



ST. PATRICK'S

COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE
Serving - Supporting - Caring



Ruby's Story

Ruby has been a volunteer at St Patrick's Community Support Centre (St Pat's) for over 20 years.

This is her story:

"My life hasn't been a very easy one. I was removed from my parents while quite young and put into a Catholic home. We had been living in a shed and welfare felt that we were being neglected. I remember the porridge, it was thick and they made us kneel on the

floor doing rosary beads. After a while I was returned to my parents, only to be taken away once more - and this time, they changed my name to Robin Webber!

I raised my 3 children on my own for around 10 years, and again, life was hard. They didn't have the same level of assistance as is available now, but then again I don't envy the Mums of today dealing with kids who seem to say 'I want I want' all the time. I'm proud that I have been a constant in my children's lives. There have been the battles and struggles of life, but I have always had them with me.

From a very young age, my youngest son had asthma and speech problems. He spent a lot of time going in and out of Fremantle Hospital and I had to learn how to give him speech therapy. These challenges have made us very close. His health problems often meant that we were left out of family activities as I had to stay home with him. Spending so much time in the hospital had one up side though - I met my best friend Karen while visiting my son. We are still friends now.

I was involved in a serious car accident in 1989, in which I was held to be responsible and required to do community service. This is what brought me to St Patrick's. I worked in the kitchen 5 days a week to start with, and did my hours very quickly. I enjoyed my time at St Pat's so much that I decided to stay on as a volunteer. I really enjoy talking to everyone and have met some lovely people. Beryl and I have worked together a long time and I enjoy her company. She has volunteered here for a lot more years than me I can tell you!



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I love to sing as it makes me feel happy and lets me express myself. So I joined the St Pat's choir and have really enjoyed participating at events. We went to the CEO sleep out recently. There was a big crowd and it was wonderful to see all the enthusiasm. This year, I took part in the St Pats sculpture group too. Unfortunately I have broken a few things but a couple of my creations have survived!

At St Pat's I can really see how the current housing crisis is affecting people. I know first hand how hard it is to get affordable housing. Landlords don't want kids or pets (I was told to put my animals down), and there are so many rules.

If I could give any of the clients' advice I suppose I would say to people that you can achieve anything if you try hard and are determined - all you need to do is take the first step. It is important to have friends to support you and to rely on and someone to talk to and open up to. That is what I have found at St Pat's. I have met some fantastic people and learned a lot.

The only thing that I do not like about volunteering is peeling those potatoes!"