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Care accreditation success



Alice Ross-King Care Centre



Vivian Bullwinkle Lodge



Karri and Tuart Lodge



Gordon Lodge



McNamara Lodge

The RAAFA team can be incredibly proud of the recent successful Residential Aged Care Quality Accreditations of its residential care homes.

Indeed, in the first six months of this year, our organisation has received full accreditation for all five of our residential care homes in Perth, including the Alice Ross-King Care Centre, Gordon Lodge, Vivian Bullwinkle Lodge, Karri and Tuart Lodge and McNamara Lodge

"It was certainly a bright start to the year for us, after successfully completing the audits with the assessors from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission,"

says Janice Vickery, RAAFA's Quality Coordinator.

"The achievement was very much a collaborative effort and these accomplishments were made possible as a result of our dedicated care teams, headed by our facility and clinical care managers.

"Without doubt, the hard work of all of our residential care staff has contributed to the enviable reputation RAAFA has as a leading provider of quality residential care services.

"It really is a fantastic result and everyone involved should be incredibly proud of this achievement."

There were many positive comments received, with a few highlights being:

- They were delighted about how well staff knew the residents, promoting people's independence and decision making. Showcasing truly individualised person-centred care.
- They hadn't been to a service anywhere, where they saw the level of integration between clinical and quality systems that aligned so well with the care being delivered.
- Observed an approach to diversity, inclusion and respect for people's differences to a level they had never seen before in an aged care home.

- Residents, family and staff were excited to tell the assessors how wonderful it was to live and/or work at RAAFA.

As a consequence of the successful accreditations, RAAFA's five aged care homes have been reaccredited for another three years by the National Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, having met all quality standards with no recommendations for improvements.

"Our dedicated, tight-knit teams work together as one big family, bonded by the indisputable belief that everyone we support deserves to feel happy, safe, valued and respected," adds Janice.

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wellbeing

PURPOSE

Pursuing excellence in care and heritage

VALUES

Respect; Care; Honesty

APPROACH

Creating RAAFA communities open to all

THE RAAFA WAY

President's view



By Clive Robartson AM

Hello again. This edition of Air Mail is the first under the leadership of CEO Michelle Fyfe APM, now well and truly settled into the role.

Michelle will challenge us and bring a fresh approach to management and the operation of this growing Association. The transition to a new CEO has been seamless and I look forward to changes that Michelle will bring.

Exciting time ahead

The Division Council has addressed some challenging issues over the last few months, which include planning for future

development at RAAFA Challenger Court in Rockingham, and progressing the Andrew Russell Veterans Living centre at Cannington, to name a few.

Now into a new financial year, the budget has been set and all village budgets presented and approved.

Annual General Meeting

The AGM is to be held on Friday, 27 October 2023, commencing at 10.30am at the RAAFA Club Function Centre in Bull Creek. Registration is open from 9.30am

and morning tea will be provided prior to the meeting.

Breakfast is available in the Club from 9.00am, or perhaps a cup of coffee with friends to kick-off the day.

Nominations for the Division Council and Notices of Motion have now closed.

The agenda papers and financial report will be available on-line and in each village the week prior to the AGM. The Annual Report will be available at the AGM.

I encourage all members to attend.

Sue celebrates 98 years young



migrant parents in 1925, later starting her education at Perth Ladies College.

After completing school, she began work at a soap distributors in North Fremantle, and it was there that she met her future husband, Colin.

The couple married in March 1947 at St John's Anglican Church in Fremantle, after which they started a family, going on to have two girls - Robyn and also Wendy, who has sadly since passed away.

A born and bred West Australian and true stalwart of her community, Sue Morton, celebrated her 98th birthday at the start of July, surrounded by family and friends who unanimously agree that the matriarch of their family has always had a kind and wonderful heart.

The Gordon Lodge resident, who has lived at AFME for over 20 years, was born in Fremantle to English

And although, like all women of her age, Sue had to finish work when she got married, this didn't ultimately signal the end of her working life.

Indeed, at the tender age of 50, after Robyn had left home to get married, Colin decided to help Sue through her 'empty nest' period by buying her a hairdressing business. This saw her subsequently become

an apprentice hairdresser, where she was assigned a 20-year-old 'senior' stylist mentor, during which time she also went off to TAFE to become a fully qualified ladies hairdresser.

Following that, she opened a salon - A'Head Hairstyles in Rockingham - before opening another in Ardross a few years later, both of which became the focal point for Sue and her daughter Wendy, as well as their clients.

"Mum really enjoyed her career in hairdressing, her nurturing nature kept her regular clients coming back for their weekly 'therapy sessions'," explains daughter Robyn.

"Mum always cared about other people, she had such a good heart and when she moved into AFME she was the one to be baking cakes and welcoming any new residents to the estate.

"This eventually led to Sue's unit at AFME being crammed with teddy bears, and Sue then devoted herself

to distributing them to children whose mums were in prison, after which she also collected clothes and anything that was needed for women and children in local women's refuges.

"And if all that wasn't enough, Sue was a valuable contributor on various committees at AFME, and for any new incoming residents Sue was there to help them assimilate in whatever way she could," adds Robyn. "Without doubt, Sue and Colin contributed in so many ways to the estate."

And we have it on good authority that Sue celebrated her 98th birthday with a small party of family and friends, including her sister who is about to turn 101 years old, and a nephew and his wife who drove up to celebrate her special day from down south.

Congratulations on reaching such a big birthday Sue, from all your friends at RAAFA.

Message from the CEO



By Michelle Fyfe

It is a great honour and privilege to be the new CEO of RAAFA.

I had the wonderful opportunity to spend the last eight weeks with John, prior to him retiring. He was very generous with his time and I am forever grateful. As a result, I now feel like I know a little bit about a lot of things and am eager to continue my learning journey.

