



The original 9-bedroomed Thiele Homestead on Luther Road, [where Riverview now stands], which Mr Kaesler and Mr Traeger bought in 1954, hoping it could become a Rest Home for Aged folk in Loxton, because the Thiele family had run a boarding house there for many years.

RIVERVIEW LUTHERAN REST HOME

LOXTON, SA.

50TH ANNIVERSARY

Short HISTORY : 1965 - 2016

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RIVERVIEW LUTHERAN REST HOME

51 YEARS HISTORY - 1965 to 2016

Planning for an Aged Care Home in Loxton

On 8th May 1954 two members of St Peters Lutheran Church, Loxton decided to purchase four and a half acres of land on Luther Road at Loxton, which was originally owned by Mr Johann August Thiele who died in 1950. Good friends, Mr Alwin Waldemar Traeger and Mr Ernst Konrad Kaesler bought the property from the deceased Thiele Estate for 3,500 pounds [\$7,000] with a nine-bedroomed home, originally built in 1907 and run as a boarding house in later years, with the view of setting up a low care Home for the Aged in Loxton.

It was to be 11 years before their dream became a reality.

In about 1955, Mr Traeger, Mr Kaesler and another St Peters member, Mr LH Wilksch first attempted to enthuse the local congregation to erect a Home for the

Aged in the town. Mr Wilksch presented a proposed plan to establish a home for 12 to 15 elderly people [although 20 had already shown an interest] with suggested alterations to the old house, but very soon it was recognised that such a project was beyond the resources of one congregation.

Accordingly, the proposal was referred to the Synodical Convention of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia [UELCA], SA District, and at a meeting at Greenock in February 1958 Synod resolved to appoint a commission to investigate the establishment of Homes in addition to the existing one at Tanunda, SA. At the following convention in 1960, Synod considered the offer by Messrs Traeger and Kaesler.

Planning Committee appointed

A planning committee, consisting of Pastors LW Loffler and ID Wittwer and Messrs AW Traeger, EK Kaesler, R Edwin Thiele, OE Bradtke and P Anderson was appointed by the UELCA SA District Church Council during 1961. This commission resolved to recommend a Home be built, accommodating 26 guests, two staff able to sleep on-site and the necessary ancillary staff.

Plans drawn

By this time plans had been drawn up by the architect, Mr EE von Schramek and Synod agreed to make provision for the raising of finance so that a Home could be established within the following three years.

Land transferred

The land was valued for subsidy purposed at five thousand pounds [\$10,000], and so the land at 5 Luther Road, Loxton, SA was transferred to the UELCA in 1962 by Mr Traeger and Mr Kaesler.

The Home was to be built in the form of a rectangle with motel style accommodation with all units facing into a central courtyard which would be planted with lawn and shrubs. There were to be 24 single and one double unit built, with two units sharing shower and toilet facilities. Each room was to have an inbuilt bed, bedside table, inbuilt settee, a table, chair and wall heater. A wardrobe would divide off the sleeping and living area.

Extra committee members

To the original Planning [now Building] Committee, the following members were added: Pastor JL Boehm who succeeded Pastor LW Loffler as Pastor of St Peters, and chairman, when Pastor Loffler transferred to Tanunda in 1963; Mr RO Werner who became Secretary and Mr EH Klingberg who took on the Treasurers role.

Contract signed

On March 16, 1964 Mr WJ Slade from Berri, signed the contract for the erection of the Home on behalf of the successful tenders Slade Constructions Ltd for 73,500 pounds [\$147k]. Building commenced shortly afterwards.

By this time, the SA District UELCA had contributed fifteen thousand pounds [\$30k], and other substantial gifts had been received from the Federal and State Governments of 46k pounds [\$92k], Local Lutherans 6k pounds [\$12k] with balance of 6,500 pounds [\$13k] raised by 'Operation Door knock'.

Ladies Auxiliary

In the meantime, a Ladies Auxiliary, drawn from all Guilds of the Upper Murray Zone of the Lutheran Women's Association, including members of other Christian denominations in the area, had worked enthusiastically raising finance for furnishings. A local appeal for additional monies for the furnishing fund was launched on July 26, 1964, with the active co-operation of the Loxton Rotary and Apex Clubs, local Scouts and Brownies Groups. This appeal contributed the outstanding sum of over 6,500 pounds [\$13k].

Name given and Foundation Stone Laid

The Foundation Stone of Riverview Lutheran Rest Home was laid on 19th July 1964, by the Vice-President of the SA District and a former pastor of the St Peters congregation, Pastor H Stiller with over 400 people attending. *Riverview* was an apt name for the Rest Home with the Murray River flowing past, down below the cliffs.

Support

The support of members of the SA District, the local congregation in helping with working bees along with the general Loxton community, enabled the continuing work to proceed smoothly, so that in less than 12 months, Riverview Lutheran Rest Home was ready for occupancy by February 24, 1965.

Vision

The people involved with this vision trusted that Riverview Lutheran Rest Home, Loxton would continue to serve aged folk, irrespective of means or creed, for many years to come.

Official Opening

The building was opened by the then Premier of SA Sir Thomas Playford and dedicated by the President of the UELCA SA District Rev CJ Pfitzner on Sunday

February 21st, 1965 at 2.30pm with 28 rooms, at a cost of 63,500 pounds [\$127k]; well under budget, and catered for low care aged people. Three days later the first of the residents, Mr Jones, Mrs Lange and Mrs Schaeffer moved in.

It's of interest to note in the minutes that 'it was decided to keep to a smaller unit [Home] to preserve as much as possible a home atmosphere and there is no thought of building on to the Rest Home in the future'!

