

August 2025

Mr Phil Hayes-Brown
CEO
Wallara

Dear Phil,

Thank you for the opportunity to tour the beautifully upgraded facilities at Sages Cottage Farm. We were both truly moved and impressed by what Wallara has achieved.

Back in 2002, during our time with Menzies Caring for Kids, we were exploring ways to support disadvantaged and at-risk children when we came across a pioneering program in Santa Rosa, California—Forget Me Not Farm. Their innovative use of Animal Assisted Therapy, which had shown extraordinary results since 1992, sparked a vision for what might be possible here in Australia.

Inspired by that model, Menzies funded two staff members to visit the U.S. and assess the program firsthand. Their insights confirmed the transformative value of this approach, not only for vulnerable children but for the broader community as well. From there, our search began for a parcel of land where we could bring a similar vision to life.

That search led us to Sages Cottage—a 35-acre property purchased in 2003. Though larger than we originally intended, the potential was undeniable. We dreamed of creating a place of connection, healing, and inclusion. In its early days, Sages exceeded all expectations and quickly became a cherished community asset. We held onto the hope that it could one day become a national model.

While the vision remained strong, securing sustainable funding proved a challenge, and in 2013 we made the difficult decision to step away. But it was always our hope that the spirit and purpose of Sages would continue.

Seeing what Wallara has accomplished since then fills us with gratitude and admiration. You have not only honoured the intent behind Sages—you've elevated it. Today, Sages Cottage is a thriving, inclusive hub serving more than 80 clients with environmentally conscious, educational, and therapeutic programs. It is a true testament to your leadership and the passion of your team.

We are proud to witness the continuation—and expansion—of a shared vision. The work being done at Sages today gives us great confidence in its future. Thank you for your commitment to inclusion, innovation, and community.

With sincere appreciation,

Phil Jones & Georgia Symmons
Past Presidents
Menzies Caring for Kids