My initial impressions of RAAFA are of how diverse this organisation is and more than anything, how caring it is.

The desire to help and care for others is what has drawn me to a lifetime of community service. I was a Police Officer with the WA Police for 34 years. I left at the rank of Assistant Commissioner and took the wonderful opportunity to lead the St John Ambulance organisation

for four years. Those four years were challenging, not least because of the global pandemic.

I currently sit on the WA Football Commission - I think it's no secret that I am passionate about Australian rules football. Indeed, I do sometimes get asked if I'm related to Nat Fyfe, but sadly the answer is no, much to my disappointment.

I am also on the board of Parkerville Children and Youth Care, an organisation which is focused on supporting vulnerable children - another cause very close to my heart.

I am married to Mark and have three beautiful daughters, and now three energetic grandsons who are great fun to spend time with.

Again, I would like everyone to know how thrilled I am to be appointed as the CEO of RAAFA, after the long-standing tenure of the highly respected and beloved John Murray.

Older West Australians have built our nation and our families, they deserve the very best as they age, and I am very much looking forward to working with the RAAFA community to ensure that we continue to excel at taking care of the people who have always taken care of us.

And for those who I haven't yet met, I very much look forward to being introduced.

Happy 20th birthday Erskine Grove

Over 200 residents and guests gathered at Erskine Grove on 15 June to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the popular estate. And remarkably, the very first resident who moved in with his late wife on the same date back in 2003, was there to join the party.

Barry Doherty is one of the original 23 residents who moved into Erskine Grove two decades ago, and we are pleased to report that every one of them is still with us and were able to join in the celebrations.

And during the first official get-together - a party organised by Denise Nicolay and a dedicated band of volunteers - residents and guests wandered around the Erskine Grove courtyard with their champagne and nibbles, taking a

nostalgic trip down memory lane as they reminisced about all that has happened since 2003.

"During the celebrations, Barry, and Irene Polglase, another of the original 2003 residents, and widow of the first Branch President, Ray, were front and centre of the celebrations, with Irene cutting the birthday cake," explains Denise.

"We were so pleased that the weather was also kind to us, and President, Clive Robartson, and retiring CEO, John Murray, could come along and join the celebrations, along with the City of Mandurah Mayor, Rhys Williams and Councillor Jenny Green."



Branch President David Lloyd and wife Shirley

Residents had arranged a visual presentation showing 20 years of village life, which will remain on display until 14 October,

when a formal dinner is planned as a culmination to the year's celebrations.

RAAFA Annual General Meeting 2023

Air Force Association (Western Australian Division) Inc. trading as RAAFA

By Norm Waldie,
Secretary
Friday, 27 October 2023

Registration commences at 9.30am with the meeting commencing at 10.30am at the RAAFA Club, Bull

Creek. Morning tea will be provided.

If you would like to stay for lunch after the AGM, the Club will have the following selection available.

- Grilled fish served with fries and salad, \$20.00

- Beer battered fish with fries and salad, \$20.00
- Loaded vegetable quiche with fries and salad, \$20.00
- Pie of the day served with fries and salad, \$20.00

- Roast of the day served with roast potatoes and vegetables, \$20.00

Nominations for Division Council positions and Notices of Motion have now closed.

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Air Mail story
deadlines

1 September for October / November
3 November for December / January
5 January for February / March

Please email articles to airmail@raafawa.org.au (preferred) or post to Julie Stearne, 18 Bowman Street, South Perth WA 6151.

Korean War Memorial unveiling

The unveiling ceremony of the new Perth Korean War Memorial was performed on 27 July by the Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier of Western Australia, and H.E. Mr Kim Wan-joong, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Australia.

This unveiling was immediately followed by a commemorative and consecration service, which also marked the 70th Anniversary of the Armistice between the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China.

As might be expected, this official dedication represented a significant event, with dignitaries and diplomats coming to Perth from South Korea for the event. Indeed, the South Korean Government contributed half a million dollars

towards the construction and, in addition, transported a five-tonne rock from Kapyong - where Australians fought - that forms the centrepiece of the memorial.

Fittingly, the ceremony began with a flypast by three PC-21 aircraft from 2 FTS and was attended by VIPs including former Premier Mark McGowan, RAAFA CEO Michelle Fyfe, and Councillors Kylie Russell and Charles Page. Speeches were given by Premier Roger Cook and Ambassador Kim Wan-joong.

RAAFA has been heavily involved in this project, with both Clive Robartson AM and Commodore Brett Dowsing, JP, RAN ret'd (Chairman and Division Councillor respectively) serving on the memorial committee, and RAAFA's Chief Financial Officer providing

accounting guidance.

"It was amazing to see around 600 people come out to recognise the dedication of the memorial to the 'Forgotten War'," said Clive.

"Clearly it has not been forgotten and the humbleness of the South Korean people in recognising the great contribution made by our Australian servicemen and women was very poignant. It has not and will never



be forgotten by the people of Korea."

Lest we forget.

Making the move to Merriwa

Roger and Jacqui Mentzel moved into RAAFA's Merriwa Estate back in November last year and say it's the best thing they've ever done.

The couple, who have two daughters and six grandchildren, were living in Yankep when they started to look at retirement village options in the northern suburbs.

"When we visited Merriwa we just loved the estate layout, the gardens and the fact that it felt like a small suburb with a fantastic community atmosphere," explains Roger who, along with his wife, hails from Durban in South Africa.

"Our one daughter lives just three kilometres down the road so the location was perfect for us, plus we love the fact that we are close to lovely restaurants, a short drive away from the beach, a convenient bus and train journey from the city and then there's a brand-new Woolworths just down the road."

The couple are also overjoyed by their new home, which they say is immaculately presented and easy to look after.

"It was renovated when we first

moved in so we knew that everything would work, and if anything does go wrong the maintenance team are here in a flash to fix it, which we think is just wonderful," adds Roger.

