels attached. These can be obtained from Minda's marketing department.

If you are able to assist, please contact the marketing department on 8422 6286 or 8422 6514.

For more information on upcoming events, please contact Marion Zafry on 8422 6286, email marion.zafry@minda.asn.au or go to www.mindainc.com.au.

The starting line up at Minda's 2009 Corporate Golf Day

The Spring weather was predictably unpredictable, nevertheless Minda's fifth Corporate Golf Day was a swinging success in the hills, complete with a raucous audience of kookaburras!

110 participants took to the Green at the new venue, Blackwood Golf Club, on Friday 16 October, raising just under \$20,000. The proceeds from the event will go towards the furnishing of 14 community houses, offering further choice around living arrangements to the individuals Minda supports.

Congratulations must go to the winning team from 360° Private/Haese and Harris Publications, with an impressive score of 53 and 5/8.

Thanks go to major sponsor, Adelaide Development Company (ADC), as well as

the many hole and team sponsors including Bank SA, Brock Urban Projects, Phil Hoffmann Travel, Kelly and Co. Lawyers, Logitech/Amcom, Epac Salary Solutions and Macquarie Private Wealth.

Hardys provided the wines for the luncheon. There were plenty of fundraising activities on course including a chipping competition by Cornes Toyota.

A Hyundai Getz was up for grabs for the Hole in One competition and although there were several close shots, unfortunately the prize went unclaimed.

There were many other generous contributors and volunteers who made the day such a success. A great effort - congratulations and a huge thank you to all involved.

We Can Do It

On the board

In each edition of Vocal Point, we profile two of our Board Members. In this edition we introduce two of the newest members of Minda's Board, Kate Thiele and Richard Bruggemann.

Kate Thiele



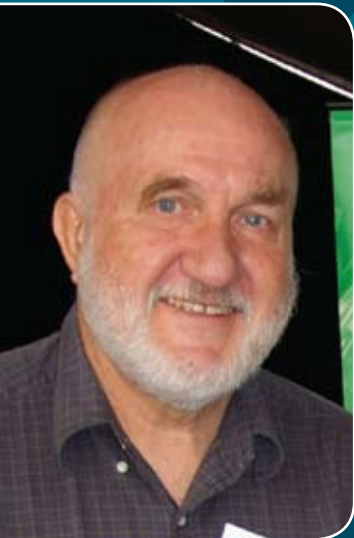
Kate Thiele has always thought fondly of Minda, having had an indirect connection with the organisation as a child. When the opportunity arose to consider a position on the Board, she was interested in both supporting the organisation and in understanding the capability of the Board.

Kate is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Guide Dogs SA/NT, a role in which she has sought to make a tangible difference to people with sensory loss. Her impressive career has provided a strong skills set and she brings significant expertise in marketing, business development, relationship building, leadership and strategic management to the Board. She also has a passion for vocational education and is currently completing an MBA and has completed the Company Directors course.

Kate hopes to draw upon her experience and skills in the not-for-profit sector to communicate “who we are and what we do” as well as assisting with the continual challenge of raising profile and support, both financial and from the community.

“I am committed to being the best Director I can be, and will work to support the Board in ensuring we operate with good governance and in the interests of stakeholders,” Kate said.

Richard Bruggemann



Although a new addition to the Minda Board, Richard Bruggemann will be a familiar figure to many.

Over the years he has collaborated with Minda in various capacities by being the channel for Minda's funding from the State Government, developing training resources and most recently, working on the Life Span project that examined the prevalence of mental illness in people with intellectual disability. He is also a member of the Minda Association and Family Services Committee.

Richard brings 30 years of experience in the disability sector and passionately believes in the capacity of people with intellectual disability to contribute to society. “I have been privileged to have had excellent teachers to assist me in my journey - the people with intellectual disabilities themselves and their families,” explained Mr Bruggemann.

Mr Bruggemann serves as the President of the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN SA) and is Director and honorary Treasurer on the National Council on Intellectual Disability as well as serving on various other Boards in the health and disability sector.

