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RAAFA

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Fun for both young and old



Fun and frivolity were on offer to both young and old recently as residents from Cambrai Village paid a visit to youngsters at Sagewood Montessori School in Joondalup.

Bringing joy to both seniors and children, the intergenerational event saw residents from RAAFA's popular village share stories, songs and craftwork with the next generation, as well as participating in play and storytelling.

The morning started with a warm welcome from the children, who sang a welcome song in three different languages, followed by Cambrai residents providing talks and showing photos as well as demonstrating their craftwork - showcasing a house built from popsicle sticks no less.

The visit focused on encouraging companionship and connections between young and old, enabling seniors to experience enhanced

wellbeing through fun and friendships, while allowing the children, who may otherwise have little interaction with seniors and older family members, to have an opportunity to spend time with older people.

Vanessa Priestley, Retirement Wellbeing Officer and Dementia Champion, says the benefits of the visit extended both ways, with the children and residents involved genuinely enjoying their time together and forming real friendships.

"The day was an amazing opportunity for both the seniors and children and provided a meaningful occasion to bridge the intergenerational gap between young and old," she said.

"Due to families living all over the world, many children do not have the benefit of having grandparents nearby, and in fact many seniors

have grandchildren who are all grown, so this initiative was a great way for our seniors to spend time with youngsters.

"The children had the chance to learn from our seniors, who were able to demonstrate their skills, while the seniors involved gained many benefits too, not least by feeling valued and respected.

"Spending time with the children is a great way for anyone to feel young at heart again, and also it enabled Cambrai residents to share stories about their own childhoods, and to showcase their hobbies, talents, and life lessons."

One of the residents involved, Margaret Gribble, loved the experience so much that she said it was the best thing she had done in 2022!

"It was a wonderful morning out, particularly to see all these beautiful faces looking at me and listening

intently to what I was saying," said Margaret, who took some coloured pictures of African animals with her to tell the children about her time living in Africa.

"The youngsters were so polite and didn't fidget once, it really was the most lovely experience."

Cambrai resident Sandra Hasslet was also part of the morning, an experience that she said made her feel young at heart, and like a grandparent to young children all over again.

"It was just such a fantastic thing to take part in and the children were just adorable and they were also riveted the whole way through," said Sandra.

"We were all made to feel very welcome and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it all, so much so that we've all put our name down for next time. We can't wait."

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PURPOSE

Pursuing excellence in care and heritage

VALUES

Respect; Care; Honesty

APPROACH

Creating RAAFA communities open to all

THE RAAFA WAY

President's view



2023 view

I anticipate that 2023 will be another exciting year as we continue the development of RAAFA initiatives and programs. There will be change.

By Clive Robartson AM

Museum musings

Hello. I recently had the privilege of a tour with my grandson through the Avro Lancaster NX 622 in our Aviation Heritage Museum in Bull Creek. This visit had been on my bucket list for some time, and I was delighted to have the opportunity of a guided tour by one of our knowledgeable volunteers. It was a great experience to share with my grandson and I recommend you make the time.

As you may know, the Lancaster played an important role in defending Britain during WWII and served with distinction in many other theatres. This grand old lady has recently been joined by the more youthful Tornado GR4, ZG791, a gift from the Royal Air Force.

The aircraft is currently located outside and a dome shelter is being built to protect it from the elements and will be completed late February. It will be joined later this year by an Aussie counterpart, an F/A-18 Hornet from the Royal Australian Air Force.

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus has been attributed to the quotation "There is nothing permanent except change". As announced in the last edition, retirement beckons our CEO, John Murray, at the end of June, when we bring on board a new CEO.

I expect we will have an announcement on this appointment for the next edition.

Division Council are working to make this transition as smooth as possible, taking time to reflect on the outstanding successes of the last 10 years and exploring the opportunities that change can bring.

Transition is a time to re-think, re-design, re-refresh and re-invigorate the strategies we have in place and to test their robustness for the decade ahead.

Development

- Pending the return to some normality in the building trade, better prices and access to building materials once again, we aim to proceed with the

construction of the Stirling Apartments (Stage 6) on AFME at Bull Creek.

- The recent purchase of an adjoining block of land at Cannington will enable our vision for the veterans living centre to come alive, with the Division Council optimistic that the funding for this project will come together over the next few months and enable construction to commence.

There has been a stream of donations coming in and I sincerely thank those who have already contributed towards this unique project but we still need your help. You can be part of making this dream come alive by using the "Donate today" button on our website (raafawa.org.au).

- We were delighted during 2022 to welcome the residents of Challenger Court in Rockingham into the RAAFA fold and are looking forward to starting a master plan for the future of the site.
- It is budget time, and the CEO, CFO, Executive Leadership Team and programme Managers are busy preparing. It will be a very difficult budget to construct as there are still many uncertainties around Federal Government funding for the Aged Care Sector.

Veterans

The Western Australian Government have recently released a discussion paper - *WA Veterans Legislative*

Review. The Issues Paper identifies matters related to the currency and relevancy of WA Veterans Legislation and is seeking comment from the public and ESO's. The legislation referred to includes:

- The ANZAC Day Act 1960 (WA); and
- The Western Australian Aged Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Relief Fund Act 1932 (WA).

The Division has prepared a submission for presentation to the State Government on the Issues Paper. Strong emphasis was given to preservation, relating to the observance of ANZAC Day and to the continuation of monies required to be paid into the ANZAC Day Trust, as a result of events held on the afternoon of the holiday.

ANZAC Day

Speaking of ANZAC Day, I need feedback from members on our observance of this day, and particularly whether we should raise a contingent to march in the parade in Perth.

Numbers have dwindled in recent years, and we seriously need to consider our commitment to the event.

Let me know your thoughts via crobartson@raafawa.org.au.

I look forward to an exciting 2023 for RAAFA.

100 not out

Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge resident Dorothy Chilcott reached her centenary in mid-December and celebrated in style, with not just one celebration, but six!

Born in London on 13 December 1922, Dorothy entered the world as the youngest of 11 kids, nearly all of whom went on to live to great ages themselves.

Dorothy met Frederick, her childhood sweetheart, while she was still at school and the pair went on to marry when she was just 21 years old, at St Michael's Church in Stockwell, in south-west London.

Having trained as a secretary, Dorothy continued to work even after she had her first daughter Jackie, only having a short break when her twin daughters - Nina and Dot - were born eight years later.