"We also have a small garden which we love, and though it's not the acres we had to maintain in our previous homes, we've just got enough space to enjoy it and also plant some vegetables."

And if there's one piece of advice the couple have for anyone considering making the move, it's not to leave it too late.

"Don't wait too long is our advice as then you have chance to make new friends, enjoy the facilities and get immersed in community life if that's what you want to do," adds Jacqui who, at 71, is four years younger than her husband of 52 years.

"We feel very safe here and very secure, and we're really enjoying chatting to other people who live



here, everyone is extremely friendly and welcoming.

"And as a financial proposition the move has made very good sense

for us, we just love it and wouldn't want to be anywhere else. Even our grandchildren joke that they would love to move in too."

Happy centenary to Dot

Karri and Tuart Lodge resident Dorothy Pizzey celebrated her 100th birthday in July, surrounded by family and friends who say the centenarian remains kind and caring, and is always keen to share a joke.

Born and raised in Charlton, in south-east London, Dorothy remains one of the small percentage of people still alive who remembers the London blitz, with bombs falling from the sky and the race to get to the nearest air raid shelter.

During the late 1920s, Dorothy attended her local primary school and then proceeded to Invarene Road Secondary School, where she learnt shorthand, typing and bookkeeping. Around that time, she met a young man called Lionel at her local church and he would often meet her from school and carry her books home. She didn't know it then, but he would later become her husband of 69 years.

And so, after leaving school at 15, Dorothy began work at the Express Dairy in London, before marrying Lionel, her childhood sweetheart, in January 1946, just after the war had ended.

In 1952, their only child Rosemary was born. Then, fast forward a few years and, in July 1966, the family emigrated to Perth. They

boarded the ship The Fairship in Southampton on a warm English summer's day, and four weeks later they disembarked in Fremantle.

The family's first impression of Australia was not what they were expecting, as it was cold and wet, according to daughter Rosemary.

"I remember it was freezing, and we'd given our electric blankets away," she laughs.

"It was my dad's dream to emigrate to Australia, he had always had itchy feet. My mum was a home body and didn't want to leave her family in England, but in the end she gave in and they started their new life in Perth."

An incredibly hard worker, Dorothy got a job at Mordini Brothers, a greengrocers in Woodlands, where she stayed for many years.

"Mum and dad bought a block of land in Innaloo and built their first house where they lived for 30 years before moving to the RAAFA estate in Merriwa during 1997," adds Rosemary.

"And one of mum's proudest achievements was completing 30 years of voluntary service with The Friends at Royal Perth Hospital."

As time went on, Dorothy became the proud grandmother of two



grandsons - Jamie and Adrian - and now has three great-grandchildren, Montana, Harlee and Cruz. Sadly, husband Lionel passed away in 2015.

Jayne Cummings, Karri and Tuart Lodge Facility Manager, said Dot is a wonderful lady who has travelled all over the world and who adores her family.

"Dot has had an incredibly interesting life, having travelled to New Zealand, the West Indies and

Europe," says Jayne. "And whilst her travelling days may be over, she still enjoys the social activities we run, like happy hour, our regular concerts and various interactive games.

"We were all thrilled to help Dot celebrate her centenary, and we all very much enjoyed the morning tea which we put on for her, during which we sang Happy Birthday."

Congratulations Dorothy on your centenary, from everyone at RAAFA and Karri and Tuart Lodge.

Pyjamas put the fun into fundraising

Staff and seniors at Karri and Tuart Lodge spent Thursday 22 June snuggled up in their favourite and most comfortable pyjamas, all in a bid to support children in "out-of-home" care.

The fun fundraiser was organised to lend a helping hand to Fostering Hope, a charitable organisation which helps improve the lives of vulnerable children and families in Western Australia by gathering donated goods like clothing, toys, nappies and school bags, and providing them to children and families free of charge.

Jayne Cummings, Karri and Tuart Lodge Facility Manager, said everyone at the aged care home wanted to help raise funds for the youngsters, while gaining the opportunity to take part in a fun activity which also brought joy and laughter to residents.

"Fostering Hope was started by two

foster carers, who saw firsthand the challenges foster families and children in care faced, with some kids arriving late at night with nothing but the clothes they came in," explains Jayne, who is herself a kinship foster carer for twin boys.

"And so the founders started collecting items from people in the community and began sharing them with other foster carers, so that the carers had everything they needed to support their foster child or children, and ensuring the kids had something to make them feel special.

"Each year they have grown from strength to strength, and six years on they are now a licensed charity with their own store where foster carers and kids can go, not just for items they need, but also for emotional and social support.

"Because of my firsthand experience, I know how important



it is to help these beautiful kids feel valued and loved at what is a difficult time in their life, and everyone at the home who I spoke to was also happy to support this fun fundraiser.

"It really is the perfect excuse to stay in pyjamas all day, and all of our residents and staff were very happy to make a gold coin donation

to participate, as well as join in with the pyjama parade we organised and a delicious afternoon tea."

Congratulations to the team at Karri and Tuart Lodge for taking part in this fun fundraiser, which raised \$220. And, following another generous donation by Jayne, \$300 was donated to Fostering Hope.



Sound of music delights seniors

The sound of the most exquisite music could be heard at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate in mid-July, as residents were treated to a mini concert as part of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra's (WASO) community outreach program.

Dozens of residents, and a number of lucky staff, were captivated throughout the 45-minute performance, which saw a spectacular string quartet perform an intimate concert of exhilarating and joyful music, from Beethoven to jazz as well as a number of popular classics, all of which sent seniors on a trip down memory lane.

And according to Suzanne Free, Merriwa Wellbeing Officer, everybody involved absolutely loved every minute of the concert.

"The performance was very well received, it was a huge treat for our seniors and they thoroughly enjoyed it," says Suzanne.

