



Marjorie Hope Sharp OAM
Diocese of Bunbury

As a child Hope grew up in a caring and safe farming environment and was mostly schooled by correspondence. Moving to the Albany region in 1945 she became Chorkerup postmistress while studying for her Diploma in Dressmaking and Design. These skills proved of lifelong value as Hope taught sewing at local schools and later at TAFE College, managing the sewing and cooking for 21 years.

Hope married Ted Sharp in 1951 and moved to Mullewa for Ted's railways work and the birth of their daughter Peta in 1953. The family returned permanently to Albany from 1954. Both Peta and a son, Roland (born 1958) were educated by the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition, starting Hope's long association with the Order.

Throughout, Hope sewed numerous Priests' vestments; and a sample habit sent to France in 1968 was chosen as the new dress for the SJA nuns worldwide.

Catholic relatives (including a Mercy nun cousin) and a 1970 event involving a Catholic family made a lasting impression on Hope. This and seeing Catholic acceptance and support of non-Catholics led to Hope and Ted's conversion to full Catholic faith in 1983, creating even greater Parish involvement. Since then, Hope has served on Parish Pastoral Councils, worked with St Vincent de Paul Society and the Knights of the Southern Cross as well as being an Associate of the Sisters of St Joseph.

A support group for families of the mentally ill, setup by Hope in 1979 became incorporated in 1981 under the name "Schizophrenic Fellowship Albany and Districts Inc". Growing quickly, the organization fundraised to rent a meeting place which soon proved inadequate, requiring a move to larger premises well known throughout the Great Southern area for the support services provided.

In 2006, following remarkable fundraising support from the Albany community and businesses, the doors of "Fellowship House" were opened. This is a purpose built day centre for people diagnosed with a mental illness.

This facility, now funded by the Mental Health Division of the Health Department provides a daily return bus service for participants, lunch, many classes and other activities; simply a place for care and friendly camaraderie.

Hope's invaluable lifelong voluntary community work has been, appropriately, recognized with the following awards: The Order of Australia 1993; City of Albany Honour Certificate 2003; The Premier of Western Australia- Australia Day Award 2003; Winner - Community Service Award 2003; WA Senior – Southern Regions Award 2004; and the Mental Health Good Outcomes Award of Excellence 2005.