

Media Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Lee makes a new start with art

Diagnosed with younger onset dementia at the age of 57, Adelaide mother of three Lee Martin found herself without work and unable to drive. Afraid to go out by herself, she became isolated and depressed.

Two years on, things have turned around for Lee, whose artwork is part of a visual art exhibition in Adelaide.

'Remember My Story' is the result of an eight-month series of workshops run by The Art Bus Australia in collaboration with ACH Group's Tailor Made Service and Alzheimer's Australia SA.

Workshops run by professional artists focused on drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography and sharing stories. It also involved excursions to The Art Gallery and Botanic Gardens.

Lee said she has loved being part of the group.

"I didn't even think I could do art, but I love it, especially pottery – it's awesome," Lee said. "It's been great making friends here and meeting these wonderful artists."

After her diagnosis Lee's neurologist suggested she contact ACH Group, a not-for-profit aged care organisation and a leader in innovative dementia services.

ACH Group runs a Tailor Made Service to support for people living with younger onset dementia or cognitive impairment under the age of 65, their families and supporters. Services are 'tailor made' to keep people out and about, physically active and connected to the community.

Today Lee takes part in a weekly golf, lawn bowls and art classes. ACH Group is helping Lee to access NDIS funds to help in the costs associated with having her King Charles Cavalier TK trained as an assistance dog.

Other programs offered under the Tailor Made Service include walking, fishing, computing, choir and tailored excursions.

The Art Bus co-founder Claire Harris said she was inspired to run the Remember My Story program by a friend who was diagnosed with younger onset dementia aged in his 40s.

"We discovered that there are few services available for people and we wanted to help out in some way," she said. "Through this program we can offer the opportunity to learn new skills, to create and share and exploring our imaginations through the visual world is very rewarding. We've learnt a lot together in this program."

Remember My Story was made possible through Arts South Australia Community Arts and Cultural Development Project Funding.

The exhibition is on at the Eastwood Community Centre until Tuesday December 12.

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About The Art Bus

The Art Bus is a fully mobile visual art studio that delivers dynamic arts programs to the community. It was established in 2013 by sisters Claire and Miranda Harris who both have backgrounds in visual arts, education and disability. Recent projects have been run with a range of festivals, community groups and organisations including the Women's and Children's Hospital, DreamBig, Migration Museum, SALA and Adelaide Fringe.

About ACH Group

ACH Group is a not-for-profit aged care organisation that has been offering services to support good lives for older people in South Australia since 1952. As well as accommodation options across Adelaide, the Fleurieu Peninsula and East Melbourne, the group offers a range of health, wellbeing, respite and support services, help at home and social activities. Our 1700 specialist staff and hundreds of volunteers share the belief that older people should be valued and respected, connected to their communities and in control of their lives.

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