"We had residents tapping their feet and totally captivated by the

exquisite music, I think the entire audience could have listened to them all morning."

Alena Tompkins, WASO Executive Manager, Community engagement, explains that the organisation runs a program of concerts within Perth's aged care centres to bring music to older people who ordinarily wouldn't be easily able to access it.

"Our aim is to bring joy and nurture participation in our community, because we believe everybody deserves the opportunity to experience live music, and our professional musicians are always very happy to perform in residential care homes. Performing at RAAFA Merriwa was particularly fulfilling for them as they were so warmly welcomed."

Celebrating volunteers

Dozens of volunteers were recognised for their dedication and commitment during a function at the end of May at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate.

The volunteers - who range in age from their 60s through to their 80s - were treated to an afternoon tea to acknowledge their significant contribution to their community, as well as being presented with appreciation certificates.

Karen Huyton, Estate Manager, says that, in many ways the band of volunteers were the unsung heroes of the community, and that RAAFA is very fortunate to have so many passionate individuals willing to go the extra mile for residents.

"Our volunteers bring companionship, friendship, joy and social connections to people throughout our friendly, popular estate and they are very important to all of us," she says.

"We were very keen to hold this celebratory event to acknowledge the support and contribution of every one of our volunteers, all of whom contribute to our community

by, for example, helping residents to get out and about, delivering meals, organising events and even raising funds for our estate."

Resident, volunteer and octogenarian Norm Heath says he is very happy to help within the estate, as much as he can.

"I really like to get out and about to help others and also, quite frankly, to beat the boredom," says Norm, who hails from Scotland and spent many years in the Navy.

"I put my hand up for a number of things, including helping out with gardening, as part of the group known as the 3M's, assisting with meal deliveries and also driving the Mustang to get residents out and about in the estate.

"In my opinion, I think it's especially beneficial for men to volunteer, the ladies on the estate tend to be much better at getting out and connecting with each other, whereas I think the men can be a little more reserved, which is why I would encourage more chaps to lend a hand and volunteer."



Game of pickleball anyone?

Have you heard about the sport known as pickleball? If not, and you're intrigued and would like to know more, then Merriwa Estate resident Ros Doyle is the person to chat to.

Ros explains that the fast-growing sport, which hails from America brings together elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis, and can be learnt in minutes.

"I actually first heard about it from YouTube," explains Ros who has been a keen sportswoman all of her life, and has lived at the popular RAAFA estate for over eight years now.

"I thought it sounded interesting and it's suitable for people who have enjoyed tennis, but can no longer play because of shoulder injuries. It's not as strenuous as badminton or table tennis, which means it can be enjoyed by most people.

"It's really great for getting some more physical activity into your week, and also getting the social

benefits too, as we all know these things are important as we age."

Part of pickleball's appeal is that, while it does take coordination and you have to be physically mobile to play, it's very easy to learn. And because the court is smaller than a tennis court, with a lower net, players tend to run in short sprints, making the impact on joints far easier.

Plus, research undertaken into seniors playing the sport has shown that regular practice can help improve balance, movement and coordination, all of which can get better the more the sport is played.

Ros explains that, currently, around 15 residents are playing at a specially marked out playing area on the tennis courts every Friday and Sunday morning, at 9.30am.

"Already it's proving really popular at our village, and I have no doubt that more and more people will become aware of its benefits and be keen to give it a try. I'm certainly very happy to help them learn more," adds Ros.



Anyone who would like to know more about pickleball at Merriwa Estate can chat with Ros Doyle, who can be reached on 0415 372 798.

Fun Facts

Pickleball was invented in 1965 by three fathers from Bainbridge Island, Washington to entertain their kids.

Despite the name, pickleball has nothing to do with actual pickles. Amusingly it is named after a cocker spaniel, Pickles, who enjoyed chasing the ball while his owners played.

Pickleball is now the fastest-growing sport in America, and it's getting more and more popular in Australia.

Community collaboration benefits children

A combined, community project which will benefit local youngsters has been made possible by the talented hobby shop members at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate.

The project, which was spearheaded by Rotary Mindarie and supported by Bunnings Mindarie, has seen several trailer loads of unwanted children's furniture - which had been stored at ECU for many years - given a new lease on life.

Comprised of tables, chairs, bookcases and easels, the furniture is being sanded down, stained and repaired where needed, and is set to be donated to Quinns Beach Primary school in the coming months.

"It's a great initiative for us all to be involved in," says Kevin Brown, who is one of half a dozen hobby shop members taking part in the refurbishment project.

"Noel Cahill is the project coordinator, and a great carpenter to boot, and there's a group of us who are all rolling up our sleeves to help restore this furniture, it's a really worthwhile project to work on."

Rotary president, Brian Butterworth, explains that the project came about when a Rotary member, who is also a lecturer at ECU, heard about the obsolete furniture.



"When she heard about the shed full of children's furniture, she asked if it would be possible for it to be donated, and when we got the green light we picked up two trailer loads, and there's more to come," says Brian.

"It really is a great community project involving Rotary Mindarie, Bunnings Mindarie, and the talented members of the hobby shop. Everyone has volunteered their time and without them this project would not have got off the ground."

Significantly, this isn't the first project which has pulled the trio of Rotary, RAAFA and Bunnings together.

"We have worked on a highly successful project before called the REaD Box project, where members of the hobby shop made a number of red boxes which are now dotted around shopping centres and various places, which we fill with children's books that can be taken home to read," explains Brian.

"Its primary purpose is to make books more available for children to access and for parents to read to their little ones. Plus, it's another project that really benefits the wider community, so we are very happy to collaborate with RAAFA on this project too, they are a hard-working and talented bunch."

Happy birthday June

June Green celebrated her 100th birthday in early June, surrounded by her friends and care team at Karri and Tuart Lodge who say she has a passion for travel and enjoying sunsets.

