

THE TRANSCONTINENTAL PORT AUGUSTA

Prisoners learn about music

Kara Johnson November 19, 2015



WHYALLA musicians Mark Tempany and Alison Hams made an educational visit to the Port Augusta Prison recently. The duo were engaged by UnitingCare Wesley Country SA to visit the local prison last month to deliver music workshops.

Almost 20 prisoners participated in two sessions where they focused on guitar but were also encouraged in singing and music theory.

The *Inside Out* program aims to deliver skills, awareness and knowledge to clients to support and enhance positive re-engagement with their family structures and the wider community.

The program focuses on self-determination through education and skill development in an interactive and engaging face-to-face program.

According to the duo some of the participants had never played guitar before but left the workshop having learnt the rhythm and melody to well-known songs.

Port Augusta Prison general manager Brenton Williams said the program is developed and delivered to provide prisoners with skills to enable them to become valued community members.

“Whilst we focus on rehabilitation through cognitive therapy programs, such as basic literacy and numeracy, we also need to ensure that prisoners build on their own life skills and can engage in groups as this is important for them to reintegrate,” Mr Williams said

Mr Tempany said he and Alison felt the program was highly valuable.

“We are strong believers in using music as a method of self-expression and emotional release,” Mr Tempany said. “We proactively chose not to find out anything about the prisoners’ histories and just deal with the person sitting in front of us on the day.”

“We pride ourselves on doing what we can for the betterment of others,” Ms Hams said.

“We thank UnitingCare Wesley Country SA and in particular Wanda, Sarah and Sharon for allowing us the opportunity,” said Alison.