The family continued to live and work in London, until Dorothy's oldest daughter and her family decided to emigrate to the 'City of Lights' back in 1973, followed by another daughter and her husband Andy in 1974, and finally Dorothy and Fred, with their third daughter Nina.

"Mum and dad settled in Hillarys and loved it," says Dorothy's eldest daughter, Jackie Farnden, who adds that her mum continues to have a zest for life, is as impatient as ever, and remains very determined.

"My parents were always hard workers and were delighted to be able to buy a house for the first time when they came to Perth, having lived in council accommodation back home in London."



Dorothy (centre) with some of her family

Today, Dorothy has seven grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren, all of whom helped her to celebrate her 100th birthday with half a dozen trips out, including lunches and dinners.

"Mum continues to have a great sense of humour," adds Jackie.

"We all had a great laugh when we were at a celebration for her birthday and she asked for \$50 in

cash, which she promptly gave to one of her great-grandsons who was sporting a mullet, so that he could 'go and buy himself a good haircut'."

"That's so typical of our mum, she's always had strong opinions and a wicked sense of humour."

A belated happy birthday Dorothy, from all your friends at RAAFA.

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CEO's perspective



By John Murray

Positive and supportive communities are created because of the contribution of many. I, like you, have seen how when you have a situation where people, organisations, and communities, provide a positive environment, they can generally resolve any issue that might confront them.

Successful organisations, be they charitable, business corporations or government who are contributing to the wellbeing of their communities is due to the commitment and contribution made by many individuals within the organisation.

RAAFA has shown how the personal contributions of many led to the creation of this amazing organisation. The growth in the provision of supportive care for seniors, veterans and members of the broader community is unique and is a fantastic reflection on the veterans who founded RAAFA in Western Australia.

The experience of being with this organisation over the past 10 years has me reflecting on the contributions that have been made over that time by members, residents, staff, and the Division Council.

Without the efforts of many, including each of you, RAAFA would not be the wonderful organisation it is today. Everyone can make a difference whether it's chatting

to a neighbour, maintaining the library, being a member of a branch, supporting the commemoration events, providing advocacy services for veterans, driving the village buggy, being part of the painting group, playing bowls or just being that listening ear for those who need company.

Positive contribution of your time to a community and its activity is uplifting for you and those with whom you interact and sets the values and essence of how we are living.

I will be missing this vitality and it presents for me a question as to what will represent my contribution to society beyond finishing my work life and the role of CEO for RAAFA. There will be exciting times ahead.

The transition to new leadership of the organisation will, as Clive has stated, bring change. A new eye, critical thinking, different observations, and passion will inevitably question all that we do.

The new leader will need to consider what and how we utilise the

professional team, the significant assets, the stable and healthy balance sheet to enable the best outcomes within the changing environment.

The impact of government policy (in some cases lack of policy), changing world economic dynamics, unrealistic aged care staffing requirements in the context of the lack of people to fill the roles, and the reality of 70% of aged care providers operating in a cash negative position all bring challenges to leaders in our sector.

Fortunately, due to the contribution of so many, we are in a great position to weather these storms. This is evident when we have compared our 2021/22 financial year performance and cash holdings with the seven largest providers in WA, which shows RAAFA to be the best performer overall.

This is an outcome you achieve when you have a high level of commitment from all who make up this community. Thank you.

Celebrating a centenary

Meadow Springs resident John Bailey has just reached his centenary and he has a simple message for a long life: work hard and carefully choose who you marry.

John turned 100 years old on 8 December and celebrated along with 50 family and close friends at the popular retirement estate, which he has called home for just over 20 years.

Born in Carnarvon just prior to Christmas 1922, John grew up in the small coastal town around 900 kilometres north of Perth, with his two sisters and brother.

But when it came to his schooling, John was sent to boarding school at St Aloysius Convent of Mercy in Toodyay.

After completing his studies, he went on to work for a medical organisation in Leederville, but then made the decision to join the Royal

Australian Air Force in 1941.

"He defended Australia for the best part of five years, undertaking 81 missions as a fighter pilot as part of 75 Squadron in New Guinea," explains his son Kevin.

"He still remembers his number to this day, 415015, and he acknowledges that he was very fortunate to survive the war, eventually being discharged in 1945."

John married his first wife Ida during the war years, in 1943, and the couple went on to become farmers at Chowerup, a small rural location within the Boyup Brook area of south-west WA.

The couple had two sons and a daughter, and continued to live on the farm for over 20 years until they moved house in 1973, to Lesmurdie.

"That was when you could buy a home overlooking Perth's coastal

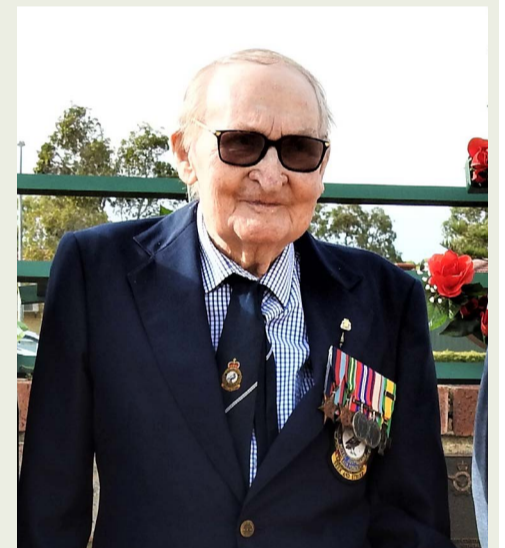
plains for \$28,000," laughs Kevin, who adds that many of his father's eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren were able to celebrate with him on his birthday.

John and Ida went on to travel for many years, until Ida sadly passed away in 1987.

"Four years later, dad married Meg who he had known for many years when he and mum lived in Chowerup," explains Kevin. "They moved to Meadow Springs in 2002 and had many happy years travelling, before Meg herself passed away."

A celebratory morning tea was held for John on his birthday, which saw family and friends flying in from all over Australia.

"Dad was a Freemason for many years and eventually became the Grand Master of the entire operation in WA, so he was very well-known and highly regarded," adds Kevin.



"Having said that, he is much loved by everyone, so much so that when his three barbers at Meadow Springs heard he was having a 100th birthday celebration, they were keen to celebrate with him, so dad invited them too. And that pretty much sums dad up - friendly, inclusive, strong-minded and resilient."