Chaplain appointed

Assistant Pastor of the Loxton Lutheran Parish, Danish Pastor JM Larsen was appointed as chaplain of Riverview.

Amalgamation

Since the amalgamation of the two Lutheran Churches in Australia in 1966, Riverview Lutheran Rest Home, Loxton came under the banner of The Lutheran Church of Australia SA & NT District Inc, but operates autonomously with a Board of Directors, a CEO/DON, 67 staff, permanent and casual RNs, ENs, Aged Care Workers, Kitchen and Domestic and Cleaning staff, plus a Chaplain one day a week.

Independent Living Units

As is the case, time changes many things and in 1973 the Board agreed to build 4 Independent Living Units, next to the Rest Home. Built in stages, in blocks of two, the first 10 were single bedrooms' units with the last two facing the river being two bedroom units with carport attached. They were easily filled with mostly low care, and predominately single ladies or gentlemen still capable of looking after themselves, but needing to down size.

Changing laws

With laws changing in Aged Care, the Board found the need to extend the existing now 40 room facility in 1993 at a cost of \$750k, making them much larger, as well as giving each resident their own ensuite bathroom.

Riverview outgrown

In 2003 with an aging population in the Loxton area, the time had come to redevelop Riverview. An application for an extra 12 bed licence was finally realised, along with a Commonwealth Government grant of \$500k to assist with the building of adding on 12 new High Care rooms and a Lounge area. Six of the rooms were incorporated in a Dementia specific unit. Full occupancy was achieved by August. The kitchen also needed to be rebuilt to handle food preparations for 40 residents and a new administration office area, staff room, new entrance and roadway redevelopment was completed in December at a cost of \$1.7m. The builders were Juncken Builders

from Loxton and Andrew Davies, Architect from Brown Falconer and the official opening was held on March 13, 2004.

Ladies Auxiliary disbands

For over 44 years the Ladies Auxiliary played a huge part in keeping Riverview supplied with extra niceties, raising funds each year via Garden Fetes, Street Stalls and Fairs, and Church Guilds from around the Riverland all contributing in some way. Members predominately came from the Loxton Churches. With no younger members joining the Auxiliary it was decided in 2010 to disband and instead set up a Fund-Raising committee. It was envisaged that one big fundraiser per year would bring in more money than the four to six street stalls the Ladies Auxiliary were holding each year. The Board will always be forever grateful for the wonderful support and enthusiasm provided by the ladies and the continued and tireless efforts for fundraising over the years.

The new Fundraising Team, with the help of many of the past auxiliary members, has successfully raised many thousands of dollars and the past few years has seen many functions for Riverview's new building projects, with many more to come.

Memory Support Unit and Serviced Apartments

After calling a halt in 2013, to building nine Town Houses on the land in front of Riverview, the Board was excited to receive notice of a \$1m grant along with another \$1.5m real term interest free loan for a 20-bed Memory Support Unit from the Commonwealth Government. On further investigations of the aging folk in the area, the Board decided to also build 13 Serviced Apartments and a grant of \$800k from the Riverland Sustainable Futures Fund was received.

Construction

Brown Falconer was chosen as the Architect and Partek given the job of building the \$9m project, providing they used local subbies wherever possible. This they did, ensuing the project has come in on budget and on time.

The Memory Support Unit will be filled quickly, so freeing up 20 beds in Riverview for High Care Residents around the region. It is envisaged the Serviced Apartments will also be filled soon with the units ready for occupancy now and tenants beginning to move in. Employing nearly 70 staff now, Riverview will employ around 90 local folks on completion of the current \$9m building project.

Naming

The name '***Kaesler***' for the Serviced Apartments and 12 existing Independent Living Units, '***Traeger***' for the MSU, '***Edwards***' for the main existing block and '***Noske***' Memory Garden were chosen in recognition of these four men who have given so unstintingly of their time.

The Board

Due to the ever-increasing workload building projects bring, the Board was increased to 11 members consisting of: Michael Zeppel Chairman; Anne Battams Vice-Chairman; Lorraine Fielke Secretary; Theo Kaesler, Ray Edwards, Greg Graetz, Grant Chapman, Yvonne Tatt, Robert Fielke, and Pastor Darrin Kohrt Spiritual Advisor, making up the Board, with Rose Auricht and Peter Kernich recently stepping down and Secretary Del Kaesler departing this life. CEO/DON is Kathy Goldsack. Pastor David Buck from Barmera Parish is the Chaplain and comes to Riverview each Wednesday, ministering to the needs of our residents.

The Building Committee consists of: CEO/DON Kathy Goldsack, Anne Battams Chairman, Mike Zeppel, Lorraine Fielke, Grant Chapman, with Julian Nickolai and Peter Kernich as Building Advisors. A huge thank you to Anne and Kathy for the many hours spent on this \$9m project.

Accreditation

Since 1997, Riverview has had to pass an audit of 44 outcomes every three years. A great achievement made possible thanks to the effort from all staff and residents. A huge thank you to all involved.

Thanks

It is with thanks to God that we acknowledge the work of everyone involved over 50 years of Riverview. The foresight and vision in the early days, the fundraising to be debt free, the residents in our care, the wonderful staff who just love elderly folk and make Riverview home for them, the families, friends, congregational members, talented musicians, singers and school children, who take time to visit, the Board members who give freely of their time and talents - for this we say:

'Thank You, may God Bless you all, may you have health and tranquility in your life and if you need care as you age gracefully before meeting the Lord, Riverview is here for you.'