

## Wandarrah Workshop

Tony Taylor and Kevin Coyle have a lot in common. They live near each other in Pascoe Vale and have been friends for a long time. Both have had skilled jobs all their adult lives — Tony a qualified fitter and turner who became a service station proprietor, and Kevin, a salesman.

But in recent years they have had far more than this in common. At the age of 58 Tony suffered a cerebral haemorrhage, and Kevin, at 53, a stroke. Both are unable to work again.

'Mount Royal Hospital suggested I come to the Brotherhood's workshop once I was able to', Tony said. 'It's been marvellous for me so I told Kevin about it. He thought it was like a sheltered workshop and neither of us wanted to go to one. But I got him to come with me once and he hasn't missed a day since.'

Tony is at present designing items which can be made and used by people who only have the use of one arm.

Wandarrah Workshop is an extension of the Brotherhood's Coolibah Centre for elderly and disabled pensioners in Fitzroy. While most of the people who attend came through hospital or other referrals, some of the residents in the Brotherhood's Fitzroy accommodation are also involved.

Frank Kadzela lives in Sumner House hostel for the frail aged, next door to Wandarrah, and spends most of his day in the workshop.

Ann Stafford, Supervisor of Wandarrah Workshop, is designing a wide range of activities for the men and women who attend. 'We'll build anything, providing it's practical,' Ann said. 'The men have made parquetry tables, wooden sewing baskets, wheelbarrows and window boxes. They're all for sale and we're happy to fill special orders.'

Ann believes that a workshop for people who have disabilities



Frank Kadzela (right) and Abdel Malek at work at Wandarrah Workshop.

should allow the maximum opportunity for them to 'do their own thing'. Wandarrah provides some basic equipment and materials and people who attend can turn their hand to any kind of activity that interests them. Some emphasis is given to the use of limbs affected by illness, but a flexible workshop can provide a range of interesting activities to meet most therapeutic needs.

As well as that, Wandarrah is a cheerful place to be, especially for those who are isolated by age or disability from the workforce.

Anybody who has had a stroke knows the frustration and despair which comes with the loss of ability to do those things which once came easily. Completing simple tasks can be very rewarding for someone who thought they would never be able to manage tools and materials again.

The workshop operates on a very slender budget and innovation and imagination are in high demand, with limited space and facilities. Judging by the results however, a great deal of imagination is being used to produce diverse items, restore old furniture and share and exchange skills.

Wandarrah is soon to move into smaller premises in order to save rental costs. Any unwanted tools or useful items would be gratefully received.

## Can You Help?

Volunteers are urgently needed for our shops in Clayton, Eltham, Greensborough, Watsonia, Parkdale and Box Hill. If you have a little spare time each week, and would like to do something constructive, join one of our shop groups. No previous experience is necessary, just enthusiasm! Please give Thelma Tuxen a ring on 419 7055.

## Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Brotherhood of St Laurence will be held at the main office, 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy on Wednesday November 25 at 5.30 pm.

All Brotherhood donors, volunteers, friends and members of the public are welcome to the meeting and to refreshments, served from 5 pm. If you would like to attend, please ring Merron Rusden on 419 7055.

## Board Appointment

John Chester has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Brotherhood. John has been associated in a voluntary capacity with the Brotherhood for 12 years and is the present Chairman of the Melbourne Donated Goods Division Committee.