A very happy belated birthday John, from all your friends at Meadow Springs and the wider RAAFA community.

Four-legged fun at McNamara Lodge

Bella the 16-year-old kelpie and Franki the 12-year-old border collie are the two newest recruits at McNamara Lodge.

The exceptionally cute twosome are pet therapy pooches who have been visiting residents every fortnight for over two years with their 36-year-old owner, Jared Jones.

And according to Jared, a qualified mining engineer who has been dedicated to volunteering for over six years, the pair have an incredibly

positive influence on residents, bringing companionship, laughter and often just making someones day.

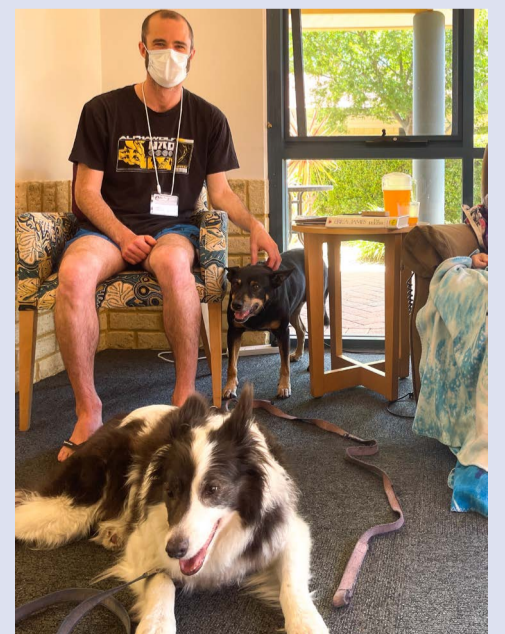
"Both dogs are certainly a big hit," says Jared, who volunteers through the government-funded Nuhra Community Visitor Scheme.

"There are some residents whose faces light up every time the dogs walk through the door, and it's lovely to see the seniors interacting with them and giving them treats.

"They are both awesome dogs and I'm really proud of the happiness they bring to both staff and residents during each visit."

Recent research has revealed that animals improve peoples' sense of well-being and levels of happiness.

"They are certainly a big hit when they arrive, particularly my border collie who is currently wearing boots because he has a limp which, as you can imagine, the residents think is hilarious," adds Jared.



Living a life you love

“The reality is that when you get older, some of your friends pass away and others move to other areas, so you can suddenly find yourself with a far smaller social network,” says Tony Carter-Johnson, who moved into the Cirrus apartments at RAAFA’s Air Force Memorial Estate with his wife Kathy in February 2021.

“That was what happened to us, but then we moved into our new apartment at Cirrus and we made such wonderful friends, something we hadn’t really anticipated.

“Now we have a ready-made social circle which we love, everyone here is so friendly and while we go to a lot of arranged social evenings and events, there are many impromptu things that just happen too, like a group of us from our floor might get together for some drinks and nibbles in the afternoon, or we might wander down to the train station and pop into the city for lunch.”

Despite his love of his new home however, Tony is the first to admit that he did have some initial reservations prior to moving into the estate.

“My sister has lived here for around five years and she only had positive things to say, but I did have

reservations about moving into a retirement village as my wife and I are only in our early 70s and I wondered if we were too young.

“But when we viewed the apartment, we just loved the configuration and we were struck by how green the surroundings were, which I suppose wasn’t surprising given we were up amongst the treetops on the third floor.

“So we made the decision to make the move then and there, and everything went seamlessly. We sold our villa in Applecross very quickly and the moving process was the best we’ve ever experienced, we used the removalists that RAAFA recommended and they were fantastic.”

And in the almost two years that Tony and Kathy have lived on the estate, Tony reckons he’s never been fitter.

“I use the pool virtually every day and I walk down to the river most mornings which are two things that I love to do,” he explains.

“And it’s so easy to keep fit and socially active here with the gym, the pool and all of the activities, outings, lunch and dinner engagements and trips to the theatre,” continues Tony, who was



born and raised in South Africa.

“It sounds strange, but I felt that as soon as I moved in I really started to enjoy life. We participate in so many things and we have lots of friends, many of whom are in their 80s and all look really fit because the lifestyle here is so great.

“What’s more our grandchildren actually ask their parents if they can come to visit us, they love the place too, and they’re very useful to have

around as they help us with our new technology,” laughs Tony.

“I would recommend the estate 200%, I can’t speak highly enough of the place - the people, the service and the management are all exceptional.

“It’s a great community and one where you can improve your fitness and stay young as you get older.”

Celebrating her 104th birthday

Alice Ross-King Care Centre resident Josephine Dwyer – known as Jo by her family and friends – reached the incredible age of 104 years old at the start of December. And, according to her daughter Melanie, Jo still has a huge zest for life and, at times, is an outrageous flirt and rather ‘cheeky’.

“I admire my mum so much, she’s got a fantastic personality and is still very sharp, to this day she loves to do her crosswords and has only recently given up bowling,” says daughter Melanie, who also says her mum has always been an avid gardener and has loved playing the piano throughout her life.

“And although she still misses my father terribly, she’s very happy at Alice Ross-King Care Centre, and still manages to have her tipples of Bailey’s every evening which is her absolute favourite.”

A born and bred South Australian, having started out in life in Exeter in Port Adelaide, Jo enlisted in the RAAF at the start of the war and served as an Aircraft Woman for four years in Williamstown, NSW.

“Mum completed signals, plotting and switchboard training and, after that, she trained to become a qualified nurse, working at the local children’s hospital after the war

when she moved back to Adelaide,” explains Melanie.

“She married my dad, Bob, in 1953 had two children, and then the family moved from Adelaide to Perth in 1976 for my dad’s work. And although she has lived in Perth for almost 50 years, she’s still a born and bred Port Adelaide supporter,” Melanie laughs.

Today Jo, who has two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, still enjoys looking after her appearance, dressing elegantly and enjoying the odd glass of bubbles with lunch.



Thank you, from Gordon Lodge

There are so many tasks that volunteers do each and every day that make such a difference to people’s lives.

And at Gordon Lodge they celebrated and said thank you in December with a special morning tea to acknowledge the generous contributions of time and effort given by so many wonderful people.

Tory Ludlam, Gordon Lodge’s Occupational Therapist, explained that those involved, volunteered in many different ways, with three residents of the home also contributing their time in a voluntary capacity to ensure various

activities ran smoothly, and also that the resident fish were fed every day.

