

DoveTale

AUTUMN 2016

- Maggie Beer visits Noble Park
- Seeking community input
- Residents race for cancer research
- Keeping hearts healthy



News from across Uniting AgeWell communities





Executive Director & CEO Message

New research released by Alzheimer's Australia this year shows there will be an estimated 400,000 people living with dementia in just five years' time. It is the single greatest cause of disability in older Australians and the second leading cause of death across all ages.

As the number of Australians with dementia increases, so does the responsibility of organisations like Uniting AgeWell to support and care for them. Creating specific dementia care programs becomes even more important.

Uniting AgeWell has introduced the UA Namaste program to care for people nearing the end of life or with end-stage dementia who are agitated or withdrawn. Meaning "honouring the spirit within", it works holistically to stimulate a person's senses in a comforting and pleasurable way. It uses sounds, taste, smell and gentle massage to decrease a person's stress and anxiety.

As you will read in this edition of DoveTale, this wonderful program has been piloted at Carnsworth in Kew, and has already achieved outstanding results. Residents are calmer and more responsive, and staff and families are in turn more comfortable.

Last year UA Namaste was recognised as a finalist in the Best Dementia Program category at the 6th Ageing Asia Conference in Singapore.

The program is part of the AgeWell Palliate service, which aims to create caring and supportive environments for older people, especially as they come to the end of their life.

We recognise the need for comfort, support, choice and dignity according to a person's culture and beliefs. Our chaplains are an important source of support and comfort for people and their families, and our care staff are highly trained in dementia-specific care.

We want to enable more people to experience the care and support of UA Namaste. And as more people develop dementia, the need for this program will only increase.

Our goal is to roll it out across all Uniting AgeWell residential care sites in Victoria and Tasmania. This requires staff training and the development of special Namaste rooms.

We are seeking community support to help us expand this program to other sites. If you would like to know more about UA Namaste and how you can help us achieve this goal, read the story on page 4 of this edition of DoveTale.

It's important we continue to develop and improve our services and offer high quality care and support that enables people to age well.

I hope you enjoy reading more about Uniting AgeWell's programs in DoveTale, and I wish you a safe and joyful Easter.

Kind regards

Valerie J Lyons



Message from the Board Chair

Uniting AgeWell recently decided to establish a new community committee to help it plan and shape the future of the organisation's services and the aged care system as a whole.

This committee, known as the AgeWell Community Advisory Committee (ACAC), is an exciting new initiative. Although common in the hospital and disability sectors, this is rare in senior services so this is a ground-breaking step in which Uniting AgeWell is a trail-blazer.

After advertising for expressions of interest, two information sessions were held – one in Hobart and one in Melbourne – in February. I was pleased to attend both and was encouraged by the attendance.

