



**GROW**

mental  
wellbeing  
programs

# 65 Celebrate

**Memorabilia  
Event  
Program**

**APRIL 26 2022**  
**5 p.m. (AEST)**

GUEST SPEAKERS  
GROWER TESTIMONIALS  
LIVE MUSIC

**A CONNECTED COMMUNITY**  
Australia / New Zealand  
Ireland / USA

**#GROWAU65**



**“By acting everyday on being  
caring,  
focused  
and forgiving**

**the path of happiness,  
joy and contentment  
can be walked,  
sometimes danced even.”**

*Brett*







## Welcome from David Butt

National CEO, GROW Australia

It is a delight to welcome you to Celebrate 65, GROW Australia's acknowledgment to April 26, 1957 when the first official GROW group gathering was held in Hurstville Sydney, Australia.

Fast-forward 65 years, GROW is now operating in Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and the USA.

April 26th, 2022 we are thrilled to celebrate the impact of GROW with our global community with this special online ZOOM event.

The impact of GROW across the globe in Mental Health prevention and recovery cannot be underestimated. GROW has helped tens of thousands of people live a healthier and happier life filled with hope, friendship and a community who cares.

Over our 65 years, many GROW Wisdoms have emerged from the Grow Program, none more relevant today than 'you alone can do it, but you can't do it alone'. This event signifies both the strength of our global community and our unity in preserving its authenticity.

I want to thank all our GROW community for your contributions to this acknowledgment to our 65 years and to our very special guest speakers who will address the significance of storytelling and community, the logic of intentional peer to peer support in mental health recovery and its place in person centred mental health reform (in Australia).

A special mention must go to the contribution and support from GROW National Patron, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

GROW Australia continues to play a significant role in the mental health sector delivering the GROW Program to a diverse community including young people, young adults, adult and older adult groups, carers, prison groups, CaLD groups, LGBTIQ+ groups and those living in residential rehabilitation. We are an organisation where everyone is welcome.

We hope you enjoy this significant event in our history.

In GROW Friendship,

**David Butt**  
National CEO, GROW Australia

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# Speakers

## **Dr. Ruth Verhey - Director of International Friendship Bench**

Dr. Ruth Verhey is a global mental health researcher and a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist. She is the International Friendship Bench lead and works on expanding the Friendship Bench program globally. She has helped to develop the Friendship Bench program, especially the group support, income generation component and training material and is Co-PI on all FB research projects. Ruth holds a PhD from the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Her research focuses on easily accessible and affordable care for common mental disorders, community-based interventions, group support, the well-being of counselors as well as PTSD in people who live with HIV. Originally from Germany, she has lived and worked in Colombia and has been working in Zimbabwe since 2004. She is an EMDR consultant and runs a private practice.

### **Presentation overview**

At the heart of storytelling lies our ability to find healing through expressed empathy. At Friendship Bench trained grandmothers create space from wooden park benches for all to share their stories and receive structured talk therapy that transforms lives. Anchored in research The Friendship Bench's mission is to take people out of depression by bringing a Bench within walking distance for all.

## **Michèle Kerrigan - Chief Executive, GROW Ireland**

Michele Kerrigan is the Chief Executive Officer of GROW Ireland – since 2007. Prior to this, she was Deputy CEO of Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland with special responsibility for the MS Care Centre. Michele is Chairperson of the Mental Health Reform which campaigns for improved and prioritized mental health services in Ireland. Michele holds a diploma in Health and Social Care, Business Computing and Supervisory Management and an Honours Masters Degree in Management in the Voluntary and Community Sector. Associate member of CIPD.

## **Andrea Best – National Program Coordinator, GROW Ireland**

Andrea Best is the National Program Coordinator for Grow, Ireland's largest community mental health organisation which runs over 100 weekly support groups for people with mental health issues nationwide. Andrea is an accredited Psychotherapist who also holds a Masters Degree in Psychology. Andrea started working for Grow as an Area Coordinator in 2017 and became NPC in 2018.

### **Presentation overview**

Shaun O'Hanlan, who had been a missionary in New Guinea suffered a mental breakdown. While recuperating in Victoria, he attended a Recovery group and returned to Ireland well-armed with Recovery Literature. GROW Ireland has been operating since 1969 and has become Ireland's largest community mental health organisation which runs over 100 weekly support groups for people with mental health issues nationwide. Michelle and Andrea chat together to address how GROW has been the answer to mental wellbeing and recovery in Ireland.

## **Professor Allan Fels**

Professor Allan Fels was chair of the Australian Government's National Mental Health Commission from 2012 until 2018. He chairs Mind Australia and the Haven Foundation which provides accommodation for the long term mentally ill. He is a patron of Mental Health Australia, Mental Health Victoria and was a Commissioner on the Royal Commission into Mental Health.

### **Presentation overview**

The Royal Commission recommendation reforms are changing the face of Mental Health in Victoria. The value of peer-to-peer support in enabling people to lead contributing lives plays a key part to the person-centred approach to mental health reform.



Dr. Ruth Verhey



Michèle Kerrigan



Andrea Best



Professor Allan Fels





# Workshop

## HOW HAS GROW BEEN THE ANSWER TO MY RECOVERY JOURNEY?

Enjoy the opportunity to listen to a reading from the new GROW Australia publication, **Growing to Recovery**, Readings for Mental Health Vol 2.

Facilitated by a Program Worker, attendees will break into workgroups where you will have the opportunity to discuss a chosen reading and reflect on the objective of the message using the Grow Program and the Grow Anthology.

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# Music and Poetry

A large, light-colored acoustic guitar is the central focus, positioned diagonally across the frame. It has a natural wood finish and a black strap. In the background, a drum set is partially visible, including a cymbal and a snare drum. The lighting is warm and focused on the guitar.