“We had a really lovely morning tea and it was fantastic to thank all of our volunteers, some of whom have volunteered with us for many, many years,” said Tory.

“From sorting out bingo counters, to laminating pictures and looking after our craft things, and of course socialising with residents, all of our volunteers really strengthen our community here at Gordon Lodge and we are so thankful for their dedication and commitment.”

A big heartfelt thank you!



AFME celebrates its volunteers

The team at Air Force Memorial Estate toasted its volunteers at the start of December, when a special event was planned to thank the dedicated people who contribute to the estate's friendly, helpful and cohesive community.

Penny John, AFME Estate Manager, said Air Force Memorial Estate was built on the foundation of volunteers, and that the spirit of giving remains very strong today with around 250 active volunteers who provide support through many varied activities.

"For the AFME team, our annual event is a way for us to acknowledge the incredible contribution volunteers make to our organisation," she said.

"The commitment our vollies make to this estate resonates with RAAFA's vision, which is 'to go above and beyond in engaging and supporting our community'.

"Currently around a third of AFME residents are registered volunteers and, given our ageing population, this demonstrates to me the strong

sense of care and the passion that these remarkable individuals have for the estate, and in maintaining our wonderful sense of community.

"And so it was really fantastic to organise a 'thank you' event to acknowledge our volunteers, who give their time so generously and in a variety of ways."

Rhonda Mays, Memorial Estate Residents Branch President, was one of the volunteers who attended the event, which she said was extremely enjoyable.

"I find volunteering very rewarding and it makes you very social on the estate too, meaning you meet lots of people and can really give back," she says.

"Volunteering certainly brings me lots of happiness and we have a great team whose attitude is 'nothing is too much trouble'. Everyone puts their hand up to help which is just wonderful."

Jane Donald, Estate Library Coordinator, who has lived at AFME

for over 13 years and who also attended the event, said she loved the social aspect of volunteering and serving lots of people.

"You really feel a sense of satisfaction and that you're making a contribution," says Jane, who was previously a librarian in England, Northern Ireland and also in Melbourne.

"I love continuing to be a librarian even though I'm retired, and you really get to know people's taste so you can make recommendations to anyone who uses the service. It's great to do something that focuses on other people, not just myself."

Did you know?

Research shows that volunteers experience greater satisfaction with



Just a few of the volunteers at the event

life and life purpose, increased self-confidence and a greater sense of identity.

Volunteering may also reduce the onset of cognitive decline amongst older people and is related to lower rates of depression and loneliness.

Volunteering can provide a healthy boost to self-confidence, self-esteem and life satisfaction.

Volunteering can also give an individual a sense of pride and identity.



LtoR Jenny Lewins, Pat Whipple, Barbara Morkel, Lesley Laing, Leonie Flindell and Beverley Hewett

Friendships still flourish

Michelle Obama famously said: "Friendships between women are built on a thousand small kindnesses, swapped back and forth and over again," a quote that Air Force Memorial Estate (AFME) resident Beverley Hewett could easily have written about her own long-standing friendship group.

Beverley is just one member of an all-women friendship circle that has been meeting monthly for close to half a century.

Beginning with 15 ladies, and now reduced to eight due to a number sadly passing away over the years, the firm group of friends have been there for each other through thick and thin, supporting each other through life's ups and downs and

watching children grow up and go on to have children of their own.

And according to Beverley, although the group includes many very different women with a range of nationalities, including Hungarian, Dutch, South African, African, English and of course Australian, the group has always been steadfast in its fellowship.

"We came together as a result of one very strong woman, Joan Thatcher, who only recently passed away, and we started out as more of an educational and study group back in the mid-1970s," explains Beverley, who lives at AFME's Mirage Terraces.

"Then, as the years have gone by, we dropped the study and morphed

into more of a friendship group, everyone is very bonded and we've gone through life supporting and caring for each other over the decades.

"It's hard to believe that we've known each other for so long and that we are all pretty much in our 80s now, but we still catch up for lunch at the club every month and have a very strong sisterhood that continues to thrive."

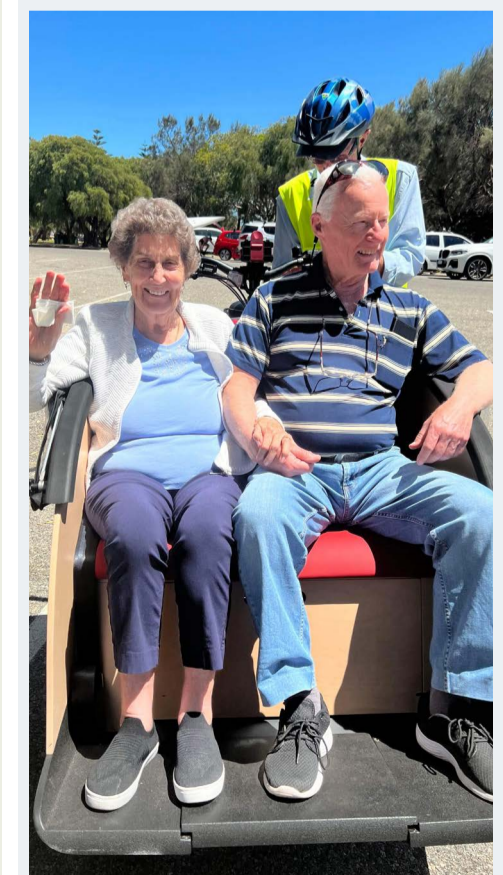
Note: RAAFA as an organisation prides itself on its friendly, welcoming retirement communities situated throughout Perth, where residents can continue to form strong fellowship and where both new and old friendships are able to flourish.

Never too old to feel the wind in your hair

Residents from Alice Ross-King Care Centre enjoyed their first bus trip in 2023 to Point Walter.

The morning included sunshine, fresh air, bike rides, morning tea and a delicious ice cream to top the memorable day out.

The residents had a wonderful day with one mentioning how much fun she had. Occupational Therapy Assistant, Maria said, "it was a great feeling for the staff, putting joy in the hearts of our residents."



Retirement after three decades

When it comes to jobs and careers we're often told to 'love what we do', and nobody has embodied that concept more than 70-year-old Chrissy Bull.

Chrissy recently retired as a food and beverage attendant at the RAAFA Club, Bull Creek, located on Air Force Memorial Estate after more than three decades.