Born in Subiaco, June has lived in many different places around Australia with her husband Raymond.

Together they had three sons and we have been told that the couple loved travelling.

When asked about her most memorable trip, June replied, "rafting down the Colorado River for two weeks."

And what an amazing experience that must have been.

Congratulations and happy 100th birthday June, from all your friends at RAAFA and Karri and Tuart Lodge.



More support in store for veterans

RAAFA is set to open a support centre to provide additional options and assistance to veterans, an area our organisation is both dedicated to and passionate about.

The Challenger Court Veteran Support Centre will be based at RAAFA's newly acquired retirement village in Rockingham, where a spare unit (number 9) has been converted to house the new facility, which will be open from 9.00am to 12noon each day, on an appointment basis.

RAAFA's Graeme Bland, says RAAFA has been providing support to the veteran community since the 1990s, during which time it has serviced the Bull Creek, Merriwa and Meadow Springs communities.

"RAAFA is committed to providing advocacy and welfare assistance for past and current ADF members, by offering advice and help on veterans' matters and entitlements, as well as the services available to

them through the Department of Veterans' Affairs," explains Graeme.

"And we are very pleased to be able to expand our services through our new Centre, which is ideally positioned right on the doorstep of Garden Island and near the very heart of Rockingham.

"As with all of the veteran advocacy services we offer, we are focused on making a difference to veterans' lives, and we welcome all veterans past and present to contact us if they feel they could benefit from some assistance."

Currently, 18 volunteer advocates assist veterans at Bull Creek with their dealings with the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

"On behalf of veterans, past and present, we thank our volunteer advocates for being there and making a difference to the lives of others."

The Veteran Support Centre will

be based at 9, RAAFA Challenger Court, 30 Ray St, Rockingham WA 6168. Anyone who would like to chat to a member of the advocate volunteer team can get in touch by emailing AFA-admin@afawaadvocate.com.au.

Did you know?

In 2007, a group of qualified



Graeme Bland outside the new centre

RAAFA recognised as a finalist in prestigious retirement awards

The entire RAAFA team was incredibly proud to become a finalist in the 2023 National Retirement Living awards in the Best Luxury Retirement Living Development category, for its Cirrus Apartments and the RAAFA Club at AFME.

The National Retirement Living Awards celebrate high achievement across all parts of the retirement living sector, and the award ceremony took place at the end of June on the Gold Coast.

RAAFA's Chief Operating Officer, Tonia Zeeman, attended the awards ceremony, alongside AFME's Estate Manager, Penny John and Phil Bedford, RAAFA's General Manager Property and Sustainability.

Penny John says RAAFA strives for excellence in every area of its

operations and the organisation was delighted to have been awarded finalist status for the prestigious award.

"Throughout the entire development and building process for our Cirrus Apartments and the RAAFA Club, we worked closely with our architects, Cameron Chisholm Nicol, to achieve a truly modern approach on how we could best respond to the needs of our current and future retirees," she says.

"And so we're genuinely very proud to have been recognised as a finalist in these awards. We've always been focused on responding to the individual needs and choices of our residents, and this seems to have been recognised by making the finals in this award category."



Photo: LtoR Phil Bedford, Tonia Zeeman, Sandy Komen, Penny John



There's nothing like a mate's support

We are proud to launch a new initiative designed to provide support for ex-service personnel who are exiting the defence force.

Transition Mates is a program that will support RAAFA's Andrew Russell Veteran Living (ARVL) program. ARVL's aim is to ensure that every ex-service person in WA, who is homeless or at risk of homelessness, has the opportunity to access appropriate and affordable housing.

We aim to provide practical supports, learning and connections, which empower veterans to generate their own positive living and accommodation outcomes. By partnering with a range of providers we will be supporting veterans to forge community connections and develop their own strengths and living skills, which are sustainable for their individual circumstances. Transition Mates is one pathway toward this important empowerment.

Training and information sessions

advocates - all former members of the three ADF services - joined together and with AFA's help created the Bull Creek Veteran Support Centre, which now operates out of the western end of AFA House, in partnership with the recently formed Combined Defence Force Support Association.

are underway for members interested in volunteering to become a 'mate'.

Ian Craig, Head of Clear Skies, explains that the Defence Chaplaincy network will link volunteer 'mates' with separating service members who may benefit from some support.

"Our volunteers have initially been engaged from within our existing RAAFA membership, although this initiative has received interest from the broader veteran community and we expect this to eventually grow as the program expands to other forces," explains Ian.

"Volunteers will learn about the objectives for the initiative, and training for skills to be developed to facilitate a healthy and beneficial relationship between mates and veterans."

If you are interested in becoming a Mate, please contact the Clear Skies Coordinator on (08) 9288 8425 or via Rachel.murphy@raafawa.org.au.

Full steam ahead on replica ferry

Meadow Springs Estate resident John Taylor has always lived by the mantra 'never start a job unless you can finish it properly'.

And, despite his great age of 94, John is still living by that saying, having just spent over two years completing a solar-powered model ferry, a replica of a steamboat that operated on the Yarra River, and which had its maiden voyage at Meadow Springs Estate in mid-June.

"It all started at the beginning of lockdown when my son told me that he thought I needed a project to work on through the pandemic," explains John, who was born at Murray Bridge in South Australia, in 1929.

"So, I started to research which materials I would need, and it took me six months to get them together, including acquiring some solar

panels from China. From there I got a set of designs sent over from England and then basically got to work.

"I must say that this project would not have been possible without the incredibly enthusiastic friends I have at the Hobby Workshop on the estate, including Peter Aschenbrenner, John Hewitt, who completed all of the electrics and Mike Kelly, who built the launch vehicle.

"Everybody has been extremely supportive of this project for over two years."