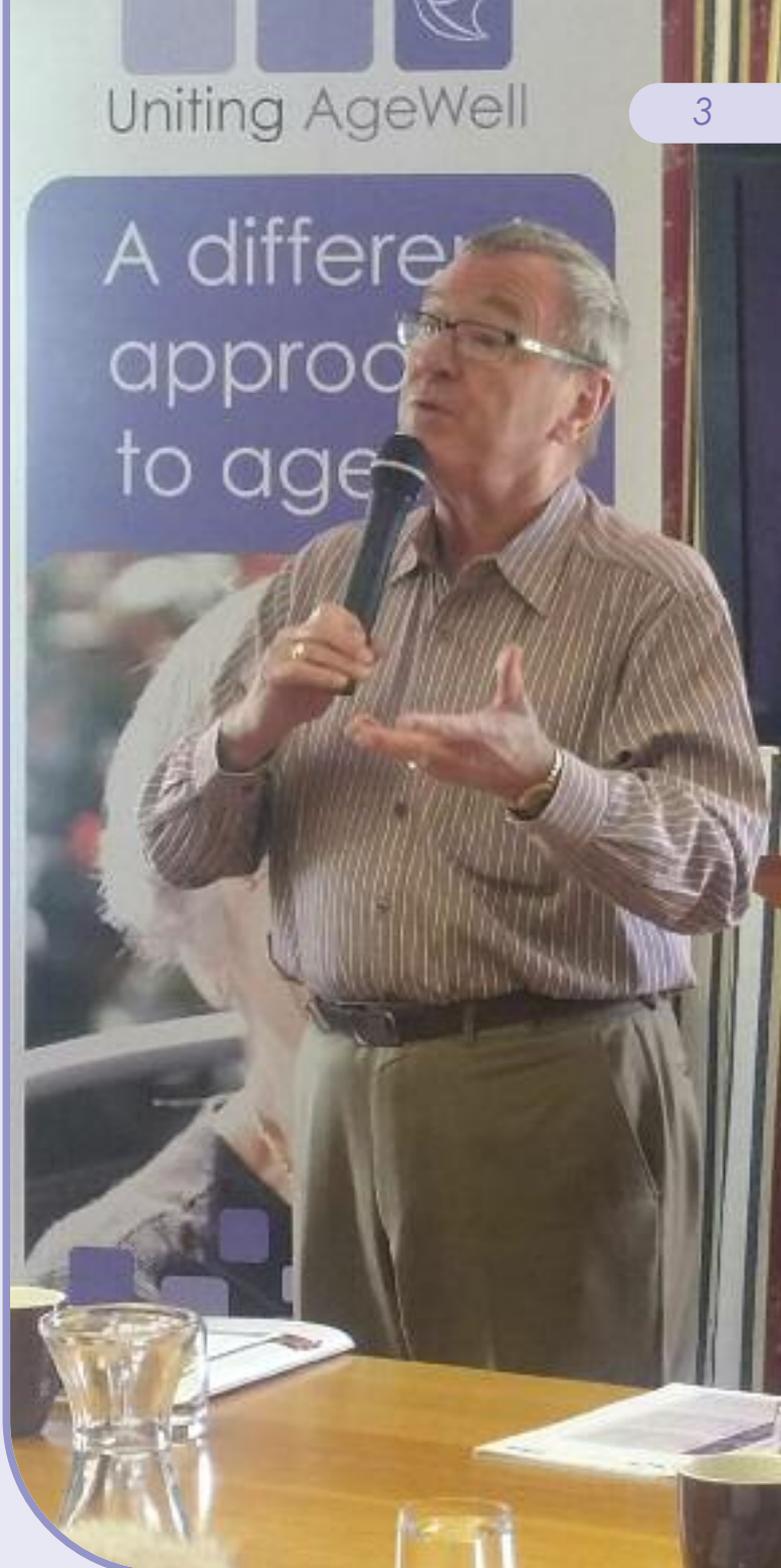
Many potential members of the committee travelled long distances to attend and show their interest. We had an amazing range of skills and interests represented, so it will not be easy to choose the 8-12 members who will initially form the committee.

Once the membership is approved, the members will participate in an orientation program prior to the first meeting early in the second half of 2016.

This new committee will provide important community and consumer feedback on the way in which we are providing services and particularly the areas of work in which we can do better.

I look forward to this committee helping the Board and, through the Board, our staff to be even more focussed on the personal needs of those in our residential homes and in our community programs. The Board is committed to taking seriously the views and recommendations of this new committee.

As with all UA Board committees, the ACAC will be chaired by a Board member. The Board has appointed Ms Jill Linklater, a registered nurse with broad experience of the acute, disability and aged care sectors. I am sure that under Jill's



Uniting AgeWell

A different approach to age

UA Board Chair Rev Allan Thompson speaking at the ACAC information session in Hobart

leadership this new committee will quickly find its feet and make a valuable and lasting contribution to the life and work of Uniting AgeWell.

As we strive for excellence in what we do, this is a further expression of Uniting AgeWell's commitment to its vision of being a creative leader enabling communities to age well and individuals to live to their potential.

Rev Allan Thompson



Carnsworth resident Kevin Hogg has become more alert through the Namaste program

Namaste program – honouring the spirit within

A new Uniting AgeWell palliative program is using massage, music and aromatherapy to soothe yet gently stimulate residents who may be agitated or withdrawn due to the effects of end-stage dementia.

The UA Namaste program, part of AgeWell Palliate, is offered to clients nearing end of life or with advanced dementia.

Meaning 'honouring the spirit within', the unique care program has been piloted at Carnsworth in Kew and it is hoped it can be rolled out across all Uniting AgeWell sites.

The program features an enclosed UA Namaste room creating an environment that promotes sensory stimulation and improves wellbeing.