"Chrissy has worked above and beyond for RAAFA and our residents," says Simon Elton-Bott, the Club's Manager.

"The countless amount of times Chrissy has stayed back past her shift or come in earlier at the last minute without ever saying no is a testament to her character and the love she has for the club, it's customers and RAAFA residents."

Incredibly, Chrissy first started working with RAAFA in 1989 - over 33 years ago - initially on a part-time basis while working two other jobs.

But, as Simon explains, she was eventually persuaded to relinquish her other roles as he continued to

ask her if she was available to work additional hours.

"Anyone who knows her won't be surprised to hear that Chrissy has had thousands of positive comments from our customers, all of whom adore her and will miss her greatly," Simon adds.

"We were all happy however to have a little celebration at the club to say goodbye to her during December, we wish her all the very best and every happiness in her retirement, as she finally takes time out to spend with her growing family and grandchildren."



Gratitude tree

At Erskine Grove they celebrated volunteers day a little differently by creating a gratitude tree. Residents penned special thank you messages on the 'leaves' and added them to the tree.

Thank you to the bus drivers; secret garden gnomes; electricity meter readers; function organisers; and the list goes on.

The delicious fruit cake was cut by David Lloyd, Phillis O'Shea and John McKenzie.

Branch President, David also volunteers as a mentor in the Mandurah local learn to drive program and has been nominated for Mandurah's volunteer of the year award.

Phyllis has been leading our aqua aerobics classes for many years and also runs exercise classes for seniors in Mandurah.

And, John helps the Mavericks

group each week, monthly seniors lunches and supports residents with their appointments and around their units.

To everyone who helps make a difference, thank you.



Lighting up at Christmas

The residents entered into friendly competition, lighting up the streets across Cambrai Village with Christmas cheer.

The Christmas lights competition was open to all residents across the village, inviting them to decorate their homes, either inside, outside or both.

Estate Manager, Nick Walker and Wanneroo City Councillor, Glynis Parker, had the difficult task of

judging all entries.

First prize went to Peggy Watzek in unit 233 and it was such a tough call, with equal second prizes to Mike and Jackie Green unit 194, and Jeff and Jackie Harry in unit 71.

The judges had a very difficult job considering the amazing lengths many residents went to.

Congratulations everyone for entering into the Christmas spirit.



Peggy Watzek with Nick Walker

RAAFA connection – the Korean War Memorial project

Around five years ago, it was mooted that a memorial to WA-born personnel who served and sacrificed through Australia's participation in the Korean War should be established in Kings Park.

And as a result, a special committee was formed and this significant project has now not only been approved, but it's been confirmed that construction of the memorial will be completed by 27 July 2023 - the 70th anniversary of the signing of the armistice ending the conflict.

As you might expect, RAAFA has been heavily involved in this project, with both Clive Robartson and Brett Dowsing (Chairman and Division Councillor respectively) serving on the Committee.

Significantly, at the start of December, a small sod-turning ceremony was conducted on the



memorial site. Following short speeches by Minister Paul Papalia, CSC, MLA and Ms Ji Eun Park, the Consol General from the Republic of Korea Embassy, sods were turned by the aforementioned representatives, with Australian and Korean veterans and community leaders, Colonel Taesub Kwon

(Korean Defence Attache), and Committee members.

The Project is comprised of the memorial, an amphitheatre and a connecting pathway, all of which is being made possible as a result of funding via the Federal and State Governments, the Korean Government and contributions from

community and business entities, including those of Korean heritage.

And as part of the memorial, there will be a stone from the battle site of Kapyong (Australian spelling) in Korea. Significantly, it will have a commemorative bias on the front facing side, and a contemplative and educational bias on the rear side.

Bringing the festive spirit to Erskine

By her own admission, Johanna Van De Peppel absolutely loves Christmas - and it's safe to say that she helps everyone at Erskine Grove enjoy it too.

Starting in mid-October every year Johanna dusts off her Christmas trimmings and quite literally starts to deck her halls with boughs of holly - and her doors, and her walls, and her living room and her garden!

The result is an incredible winter wonderland, which is open to the entire estate to enjoy, as well as Mandurah locals (by appointment) who would like to pay a visit and really start to get into the Christmas spirit.

And whilst there's no official charge for entry, Johanna does collect donations, and this year, like others, the money raised went to the Cancer Foundation.

"I just love the lead up to Christmas and I get so much joy from decorating my house and opening it up so that others can get into the Christmas spirit," says Dutch-born Johanna, who is now 74 years old and has been decorating her house at Christmas 'for as long as she can remember'.

"Quite a few people on the estate don't bother with a Christmas tree, so I like to think that I can bring the spirit of Christmas to the estate

and make a lot of people happy by inviting them to share my decorations.

"Plus, I love it when residents bring their grandchildren to have a look, it's wonderful seeing their reactions and even adults seem to think the snow is somehow real.

"I've made a commitment that I will keep doing this for as long as I can, and so if I can continue to gain some help from the wonderful Erskine community lifting some of the boxes from storage, I will.

"I truly think December is a wonderful time of year."



Knitting bonds

When the craft group at Amity Village Albany brainstormed a project they could do together, they hit the jackpot.

After searching knitting pattern books Joan Thomas, Dot Pryor, Pat White, Val Winfield, Mercedes White and Sheila Quicke landed on a nativity scene that could also be used in the village Christmas decorations.

"It's a pattern from one of the books," said Mercedes. "and we thought 'this is good because everyone in the group can have their own part'."

Each knitter took on the challenge to create a different figure in the nativity scene with Joan in charge of the sheep.

"It was quite fiddly because they're all so small," says Joan. "The sheep have little ears and tiny legs and the cradle and baby Jesus were very delicate."

Despite the tricky subject and some members having to withdraw, the group finished the project in record time.

"We started in winter as I was expecting it to take until Christmas,

but it was all done in only a few months," says Mercedes.

The finished display has drawn praise from everyone at the village.

"It's lovely seeing it all come together," says Joan. "It was a joint effort and quite a challenge."

"We surprised ourselves, it was quite intricate. Now we need to think of a project for this year," says Mercedes.



Music to Margaret's ears

When RAAFA's Amity Village Albany resident, Margaret Dickinson was just eight she started playing the organ for her local church and she has never stopped.

"We lived quite close to the church in Kojonup," she says. "You look at it now and think, 'How could anybody fit in there?', but everybody joined in together."

