

## Armidale Sanctuary

### President's Report – July 2022

#### 2022 NSW Humanitarian Award

The presentation of the 2022 NSW Humanitarian Awards was held at Government House in Sydney on 5 July. I accepted the award in the Regional and Rural category on behalf of all members of Armidale Sanctuary. The award was presented by the Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC. (Photo below.) Volunteer Coordinator Kerry Dunne was also at the ceremony. Plans for Astrid Knirsch to attend as well were sadly spoiled by Covid.



More photos and information about the award can be found on the following websites:

<https://www.startts.org.au/news-events/humanitarian-awards/2022-nsw-humanitarian-awards/>

<https://www.fairfieldchampion.com.au/story/7811196/nsw-humanitarian-awards-recognise-extraordinary-people/>

The whole awards ceremony can be seen at: <https://fb.watch/e6EnFVkOlc/>

**Congratulations and thanks to all Sanctuary Members for your contributions that made this award possible.**

#### **Projects and activities:**

**Refugee Week:** A celebration of Refugee Week took place on Sunday 26 June at the Markets on the Mall. Activities included Ezidi music, dancing, bread making and food, a beauty and make-up stall (TAFE) and art stencils for children (NERAM). Sanctuary also had a stall to try and attract new members.

**Information/Code of Conduct session:** This will be held on Thursday 21 July at 3.45 At Drummond Memorial Public School (Rusden/Niagara St). The session is particularly for new members and those may be thinking of joining Sanctuary. It will provide information on Armidale Sanctuary, its work and the Code of Conduct for volunteers. Some background information will be presented about the Ezidi community and its needs in Armidale. (A member of the community has been invited to do this.) Experts from agencies working with the Ezidis will also be there to answer questions: Tim Gray (SSI) and Teresa Duggan (STARTTS), and also experienced Sanctuary members: Lucinda Wright (Vice President), Fay Paris (Home Reading Program and Homework Centre Coordinator) and Astrid Knirsch (Volunteers Coordinator). Please bring along any friends who might be interested.

### **Meetings:**

**NSS (Northern Settlement Services),** 7 June, with Lucinda and Aghasan Saleem (Acting Team Leader): (1) Citizenship: Aghasan will organise a session for volunteers on filling out the application form. She is working on ways to get documents translated that are required for the applications. (2) Unfortunately, NSS cannot help with applications to bring family from Iraq to Australia. (3) A Women's Group is now meeting twice a month (Mon or Wed, 10am – 12 noon) at Armidale City Church. Volunteers are needed (contact me if interested). The idea of inviting Aboriginal women to attend meetings was also discussed.

**Refugee Week Planning meetings** (8 June and 15 June).

**STARTTS (NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors),** 28 June, with Kerry, Astrid and Teresa Dugan (Outreach Counsellor/Project Officer): (1) A STARTTS Women's Group will start meeting at the library after the school holidays. (2) A Photography Group is also being planned. (3) STARTTS has received a \$50,000 grant from the NSW government to employ a youth worker. (4) The vacant counsellor's position has been advertised 3 times, but no suitable candidate has applied. (5) A Bus trip to Dorrigo for youth is planned for the school holidays. (6) On 3 August there will be a commemoration of the anniversary of 2014 massacre of Ezidis by ISIS. Many people in the Ezidi community are already distressed by the memories evoked by this upcoming event.

Thanks once again to all you supporters and volunteers.

Jeff Siegel  
President