The room evokes feelings of calmness, allowing the person to focus on sensory components through massage, aromatherapy, natural light and familiar music from the person's era.

Uniting AgeWell's Palliative Care Specialist Kerry Whitlock, who led the pilot program, says eye contact, gentle massage, taste and music are all senses that can generate a response.

"The UA Namaste care model works to decrease a client's stress and anxiety, and consequently, their family's," she said.

"Through this style of care, we're finding ways to calm the person and surround them with a peaceful environment at the end of their life.

"It's very simple things, but all these little things really add up to a much greater level of care and support."

Kerry says the program has already achieved great results.

Since taking part in the program, staff and family members have noticed 79-year-old Carnsworth resident Kevin Hogg is more alert.

He was diagnosed with dementia 14 years ago, resulting in the loss of verbal communication and memory.

"He looks brighter and responds well to the carers – it's a wonderful program that's certainly useful in a residential setting," says Kevin's wife Ilka Turner.

Uniting AgeWell is running an appeal to help raise the necessary funds to create UA Namaste rooms across all its residential sites and to deliver specialised training to staff.

To find out how you can help UA deliver this important program to more people, or to make a donation, call T: (03) 9276 5712 or visit unitingagewell.org 



Lillian Martin residents strike a pose in their Cancer Council shirts

Residents race for cancer research

Residents at Uniting AgeWell Lillian Martin proved age is no barrier to contributing to the community when they took part in this year's Cancer Council Relay for Life.

For the second year, staff and residents entered a team in the 24-hour fundraising event in Hobart.

Team 'Lillian Martin', captained by Manager Integrated Services Vicki Mills and made up of staff, took part in the official relay at Tolosa Park Glenorchy on February 27-28.

But determined not to miss out, 24 residents held their own relay on February 22 where they did laps around the aged care residence.

Family members and volunteers helped residents walk or wheel through the corridors, after heavy rainfall on the day forced the team to do the relay inside.

Vicki says like many people, Lillian Martin residents have been touched by cancer and want to do whatever they can to raise money for cancer research.

"They did an incredible job at this year's event and raised \$700 towards the Lillian Martin team," Vicki said.

"This is more than double the amount of \$326 they raised last year.

"Derrick Shaft, our extended care assistant, even shaved his head to raise more money."

Nell Rapely, 103, completed a lap escorted by physiotherapist Ahmed Mohamed.



Nell Rapely completes her lap with physiotherapist Ahmed Mohamed

Nell, the eldest resident to take part, said she was extremely happy with her efforts and like the other residents, was over the moon with the event.

Residents trained for several months for the event and the Cancer Council Tasmania provided shirts, balloons and banners.

The day was so successful it featured on television news programs in Hobart and in The Mercury newspaper.

The staff and resident teams at Lillian Martin raised a combined total of \$1,887 towards cancer research. 🐾



Maggie Beer shares her knowledge on gardening with Noble Park's Community Programs Coordinator Michelle Thompson

Maggie Beer inspired by community garden

Renowned Australian cook and author Maggie Beer says Uniting AgeWell Noble Park's community garden project is a great example of working together to engage people in healthy living and eating.

Maggie visited Noble Park on February 22 to see first-hand the site of the new community garden project and share her advice on its development. The Maggie Beer Foundation donated \$2,500 towards the garden as part of its Wellbeing Gardens Program grants in 2015.

Maggie says she was drawn to Noble Park's idea of turning the area into a vibrant community garden space.

"The intergenerational mixture is so important, using the outdoor kitchen to teach unemployed youth how to cook and to encourage volunteering," Maggie said.

"It also provides an opportunity to educate people in the community who are unsure how to cook themselves, educating them about what is truly nutritional, what's seasonal and inexpensive."

Maggie spent over an hour at the Noble Park Community, sharing her tips on gardening, chatting to staff and enjoying recipes contributed by the Noble Park community in their fundraising cookbook *From Seed to Table*.

Noble Park chef Sarah Friedrich cooked a selection of recipes from the book for Maggie, who was so impressed she went back for seconds.

When complete, the community garden will feature an outdoor kitchen and is designed to encourage social engagement and connections between residents, family members and local communities. It will also participate in the free food movement, giving locals free access to the garden's bountiful harvest.

Stage two of the garden project is underway and involves landscaping, including an area for lawn bowls.