Richard is impressed by Minda's commitment to the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention and the subsequent focus on individuals. By joining the Board, he hopes to contribute to this philosophy and help Minda to become the leading organisation supporting intellectual disabilities in Australia. Currently, Richard runs the Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies (Leadership) at Flinders University and is undertaking a consultancy for the Victorian Government, which is examining the implementation of the Victorian Disability Act 2006.

Mr Bruggemann balances his time by visiting his grandchildren in London, reading, writing letters to the editor, collecting Hawaiian shirts and creating garden art.

Master Plan Update

Minda's Blue Print Master Plan is another step closer to becoming a reality.

At a recent Special Association Meeting, Minda President, Roy Arnold, took the opportunity to explain that the Master Plan has been a far more complex project than initially thought and that numerous factors have affected the process, resulting in a slight delay.

These factors have included:

- a change in Minda's management structure
- the evolution of Minda's service delivery model and philosophical view of services, which both had to be agreed upon;
- the undertaking made at the outset that no land would be sold, making the commercialisation model more complex

- taking into account existing underground and aboveground service infrastructure, site contamination risks, storm water/ flooding risks and current vegetation on site.

Further to this, it is necessary to ensure that the final Master Plan reflects changes in Government policy (both State and Federal), which have been brought about by the Government's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The consequential new direction will result in service delivery needing to align with best practice of individualised service, which the Board has already endorsed.

At the Special Association Meeting, Roy also launched a new policy of choice whereby

the individuals supported by Minda will have the choice to live in the location of their desire – be it community living (away from Brighton) or at the Brighton site. As new policies and practices are still being developed, the Board felt it appropriate to allow time for the development and effects to be gauged before the Board accepts a final and appropriate Blueprint Master Plan.

Minda will be presenting its draft Master Plan to the Minda Association early in 2010. Further details on the draft Master Plan will be provided in the Autumn edition of Vocal Point.

A garden to remember

It was a very special evening on Wednesday 18 November as family, friends, volunteers, staff and individuals supported by Minda gathered at Brighton to open the new Peace Garden of Remembrance.



The Peace Garden of Remembrance

Created with care by a team of staff and volunteers, the garden was officially opened by Minda President, Roy Arnold, together with Reverend Trevor Whitney.

"Each and every individual associated with Minda has a place in our proud history," Mr Arnold said.

"The Peace Garden formalises that history and will give families, care givers, friends as well as individuals we support, a place to come and reflect on memories and happy times," he continued.

The garden features a special remembrance book that will remain onsite as an official record of those individuals associated with

Minda who have passed away and those who have made donations to Minda to assist with the garden's construction and maintenance. Garden seating is also available to assist quiet reflection.

Reverend Trevor Whitney was the driving force behind the creation of the garden and his passion and dedication has seen his vision for a special place of reflection become a reality.

Minda sincerely thanks all contributors to the garden, including the 150 families who donated their time, energy and the necessary funds to bring this garden to fruition.

It is time again for our Christmas Appeal



Creating opportunities for people living with intellectual disability to lead valued and meaningful lives has been the foundation of our activities for more than 110 years. In pursuing this vision, we help over 1,500 South Australians in the development of a wide range of skills necessary for the achievement of individual goals.

2009 has marked a significant change to Minda's support philosophy, most significantly the Board's adoption of the guiding principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In line with these principles, we aim to create further opportunities for the individuals supported by Minda. This includes a choice around living arrangements.

I invite you to assist us with the 2009 Minda Christmas Appeal by making a tax-deductible donation. This year we aim to raise \$20,000 which will go towards the furnishing of 14 new community homes, due for completion in December 2010.

Yes, I would like to make a donation to Minda's 2009 Christmas Appeal.



Tear off at perforation

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Payment 1) My Cheque/Money Order is enclosed and made payable to Minda Incorporated.

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www.mindainc.com.au



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