Since then, Margaret has volunteered as church organist and now 80 years on has been recognised for her service.

"Playing has always been part of my life," says Margaret. "Wherever I've gone, they've wanted church organists and it's always seemed quite natural!"

Over the years, while working as a teacher and raising a family, Margaret has played for countless church events, weddings, and even had the opportunity to play in some of the largest cathedrals in Perth.

But despite all of this, the highlight is not what you might think.

"The highlight was coming back to Albany and having the opportunity to play at St John's. I love it and the people. Albany really is a very friendly and nice place."

When asked what keeps her motivated, she said "I've never once wished that I didn't have to go. Every day, I feel that it's what I should be doing."

And after 80 years as an organist, Margaret says she is nowhere near ready to retire.

Congratulations Margaret on your incredible achievement and we wish you many more years doing what you love.



Strong interest in the Swetman scholarship

We are pleased as punch to have received a record number of applications for this year's Swetman Aviation Education Fellowship.

The Fellowship was established in 1989 by Flight Lieutenant Ronald Swetman DFC DFM, RAFVR (Retd) to foster aviation education and interest among youth in WA for purposes such as flying training, an aviation event for professional development in the sphere of aviation education or other

purposes which further an interest in aviation.

This year we included an early bird prize for the first five applications received, for a Macchi simulator experience at RAAFA's Aviation Heritage Museum, or a privately operated 747 simulator.

Tristan Long was one of the lucky five who enjoyed a Macchi simulator experience with our fabulous instructor Steve.



Division Councillor Charles Page presenting the prize to Tristan Long

Community spirit alive

There's not many people who can say they've gone 'viral' on social media, but 90-year-old mother of two and grandmother of six, June Humphries, has done just that.

The Amity Village Albany resident was featured on ABC News recently because of her remarkable morning routine - June has started her day with a morning dip at Middleton Beach in Albany for nearly half a century.

"I will not miss a day. I just don't feel the same if I don't do it," says the born and bred West Australian.

"It really makes you feel good, but I don't think my morning routine is anything particularly special, but what I do think is special is the amazing people around me who make my morning dips possible."

June explains that she is legally blind and relies on three separate friends to collect her on different days of the week, enabling her to take her regular morning dip.

"I have many incredible people around me, not least those who are happy to collect me at either 6.15am or 6.30am to head down to the beach," says June, who, surprisingly, admits to not being a particularly strong swimmer.

And her vision impairment means that, when she arrives at the beach, all the locals (known unofficially as the Southern Salties) greet her and identify themselves before someone takes her hand to guide her into the ocean.

"Because I can't really see anything more than vague shapes, they tell me who they are, which is really good," she says.

"It's really funny - some people I recognise by their voice, some people it might be by the way they walk, others might be by their size or something like that.

"I couldn't go in the water by myself without being knocked over, so

I'm just so grateful to everyone for helping me continue my regular morning routine, everyone's help means so much to me."

At the time of writing, June's story has received over 900 likes on Facebook as well as hundreds of comments, plus the TV story has been watched by thousands.

"Everybody who is a regular at the beach each morning has seen the story, which I'm so pleased about because the fact that I'm still going for a dip at 90 is not really anything much," adds June.

"The inspiring thing about it all is



how marvellous the locals are, and how many people are willing to help me, as well as others. I'm so thankful to live in such a great community."

Feeling privileged

Last month, representatives from RAAFA were invited to attend the 10th Warrant Officer of the Air Force (WOFF-AF) changeover ceremony, held in Canberra.

For those who don't know, the role of WOFF-AF provides high level advice and assists the Chief of Air Force and other personnel on the morale, work-life and general welfare of aviators in the RAAF.

The ceremony itself saw the incumbent WOFF-AF, Fiona Grasby OAM, who has held the position since November 2019, hand over the reins to the RAAF's new Warrant Officer, Ralph Clifton.

Ian Craig, Head of Clear Skies, said RAAFA's presence at the ceremony

symbolised the very strong relationship our organisation has with the RAAF.

"It was a huge privilege to be invited to the event and we were genuinely honoured to be part of the morning," says Ian, who flew to Canberra to attend the ceremony, along with RAAFA colleague Rachel Murphy.

"As we are developing our support for serving RAAF members, having access to Warrant Officer Ralph Clifton is hugely significant, as we are able to talk about our ideas for better serving members, and align our initiatives with the RAAF to ensure we are not duplicating the support we are keen to offer.



"We are fully aware that we are very privileged to have access to really wise advice and counsel from high levels within the RAAF, something which was confirmed when we were able to meet with Warrant Officer Ralph for an hour over lunch,

to discuss how we can best work together.

"We have a similarly strong relationship with the Warrant Officer in the New Zealand Air Force and, again, feel very privileged to have that strong connection too."

RAAFA Connect helps you stay at home

For those not familiar with the service, RAAFA Connect is the in-home support division of RAAFA, specialising in quality care for individuals with Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and Veterans' Home Care (VHC) eligibility, as well as private services, home care packages and Commonwealth home support.

In other words, RAAFA's personalised in-home care service has been designed to support you to live a healthy, safe and independent life while remaining in the comfort of your own home.

Nurse Manager, Lorraine Sloan, says RAAFA's in-home support division offers clients a range of individualised services.

"We will work with the client to coordinate a support plan tailored

to their individual needs," says Lorraine.

"We are here to help clients remain as independent as possible, to assist them to remain living in their own homes, and we would welcome a call from anyone who would like to discuss our services further."

RAAFA Connect nurses and support staff work together to improve a person's ability to stay at home. They do this by listening carefully to the needs required and coordinating personalised services that specifically suits an individual's needs.

Whether it's in-home respite care to provide a break for someone caring for a loved one, assistance with getting out and about with things like shopping or going to appointments.



The organisation also provides services to help people at home, including showering, medication management, cooking meals, laundry and generally whatever might be needed.

To discover more about how RAAFA Connect can help you, call 9288 8470 or connect@raafawa.org.au.

Museum adventure

A group of residents in their 80s and 90s from Karri and Tuart Lodge enjoyed a great day out at RAAFA's Aviation Heritage Museum in Bull Creek recently, followed by fabulous fish and chips by the beach.

The group loved taking a tour around what is one of Australia's largest collections of civil and military aviation artefacts, with many enjoying learning about the history of each of the aircraft.