All proceeds from the sale of *From Seed to Table* go towards the community garden. Copies are \$25 each. To order, T: 9554 0717. 



Kalkee Murray resident Betty Jones with Delta Therapy Dog Amelia

Pooches bring comfort and peace

Every week, dogs are spreading their unconditional love and joy to Uniting AgeWell residents, proving why pet therapy is so beneficial in senior services.

For several years, three UA sites have taken part in the Delta Society Australia dog therapy program.

Delta believes the human-animal bond remarkably improves quality of life and a special kinship is shared between dogs and people of all ages.

Research also shows that animal therapy can have many medical benefits, such as reducing anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, and can improve self-esteem and social skills.

Amelia the Poochon (a cross between a Poodle and Bichon) visits residents at Kalkee Murray in Geelong every Wednesday.

Certified by Delta Society Australia, Amelia spends 10 to 15 minutes with residents in their room where she gratefully receives pats, cuddles and treats.

Kalkee Lifestyle Assistant Diane Webb says Amelia's visits have an extremely positive effect on the residents.

"Our residents, especially those with dementia, get a lot out of Amelia's visits, she brings a sense of peace and calm to them," she said.

"There's a sense of wholeness and wellbeing our residents experience when Amelia's sitting on their laps being stroked, developing a strong human-animal bond."

Delta dogs also provide therapy for residents at Uniting AgeWell's Camberwell communities. At Tanderra, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel cross visits residents each Tuesday, while a Golden Labrador spreads his love at Condare Court on Mondays.

Lifestyle Coordinator Liz Marsh says residents are visibly excited to see their furry friends each week and the positive effect on their demeanour is clear.

Many other Uniting AgeWell sites also welcome dogs, with staff often bringing in their well-behaved pets to sit with residents, while others have resident pooches that carefully parade the corridors. 🐾



Heartmoves practitioners Lidia Parkin and participant Margaret Kelly

Making hearts healthy in Hawthorn

A physical activity program developed by the Heart Foundation for people with stable long-term chronic health conditions is coming to the Hawthorn Centre.

Hawthorn will be the first Uniting AgeWell site to offer Heartmoves, a popular and gentle physical activity program suitable for anyone who has not exercised for a while.

The Heart Foundation program, which begins in April, will be administered by accredited and licenced Heartmoves practitioners and will show clients how to enjoy exercise without straining their bodies.

Uniting AgeWell Exercise Physiologist Lidia Parkin, an accredited Heartmoves practitioner, says Heartmoves is designed to be a safe and effective exercise program for people with long-term chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes or obesity.

"Everyone can participate. It involves low-to-moderate intensity physical activity programs and classes are limited in size to ensure maximum safety for participants," Lidia said.

Hawthorn Centre Team Leader Andrea Tilley, also an accredited Heartmoves practitioner, says the program provides more than just exercise.

"The program provides people a friendly environment in which to exercise," Andrea said.

"It allows us to tackle chronic disease management in a social environment where people have fun while exercising.

"It focuses on improving fitness, strength, flexibility, coordination and balance, all done in a fun and supportive environment."

Classes are scheduled to begin in April at the Centre, located in Elgin St. An open day is also planned where the community can observe Heartmoves in action and sign up.

The Hawthorn Centre offers a wide range of allied health services, a fully equipped gym designed for older people and social support activities including interest groups such as social outings, book clubs and the Hawthorn Men's Shed.

For further information, contact the Hawthorn Centre on T: 9815 0155 



Artist's impression of the completed Manor Lakes café

Modernising amenities at Manor Lakes

Manor Lakes Community has undergone a major redevelopment, with a new 33-bed wing, fresh new activities, living and dining areas and garden landscaping, creating a modern and vibrant residence in Melbourne's outer west.

The project, part of Uniting AgeWell's Ten Year Property Strategy, also includes new administration offices, utilities and amenities areas such as a hairdressing salon and café, and additional car parking at the Wyndham Vale site.

Construction works were carried out in stages to minimise disruption, starting with works in the main kitchen last September, followed by the nurse's station in the high-care wing, bar and dining areas.

The last stage was the construction of a contemporary café, with outdoor seating and garden areas that will also be open to the community.

Manor Lakes Manager Integrated Services Louise Harvey says residents are already enjoying some of the new amenities, including the salon and chapel.