And, as can be imagined, John said he was absolutely thrilled to launch his boat on Sunday, 18 June, which attracted quite a crowd at the Meadow Springs Estate pool.

"I was absolutely wrapped to get it on the water," admits John, who has

lived on the estate with his late wife Eileen for 21 years.

"I remember when I first moved into the estate and discovered the workshop, I joked that, with all the machinery available, you could build a battleship. Of course, at that point I could never have dreamt that one day I would build a replica ferry that was solar powered."

And so, presumably, after wrapping up such a large and intricate project, John will be happy to put his feet up and relax?

"Not a chance," says John. "I am expecting my very first great grandchild in September, so the next job on my to-do list is to restore



an old tricycle that has been in the family for years. No doubt the little one will need a set of wheels in a few years, so I'm going to make it my job to make sure there's a trike ready and waiting."

Congratulations to John, and indeed everyone at the Meadow Springs workshop who helped with this significant project over the past two years. What a great job - done properly, of course - under John's leadership.

Bunnings team visit

Residents from Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge were given the opportunity to practice their creative flair when a team from the local Bunnings store paid a visit recently to run a free woodwork workshop.

The seniors had the choice of making either a trinket or pencil box, and we have it on good authority that they had an incredibly enjoyable time in the process.

Geneve Hewitt, Therapy Assistant, said the residents thoroughly enjoyed the company of the Bunnings team, in addition to rolling

up their sleeves and having the opportunity to make something with their hands.

"It gives a real sense of community when the Bunnings team from down the road can pop in to do a DIY workshop with our seniors," she said.

"RAAFA is extremely grateful to everyone who came along to conduct the workshop, the seniors who took part just loved getting involved and being creative, as well as having something to show for it at the end of the activity."



103 candles for Ruby

Alice Ross-King Care Centre resident Ruby Edwards celebrated her 103rd birthday in late June, surrounded by her friends and the care team at the popular aged care home who say she has had a very interesting life and has a wonderfully kind heart.

And in a century that's seen two World Wars, the landing of the man on the moon, and a myriad of world-shaping events, Ruby says there's really no secret to longevity.

The born and bred West Australian grew up in hotels in the city and in regional WA, which were managed by her mother.

"I can remember going to Nedlands kindergarten and primary school," says Ruby, whose father tragically died when she was just nine years old.

"When I left school I worked as an assistant in a ladies clothing shop, after which I married my husband, though we waited until after the war as he was in the Air Force.

"We didn't have children; our passion was travelling, which we enjoyed very much. We were fortunate to visit England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Singapore, New Zealand, South America, Mexico, USA and Canada in our time.

"We were happily married for 70 years before he sadly died 12 years ago.

"When I look back, I can see that I've had a good life, though I don't think there's any secret to it. I was held up at gun point at work once and I recall asking the gunman if he wanted golden bullets because I worked in a jewellery store at the time," she laughs.



"They caught him though and this incident certainly made me appreciate everything I had.

"Like everyone, I've had my ups and downs, but I can honestly say I've had an interesting life."

According to Occupational Therapist, Waruna Ranatunga, Ruby is an inspiring lady who is very much respected by everyone at the care centre.

"Everyone at the Alice Ross-King Care Centre likes and respects Ruby very much, and we're all delighted that she has reached this major milestone - we certainly all made a big fuss of her on her birthday."

"Maintaining good health throughout life is a key factor when it comes to ageing well, but things like maintaining relationships are just as important to positive ageing, which we place a strong emphasis on at RAAFA," says Waruna.

Happy 103rd birthday Ruby, from all your friends at RAAFA and the Alice Ross King Care Centre.

Sporting shenanigans

'Give it your best shot' was the mantra for the sporting shenanigans that took place at Erskine Grove recently.

Organised by David Lloyd, President of the Branch Resident's Committee, the two-day event involved eight teams of four players, all of whom represented a Commonwealth country.

"We had a marvellous time and the event culminated in a sausage sizzle and a really good get-together," says David, who was ably helped by his wife Shirley in organising the event.

"In first place came Sri Lanka, followed by Australia and then Scotland, and everyone was presented with medals made of paper plates which all contributed to the fun and lots of laughs.

"I did invite King Charles III, the patron of the Commonwealth Games, to see if he would like to come along and present the medals, but I was informed he was quite busy. So we settled for King Charles

the Second Hand (aka good-sport Peter Nicolay), who donned a crown and a huge robe made of a tablecloth encrusted with jewels that his wife and sister-in-law had sewn."

As part of the fun, the 32 competitors participated in a range of different competitions including paper plane flying, ladder golf, carpet bowls and an egg and spoon race.

"I think it's fair to say the competitive spirit is still alive and well at Erskine," adds David. "Over the weekend we even had our fair share of spectators who cheered us on, which added to the atmosphere."

Competitor Alison De Grey said all of David and Shirley's hard work in putting on the event should be acknowledged and applauded.

"David really is a wonderful social club president and he did an amazing job with our Commonwealth games, as it was a tremendous amount of work," says

Alison.

"It was a fantastic weekend and we all had a laugh a minute. Seeing so many competitors participate in the games was so, so funny, and we laughed so hard we had tears running down our faces."

Fellow competitor Glenise Winton concurred and said it was a fantastic way to get everyone in the village together, particularly residents who might not participate in group activities regularly.

"The event really brought people together, there were such an atmosphere of camaraderie and we had a million laughs," she says.

And resident Dave Crowdy adds: "Seeing a bunch of 60, 70 and 80-year-olds running around in an



egg and spoon race was absolutely hilarious, it's safe to say that a very fun weekend was had by all."

Well done David and Shirley, and everyone else involved, in bringing the Erskine Grove community together for a fun and fabulous event.

Feeling the joy of the wind in their hair

The odd creaking knee wasn't going to stop residents from one of RAAFA's popular residential care homes clamber on a bike and feel the wind in their hair recently.