"Our residents loved their day out, with the gentlemen, in particular, really engaging with some of the tour guides as they learned more about the history of the museum and the particular exhibitions," said Occupational Therapy Assistant,

Gloria Oranje, who accompanied the group.

"The museum is still one of Perth's best kept secrets, boasting a treasure trove of artefacts which tell the story of WA's civil and military aviation, so it's no wonder the residents loved their visit."

Following the museum trip, the group of seniors were taken for fish and chips overlooking the beach.

"They had such a great day out and it was a beautiful day, so they really enjoyed being outdoors, in the sunshine, and breathing in the sea air," adds Gloria.

Jan De Beer was one of the gentleman who went along on the day. "We had a great time," he



said. "We all enjoyed it, particularly learning about the planes and then being treated to fish and chips."

Resident William (Bill) Minty adds: "We loved going for a drive too

and seeing all of the scenery, plus we really enjoyed sitting down and having our morning tea at the museum."

Fulfilling a dying wish

When a member of the public contacted RAAFA about her father's dying wish, it spurred museum volunteer and RAAFA Division Councillor, Charles Page, into immediate action.

The call made by Cheryl Anthony concerned her father, James Pinington, whose cousin William (Billy) Bowden was a pilot who tragically died on the evening of 31 July 1961, in a Dakota A65-106 which took off from Pearce Airbase at 7.00pm.

Tragically, within just three minutes, the Dakota clipped several treetops and crashed on a property near RAAF Base Pearce, killing four and injuring several more.

Pilot Bowden was the cousin of James Pinington, who had very fond memories of the two playing together as kids, and who was particularly affected by the tragedy of his cousin dying as a young man. He desperately wanted to visit the crash site one more time, in his own lifetime.

"It was the last thing on his bucket list, he just wanted to spend some

time at the spot where Billy had crashed and those extraordinary men from RAAFA made it happen," says Cheryl.

As Charles explains, as a result of the urgent request and James Pinington's own health declining, it was a race against time to find the Dakota crash site and the owners of the property where the aircraft had gone down.

"I was only given the approximate location and it appeared that some records were wrong, so it was a case of undertaking a fair bit of research against the clock," says Charles.

"Important clues came from an Air Force newsletter back in 2001, which showed a photo taken at a dedication ceremony in which museum volunteer and fellow AAFC Branch member, SQNLDR Paul Falconer-West RAAF Ret'd, was in attendance.

"This was a real breakthrough and together with the help of Google Earth we were able to discover the location, and the property owners to gain permission to visit the crash site."



And so on Friday 15 April, Charles and Paul escorted the family of five up to the crash site via a private road located high up in Perth's hills.

There, the Pinington and Anthony families held a very personal dedication at the monument located at the crash site, and James was able to say a final farewell to his cousin Billy.

"The relatives were incredibly appreciative of how we had helped," explains Charles.

"And just as we were talking about

the crash and that there were probably small pieces of wreckage still around, Cheryl found three pieces near a large old gumtree, which the manager of the property said James could keep.

Six weeks after, the family contacted RAAFA to say that James had died.

"Helping to fulfil his dying wish was such a wonderful thing, it makes you realise that some of the greatest pleasures from life occur when you do something for somebody else," adds Charles.

Message from the King

We captured this happy moment when Margaret O'Malley popped into the Merriwa Estate office to proudly share her special message with the team.

Margaret's 100th birthday was on 10 October 2022 and she was full of smiles to share what would be one of the early birthday messages from King Charles III.

Congratulations to an amazing lady and thank you for sharing your infectious smile.



Exclusive club

There is an exclusive club running at Erskine Grove that saw members wined, dined and entertained by a group of volunteers and their little helpers.

All members must be 90 years young or over, and we think reaching this milestone, is more than enough reason to get together and celebrate.

The residents enjoyed a special lamb roast lunch coordinated by volunteer chef extraordinaire, Margaret Cunningham (pictured) who does such an amazing job.



The joy of volunteering

International Volunteer Day was celebrated widely on 5 December and offered many opportunities for RAAFA as an organisation to celebrate its highly valued volunteers and thank them for everything they do.

And amongst those people celebrated was Secret Harbour couple Jean and Bob Sexton, who were encouraged to volunteer by their daughter Lisa, an Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) at McNamara Lodge.

“Lisa just loves her job and the residents, and when she asked us to come and volunteer at the home we were happy to give it a try,” says Jean, who emigrated to Australia from England, together with husband Bob, in 2008.

“We just love helping out and in

fact I think we get even more joy out of it than what we put in, we look forward to going and spending time with the residents, and we love the staff there too, who are just wonderful.”

Up until very recently Jean and Bob would spend all day volunteering at the home on Mondays and Tuesdays, where Jean ran the knitting and crocheting group, Bob played chess and socialised with the residents, and the couple helped with bingo in the afternoons.

And although a recent fall has temporarily stopped the couple's volunteering activity (poor Jean recently suffered a broken wrist and hip!), the pair are hoping to be back at McNamara Lodge in the new year.

“We were foster carers for children when we were younger and we



enjoy helping and caring for others, so for us volunteering comes very naturally,” explains Bob, who says the couple love living in Perth and that Secret Harbour has been a wonderful place to retire after living most of their adult lives in Kent.

“I really enjoy having a laugh with the male residents, reminiscing with

them and going on a trip down memory lane.

“Plus a couple of them are really good at chess and they're enjoying beating me. So much so, that we even have a little competition going now,” he laughs.

Meadow Springs Branch

Kerry Hanrahan

Christmas surprise

We enjoyed our Christmas lunch with a twist this year when Santa decided to leave his sleigh at the North Pole and instead arrived

on his Harley, much to everyone's delight.

Plus the local primary school came carolling, getting everyone in the spirit.

Keep an eye out for our future events in 2023.



WRAAF Branch – for all “Women of the Air Force”

Gwyn Braun
glb3au@hotmail.com
0407 850 090

Upcoming events

Tuesday, 7 February, 1.00pm, Meg Olive Room, General Meeting.

Bring your ideas for:

- for what you would like to do after the ANZAC Day march
- where the branch is going. Planning and re-focusing to be more inclusive to all women who have served and are serving in the RAAF.

Please note date change

Tuesday, 28 February, 6.00pm, BBQ at Judy Bland's.

Meet at Unit 201 Ventura House

AFME Bull Creek. BYO meat and drinks with a salad or sweets to share.