**Performer – Libby**, is an acoustic singer and song writer, engaging her audience with heart warming personal anecdotes and blue eyed soul. Libby performs her own composition, Lavender.

**Performer – Daniel**, is a singer, songwriter and multi instrumentalist. He has recorded a great of original material and played shows and festivals as a solo artist and band member. Daniel is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of music and is also a high school teacher who uses music to help young people express themselves.

**Poetry Reading – The Glow of GROW**  
by **Philamena**, Grower – Ireland

**Poetry Reading – Rogue Objects**  
by **Gershon Maller**, a Melbourne based poet and editor whose poetry has been published in Australia and the US.

**Performer – Rathfarnham Ukulele Group, Ireland.**

RUGs are a community group who are bound together by GROW and their love for the ukulele! We jam together weekly, & love to bring our upbeat tunes to a wider audience.



# The Glow of Grow

by Philomena, Ireland

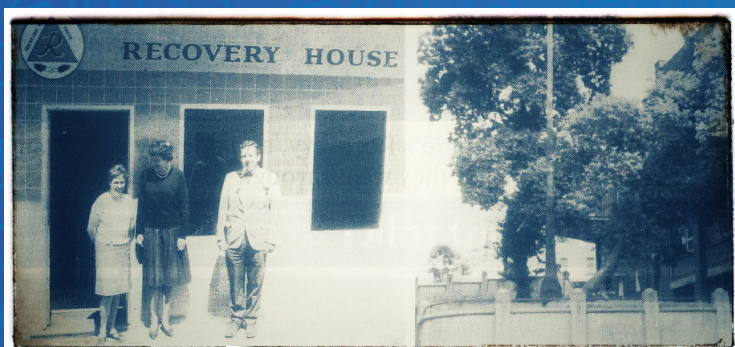
I was wandering in the dark with nowhere I could go  
Attracta came with a lantern and guided me to Grow  
Sure, I never had heard of it, and I did not really know  
But I trusted you and followed you and up I did show  
Just click the link it will take you, please just go  
Then you enter the realm, a meeting of Grow  
We follow Grow's method step by step with no fear  
We trust, we listen and we lead and help is always near  
Once a week our group comes and gathers around  
For 30 mindful seconds we pause there isn't a sound  
We raise our heads up, no more eyes to the ground  
And you will be a leader, your turn will come round  
It's all for one and one for all  
Caring thoughts sent out, your name they will call  
The 12 Steps are so precious and we read them aloud  
Then Grow's commitment read by all in the crowd  
We interact and we ask first to see  
Could anything be troubling thee  
And if there is nothing really wrong  
We hear a life story from a member so strong  
We sit and we listen with very good care  
We support our group members as they share  
Then the 4 lovey p's they keep us all in line  
We take a new task, sure we are constantly trying  
When we move forward to the methods middle part  
We read from the programme, we share from the start  
We reflect, then process and then choose our own part  
That touches us sometimes even deep in our heart  
A few more p's we'll go through, help set a task for you  
We will answer Grow's questions, see how well we did do  
We commit to our journey we are so so true  
We leave with knowledge and wisdom shared by you  
When I joined Grow, I saw people coming together  
I saw there will always be Grow no matter the weather  
The wisdom and knowledge is second to none  
Show up, share and listen, take tasks, get them done  
A group of warriors all Zoom in online  
There is no pressure on you as you will be fine  
There will be craic and a laugh and maybe some crying  
Keep coming and sharing in your life you'll start flying  
If there's anyone you come to know  
Who's struggling doesn't know where to go  
Take Grow's lantern and let it glow  
And guide this person safely to Grow

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# Historic GROW



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# Celebrate 65 global online event program

**April 26, 5 p.m. (AEST)**

## **Acknowledgement to Country**

**Welcome from Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck**, GROW Chairperson, Australia

**Message from National GROW Patron**, His Excellency Governor General John Hurley and Mrs Linda Hurley

**Guest Speaker** - Dr Ruth Verhey - Friendship Bench, Zimbabwe  
'The importance of storytelling'

**Music Performance – Lavender**, written and performed by Grower, Libby, Australia

**Guest Speakers** - Michele Kerrigan, CEO and Andrea Best, National Program Coordinator, GROW Mental Health, Ireland

'How have you seen GROW be the answer to mental wellbeing and recovery ' - Ireland

**The Glow of Grow**, Poem written and read by Philomena, Ireland

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## **WORKSHOP**

### **Readings from Growing to Recovery**

1. Getting things into perspective
2. Cooperating with human helpers
3. Taking Stock of the Situation
4. Reorganising our lives - Body, Will and Reason
5. Michele U Recovery Journey
6. Dan C. Recovery Journey

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### **Voices From Around the Globe 1**

**Rogue Objects**, Poem written and performed by famed poet, Girshon Maller, Australia

**Introduction to GROW Australia new podcast series**, 'Stronger than you think'. Music written and performed Grower, Peter Blair

**Guest Speaker** - Prof Allan Fels, Australia  
'The value of peer-to-peer support in enabling people to lead contributing lives and as a key part of a person centred approach to mental health reform.'

**Music Performance** - RUGS (Rathfarnham UkuleleGroup), Ireland

### **Voices From Around the Globe 2**

**With Thanks from David Butt** National CEO, GROW Australia

**Music Performance and Sing-a-long** - 'From little things, big things Grow' performed by Grower, Daniel.

## **Acknowledgments**

### **GROW Australia would like to acknowledge:**

All the wonderful Growers who contributed to our *Voices From Around the Globe*  
Guests who joined us for this inaugural global event, despite the time zones  
Our special guest speakers for your words of wisdom and hopefulness  
The wonderful Celebrate 65 Event Team for a united global effort  
Rosina Lazzaro, Graphic Designer