And they were able to do just that thanks to the team at not-for-profit organisation Cycling Without Age, who enabled the seniors from Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge to hop on a specially adapted trishaw for a spin around the estate, while enjoying some winter sunshine.

Cycling Without Age is a global movement which started in Denmark 10 years ago and helps mature aged people remain active and outdoors by experiencing the thrill of a bike ride while also improving their social interactions and opportunities to experience fun and laughter.

Geneve Hewitt, Therapy Assistant, says the fun morning offered seniors the physical joy of feeling the wind in their hair while being able to wave to some familiar faces, with several residents also asking for a detour so they could ride past their previous home, or the home of a loved one.

"It was fantastic to see how this opportunity brought so much joy to our residents," Geneve said.

"It's also amazing to see how many wonderful volunteers are involved as cyclists or 'pilots' of the trishaws, and how selflessly they donate their time to enrich the lives of others.

"The entire experience was great fun for everyone involved and there is so much social interaction that comes with the attention of passers-by during the duration of the e-bike ride, as well as between passengers and the pilot, which makes it a truly joyful experience for everyone. It's a great way for our residents to stay connected with the community."



Art exhibition a hit



An art exhibition organised by residents at RAAFA's Erskine Grove community succeeded in showcasing a diverse range of paintings created by the talented seniors.

The exhibition, held in May, featured artworks in a variety of forms, including acrylics, pastels and pencil, all of which were created as a result of the regular weekly classes which have been held at the community hall for almost 20 years.

Organiser and teacher, Vera Overing, said the exhibition provided all the group members with the chance to show off the pieces they had been working on for several months.

"Our group participants have been enjoying expressing themselves creatively and it's been wonderful to see how much everyone involved has liked being part of the exhibition," says Vera, who explains that four of the original members of the regular class are still attending each week.

"The project has been a great opportunity for everyone involved, and those who participated really embraced the creative process."

The art and craft group at Erskine Grove takes place every Thursday from 9.30am-12.30pm at the community hall and is open to everyone. Participants pay \$10.00 per session, which includes hot drinks as well as a spot of morning tea.

"We all love the classes and have a ball each week," adds Anne Bell, who has been a regular for over eight years.

"I have a huge amount of admiration for Vera, she helps people at all levels, even those like me who have never painted in their life. She's a very patient lady, she's just fabulous."

Stop press! Special thanks to resident, Paula Loser too, for project managing all of the advertising for the exhibition.

Sunday craft café a big hit

When Janice Beresford realised that quite a few residents at Meadow Springs Estate spent their weekends home alone, she wanted to offer them an alternative so they could have the opportunity to mix and mingle.

And that's when Janice, who has lived at Meadow Springs for just over three years with husband Willie, had the bright idea to start a themed 'Craft Café' on the first Sunday of every month.

"I really felt there was a need for more to do at the weekends when I realised that lots of residents didn't see their families for one reason or another, so a few of us brainstormed ideas and we thought of starting up a social gathering. Then we hit upon the idea of the craft café," explains Janice.

"We have so many talented residents who can crochet, bake, knit, design things out of wood and are fabulous card makers, and we thought we could give them an outlet to sell their handmade items, while at the same time enjoying

the opportunity to catch up with neighbours and friends."

The rest, as they say, is history and the craft café now runs out of the wellness centre at Meadow Springs from 10.00am until 2.00pm on the first Sunday of the month.

In June, the theme was a 'teddy bears picnic', then a Christmas in July followed by an all-day breakfast.

On the day, residents can not only treat themselves to a coffee and cake for \$3.00, or a spot of lunch for \$5.00, they can also pick up a beautiful, handmade gift, made with love by a talented resident, or maybe some home-made jam or pickles.

"It's a real team effort," adds Janice, who is also keen to recognise her regular right-hand woman, Anne Fraser, who she admits she couldn't do without (and, apparently, it's not just because she makes really tasty soup!).

"We have a wonderful group of volunteers, and my husband helps



too by offering lifts in the buggy to anyone who needs one.

"We get around 60 people coming along every month, so it's really popular. I'd actually like to get it running more than once a month, it's a bit of work but everyone enjoys it so much, particularly the

Eccles cakes made by Annie," she laughs.

Everyone is welcome at the craft café at Meadow Springs. If you haven't already checked it out for yourself, the residents would love to see you there soon.

Capturing fun community spirit

The old adage laughter is the best medicine certainly rang true at Erskine Grove, with residents taking part in a country and western-themed lunch, complete with karaoke singing, a best dressed parade and lots of raffle prizes.

Organised by the Resident's Committee President, Paula Loser, the fun-filled afternoon stretched out from lunchtime until 5.00pm, with the highlight being a special performance from the committee of Tina Turner's powerful hit 'Nutbush City Limits'.

"The lunch was absolutely fantastic and such great fun, with over 95 people attending, including some new residents to the estate," says Paula.

"It was wonderful to see everyone having such a great time and enjoying what was a delicious lunch.

"We have such a friendly estate where people genuinely enjoy each other's company, and that shone through during the entire afternoon."



Making music brings back memories

The magic of music was brought to residents living at Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge recently, thanks to the talented ukulele players at Cambrai village.

The Cambrai Ukelele Group seamlessly got seniors tapping their feet and singing along to the music they loved from many decades ago.

Geneve Hewitt, Therapy Assistant at Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge, says the therapeutic effect of music for seniors, particularly for those living with dementia and other related conditions, couldn't be overstated.

"Generally speaking, music is an incredible trigger for emotions and memories from our past to emerge," she says.

"We're delighted to have the very talented ukulele players from Cambrai provide such an uplifting and positive experience for our residents.

"It was wonderful to see as seniors, some of whom are usually very quiet, express their joy and sing along to so many familiar songs."