Glasses, plates, cutlery are provided. Partners and friends are welcome. Please RSVP to Gwyn.

Tuesday, 4 April, 1.00pm, Meg Olive Room, General/Easter Meeting.

Tuesday, 25 April, ANZAC Day dawn service at various locations around Perth including Bull Creek.

Tuesday, 25 April, 8.00am, ANZAC Day parade in Perth, assembling on St Georges Terrace. Following the parade the ANZAC Day memorial service.

For more information on any of these events, look out for Branch newsletter or contact Gwyn.

Meadow Springs AFA Bowling Club

Mike Lee, President
0422 442 260

Congratulations to the winners of the 2022-23 season Murray Districts Bowling League (MDBL) championship 'vets singles' winner Mike Lee and runner-up Derwas Overheu.

Our club plays both competitions and social games and we welcome new members. Contact Mike to find out how you can join our Club and enjoy bowling too.

Upcoming events

Wednesday, 8 February, 9.30am, Men's open triples.

4 games of 2 bowls - 12 ends. Morning and afternoon tea provided. Entry \$45.00 per team. Entries close 4.00pm 6 February. For details and to register contact Mike.

Thursday, 9 February, Championship ladies singles.

Thursday, 16 February, Championship ladies singles.

Sunday, 12 March, Championship men's singles.

Monday, 13 March, Championship men's singles.



LtoR Mike Lee and Derwas Overheu

Club Bites

MEADOW SPRINGS CLUB 9582 5375

The Beaufort Restaurant located in the RAAFA Club is open for lunch Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, with takeaways available Monday to Friday.

All bookings for lunch or dinner can be made at the bar.

Weekly specials

Monday, Roast \$14.50

Wednesday, Club night - meal \$14.50, chase the ace, bingo and horse racing

Thursday, Happy hour, 4.00pm

Events

Friday, 10 February, Lambs fry and bacon special

Friday, 10 March, Lambs fry and bacon special



CAMBRAI CLUB

9304 5400 or if unattended
0417 922 658

Weekly specials

Tuesday and Wednesday, Happy hour 4.00pm

2nd Tuesday, Chicken parmi \$14.00, 6.00pm to 7.00pm Picardy Restaurant (bookings essential by 12noon Friday prior)

Wednesday, 2 course roast dinner \$23.00, 6.00pm Picardy Restaurant (bookings essential by 12noon Tuesday)

Wednesday, Morning tea, 10.00am to 11.00am

Friday, Bar/Bistro lunch, 12noon with offal option 2nd Friday (bookings essential)

Friday, Happy hour, 5.00pm (when function on)

Events (check Club for details)

1st and 3rd Fridays - generally sundowner or function, 5.00pm



MERRIWA CLUB 9400 3640

Blue Gum Café

Pop down for one of our daily specials or sample something off the menu. Now open Wednesday 11.00am to 2.00pm and Thursday 10.00am to 2.00pm.

Weekly specials

Wednesday, Roast lunch \$15.00

Wednesday, Happy hour 4.00pm

Thursday, Morning tea from 10.00am

Thursday, Lunch specials \$15.00

Events

2nd Monday, afternoon tea, scones, jam and cream 2.00pm to 3.00pm

1st and 3rd Tuesday, Club night \$15 parmi or pasta (includes beverage)

2nd and 4th Friday, Bistro night (bookings essential)

Short Stay Accommodation

Time to get out and wander out yonder!!!! Why not have a change of scenery and stay in one of our fully equipped short stay accommodation units at Meadow Spring, Bull Creek or Merriwa. For information and bookings contact the relevant estate office or Club at Meadow Springs.

BULL CREEK CLUB 9311 4460

Open for light breakfast and lunch Monday to Friday and dinner every Friday. Check Club for details.

Weekly specials

Monday to Friday, light breakfast 9.00am to 10.00am

Monday, Roast \$17.00

Monday and Wednesday, Happy hour 4.00pm

Tuesday, Fish and chips \$17.00

2nd and 4th Thursday, Lambs fry and bacon \$17.00



Volunteering at Cambrai

Cambrai Village took the opportunity to acknowledge, thank and shine a light on the important work volunteers do across the estate and the positive impact this has on themselves, residents and the estate.

Nick Walker, Estate Manager, and the team hosted the thank you Christmas lunch in early December.

Celebrations included a buffet lunch and entertainment by singer and crooner Jay Weston as well as a lucky raffle which was won by Yvonne Cotton.

Together, through volunteering, we are changing our communities for the better. We are, better together.

RAAFA Wellbeing Team

CAMBRAI VILLAGE

Vanessa Priestley
9304 5280

RAAFA ESTATE MERRIWA

Suzanne Free
9400 3778

AFME

Jo Oliver
9311 4562

ERSKINE GROVE

Angeline Carleton
9586 4309

RAAFA ESTATE MEADOW SPRINGS

Mischa Matthews
9582 5369

RAAFA AMITY VILLAGE ALBANY

Ceridwen Fitzpatrick
9841 8311

Merriwa Estate

Maintain your independence

Do you want to maintain your independence and keep active? Improve your balance, strength and fitness and be pro-active in falls prevention?

Then we have the class for you.

Only one hour every Friday at 2.00pm.

These great Active Aging classes are run by exercise physiologists from ECU and are available right here on your doorstep for only \$8.00. All exercises can be practiced at home to build your fitness between classes. Talk to Suzanne for more information.

Open to all RAAFA members, not just estate residents.



AFME

Knitting it forward

Our knitting and crochet ladies' group has been running since 2014, providing beautiful knee rugs, ponchos, and beanies for the residents at Gordon Lodge and Alice Ross-King Care Centre.

Meeting once a week, chatting over afternoon tea, having a laugh and all with one major thing in common; to pay it forward.

The latest project has been for Clear Skies, which will be providing new accommodation for our homeless veterans and their families. So far over 50 rugs have been donated, and they keep going. An incredibly talented and kind bunch of people.



Erskine Grove

Lolly run

The Christmas lolly run has been a firm favourite for both residents and staff and this year was no different with the addition of some new little elves helping spread the cheer.



Cambrai Village

Sagewood intergenerational program

Enriching the lives of both young and old through intergenerational play.



Meadow Springs

Christmas celebrations

Christmas at Meadow Springs is a special time of year with decorations and lights adorning the estate and celebrations happening all month long, like the carers group who celebrated in style at the newly revamped wellness centre.

