

NOVA

EMPLOYMENT

Focus on DisAbility

Fiddler fine-tune staff to preserve history during COVID-19 closure

During the initial outbreak of the novel coronavirus, when the government ordered all restaurants and bars to close their doors, The Fiddler in Rouse Hill was quick to retrain their staff in order to keep them working on keeping history alive.

Fiddler employees who previously waited on customers, underwent specialised training in antique restoration under expert Allyson Adams from Old2Bold.

Allyson educated staff in the historic use of dozens of artifacts that the Fiddler displays in their original Irish pub built in 1826.

Tara Bonser is General Manager of the Fiddler and commented.

"We have all these beautiful artifacts in this room which are so important" she said, referring to the original pub called The Mean Fiddler which was first built as a halfway house and designed by Francis Greenway for Cobb & Co.

The original façade has been retained and the renovated restaurant is filled with turn-of-the-century agricultural farming equipment used by the early settlers.

"By us spending the time to clean and detail and replace these items under beautiful lights, we allow people to come in and enjoy the heritage of this building and its history," said Tara.

The Fiddler also has a history of hiring workers with disability, some of whom are now responsible for taking care of these treasured relics.

"Having an inclusive workforce is super important for us," Tara told *The Independent*.

"It stimulates new ideas and creates a vibrant culture of diverse people who have different abilities."

Tracey Evans Harvey is one of many of the Fiddler's inclusive workforce who have been retrained and whom Tara considers a 'vital part of the team'.



Old gramophone.

"Tracey's position here has slightly changed during this time. She's cleaning items here that have so much history and I can see how passionate she is about this job," Tara commented.

"We have hired 9 people from NOVA Employment over the last three years and we currently still have six of those employees working with us today.

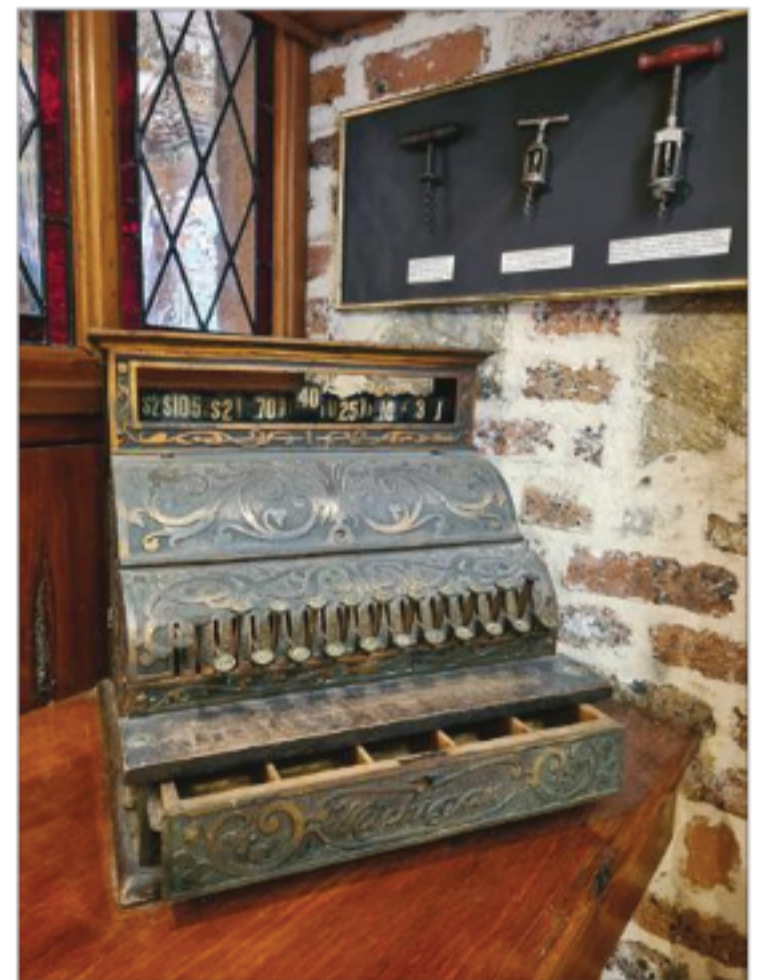
"The staff we've hired through NOVA are just like the rest of our staff, except we don't have as much turnover within our business which is fantastic for the

hospitality industry."

Their pre-pandemic roles were 'just like anybody else, such as food and beverage attendants, kitchen staff, back of house' explains Tara.

"But we wanted to ensure they still have the routine they had prior to the pandemic so, many are working on the cleaning crew now."

Tara did an amazing job with staff retention - she managed to retain most of them after the closure from the 23 March to the 31 May.



Ornate cash register in mint condition.

Tracey welcomed the chance to add to her skill set and was eager to be back after spending six weeks in lockdown.

"It's been so hard at home, just looking at four walls all day," she said.

"When I could go out, I saw all my colleagues and managers just cleaning things and it just feels nice. It feels human."

If you have a disability or are an employer looking for staff, contact NOVA Employment Rouse Hill Manager, Wayne Vumbaca on 0448 770 177 for this free recruitment service.

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