Club Bites

Proof of membership may be required when using facilities available to you, please have your card available. Non-members are required to be signed in by a current member. Not a member? Not a problem. Applications and details available on our website.

MEADOW SPRINGS CLUB 9582 5375

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

Weekly specials

Monday or Tuesday, Carvery special \$14.50
2nd Monday, 2.00pm to 3.00pm Devonshire afternoon tea
Wednesday, Club night - meals from \$15.00, chase the ace, bingo and horse racing
Thursday, Happy hour, 4.00pm to 6.00pm

Events

Friday, 8 September, Lambs fry and bacon special
Friday, 15 September, Spring lunch
Friday, 13 October, Lambs fry and bacon special
September sundowner - 5.00pm to 7.00pm, Back to Bali theme
Tuesday, 7 November, Melbourne cub

Function facilities available for hire to all RAAFA members. The club has the Beaufort Restaurant, recently refurbished Sports Bar and Middleton Hall, which have a fully integrated audio and visual system, dance floor, cash bar and commercial kitchen ready to cater for any special event. For more information or to book, contact the Club.



CAMBRAI CLUB 9304 5400

Open again for business! Come along and check out the fresh new look.

Weekly specials

Tuesday, Darts and happy hour commencing shortly, 4.00pm
Wednesday, Morning tea from 10.00am
Wednesday, Roast dinner and happy hour from 4.00pm. Bookings essential
Friday, Lunch from 11.30am, no booking necessary
1st and 3rd Friday, Sundowner and Happy hour from 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, 2.00pm to 3.00pm Devonshire afternoon tea
1st and 3rd Tuesday, Club night \$15.00 parmi or pasta. Includes beverage (bookings essential)
2nd and 4th Friday, Bistro night (bookings essential)
3rd Saturday, Sundowner bar opens 4.00pm



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 day \$18.00
Tuesday, Fish and chips \$18.00
Wednesday, Pie day \$17.00
1st and 3rd Thursday, Lamb shanks day \$23.00
2nd and 4th Thursday, Lambs fry and bacon \$17.00
Friday, Chicken parma day \$20.00
Monday and Wednesday, Happy hour 4.00pm
A la Carte night 4th Wednesday of every month



Cambrai forum

Almost forty residents came along to a rather different experience at this month's Forum.

The forum was created over eight months ago as a social event for residents to listen to different guest speakers discussing interesting topics and as an opportunity to get together. Organiser, Stu Usher said, "it's been pretty successful so far and came about to resurrect part of the Probus Club activities after it folded."

This month, local dance instructor and therapist, Suzanne Oehlers, along with six of her senior dancers, gave a presentation designed to illustrate the fascinating relationship between dance and cognitive function. While many associate dance with physical benefits, Suzanne says recent research shows that it can also have positive effects on brain function, improving memory, attention and processing speed.

Suzanne's experience and



educational tours in the Middle East was clearly apparent by the music, and the stunning costumes worn by

the dancers during the presentation. It certainly caught the attention of the audience!

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

ATSA Expo visit

Wellbeing officers Angeline, Vanessa and Mischa had the opportunity to visit the Assistive Living Technology Suppliers Australia independent living expo in June where they explored and gathered information on the assistive technology, equipment and aged care.

So, when you have a spare moment, pop in, have a chat and find out what's new in this space.



LtoR Vanessa, Angeline and Mischa

AFME

Royal Commission deadline fast approaching

You now have fewer than 100 days to lodge a submission with the Royal Commission examining the treatment of veterans and serving ADF members.

Submissions must be lodged by Friday, October 13.

But there's good news: lawyers from the Defence and Veterans Legal Service are providing free assistance with the preparation of submissions.

This legal service has specialist lawyers in all states and territories, and it also assists the families of current and ex-serving people.

Importantly, its legal support is confidential and completely independent of all agencies - including ADF, DVA and the Defence Department.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide represents a major opportunity. It aims to right past wrongs and improve the treatment of current and future veterans and ADF personnel.

If you'd like to know more, call the Defence and Veterans Legal Service on 1800 33 1800 to chat about your options. You can remain anonymous if you wish and its services are free.

Amity Village

Flag flying high, thanks to Rebecca

When residents at RAAFA's Amity Village Albany flagged (pun intended) that their current Australian flag was looking a bit tatty, they contacted Rebecca Stephens MLA to see if she could help.

And the very next day, everyone was delighted to welcome Rebecca to the popular village, who brought with her a brand-new flag which is now flying in pride of place at the estate.

Rebecca is known for being very involved with her community, and the RAAFA community was certainly very impressed with how swiftly she was able to help out.



Meadow Springs

Men's wellbeing on the agenda

The importance of having a positive mental outlook isn't lost on the team at RAAFA's Meadow Springs Estate, something that was highlighted as particularly pertinent during Men's Health Week recently.

The theme for the week was loneliness and isolation, a relevant topic with research showing that a staggering 43% of men regularly experience these issues. What's more, this number is shown to increase with age, as social connections become more challenging after retirement, with the loss of loved ones, and also changing physical and cognitive health.

These alarming statistics, coupled with the relevance of Men's Health Week, prompted Mischa Matthews to help connect the men at the estate with health professionals, as well as local groups and clubs, resulting in a number of free events to encourage and facilitate health checks and greater socialising opportunities.

"Men's Health Week is an important opportunity in helping to raise the profile of men's health and wellbeing, which has often not always been a priority for individual men," said Mischa.

"And so we organised a number of initiatives, which included partnering with RAAFA Connect to provide free blood pressure checks and also put on a free 'Show 'N Shine' car show."

The local clubs who supported the event included the Free Spirit Car Club, Peel Veterans Car Club, Ulysses Club, Men's Shed Bike Club and Murray Mandurah Bike Club.

"We really do strive to promote positive health and wellbeing for all of our residents," adds Mischa.