"We're all looking forward to the completion of works and letting residents and clients enjoy the facilities fully," she said.

"Construction of the new wing is due to be completed by mid April and it is hoped the first residents will move in at the start of May.

Wyndham Vale is one of Victoria's fastest growing municipalities. Louise says it's important the residence meets the needs of this rapidly growing community, providing high quality, flexible care to residents in a modern and vibrant setting.

A number of Uniting AgeWell's older sites have undergone renovations over the past 12 months, modernising bedrooms, living areas and creating a more welcoming environment.

For admissions enquiries or to arrange a tour, please call the Regional Admissions Officer on T: 9742 7201 



Strathdevon war veteran awarded French Legion of Honour



George Godfrey Flack receiving the Legion of Honour

When Uniting AgeWell Strathdevon resident George Godfrey Flack joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) 73 years ago, he never expected to one day be awarded France's highest military award, the National Order of the Legion of Honour.

Last December, the 93-year-old became one of a handful of Australians to receive the award, which is bestowed upon servicemen that uphold the ideals of France.

Godfrey joined the RAAF at the age of 20 for the thrill of flying Lancaster bombers and was a bomber pilot with the Royal Air Force Bomber Command in England during the Second World War.

He flew allied Lancaster bombers over Germany and completed 44 missions, including two on D-Day in 1944 over France, at a time when it was considered almost impossible to survive so many combat operations.

Godfrey, who was also awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1945, says it was an honour to receive the award, which is rarely bestowed on foreigners.

"It's difficult to explain and express how honoured I am to people who didn't experience the situation and what was going on in the world back then, but it was a lovely gesture and I am truly honoured," said Godfrey, who lives at Uniting

AgeWell's Latrobe Community, Strathdevon, south of Devonport.

Godfrey's nephew, George Flack, says the family is extremely proud of his uncle.

"Uncle Godfrey grew up in Queenstown, Tasmania, driving trucks while harbouring deep desires to join the Air Force," said George, whose own parents-in-law live at Uniting AgeWell Strath-Haven in Bendigo.

"He was rejected several times due to insufficient education but he kept applying and was finally accepted and became one of the most successful in his class."

French Ambassador to Australia Mr Christophe Lecourtier presented Godfrey with the award at a ceremony at the Hobart Town Hall.

"Mr Flack exemplifies the two countries' ongoing amity. His spirit is a great contribution to what we are now," he told Southern Cross News.

"It's very important for me to come and express how grateful France is even 70 years later."

In a letter presented at the ceremony, Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs Secretary Simon Lewis said Australia was proud that France was honouring Godfrey for his participation in the Liberation of France. 🕊



Jane Edmanson will share her gardening tips at Amarco on April 16.

Community gets exclusive insight into Amarco

Denise Drysdale, Denis Walter and Jane Edmanson lead a huge line-up of entertainment and special guests at Uniting AgeWell's Amarco Apartments this year.

The stars will entertain and inform residents and community guests at a number of public events to be held at the independent retirement living complex in Kingsville over the coming months.

At an Open Day on Saturday April 16, gardening guru Jane Edmanson will host an information session from 11am teaching people how to make the most out of gardening in small spaces – perfect for those with balconies and courtyards.

The smooth voice of renowned singer and radio host Denis Walter will fill the Amarco lounge on Friday, May 6 for a special morning tea event in the lead up to Mother's Day.

And at another morning tea on July 8, Denise Drysdale will entertain guests with her many talents.

In the lead up to winter, Uniting AgeWell's Hotel Services Manager Victoria, Carlo Napoli, will host a Winter Warmer Masterclass, giving great advice about cooking nutritious winter food.

A chef with over 23 years experience, Carlo will focus on recipes perfect for one or two people.

These events are a wonderful opportunity for the community to get involved at Amarco and see for themselves why it's such a great place to live.

Amarco Apartments Sales and Marketing Coordinator Anita Ukalovic says the beauty of Amarco is the lifestyle and community it offers.

Bookings to the morning tea events with Denis and Denise are essential. To secure your place, find out more or to book a personal tour, contact Anita on 9314 0193 or visit amarcoapartments.com.au.

Amarco is located at 9 Edgar Street, Kingsville. Display apartments are open weekdays from 10am-4pm. 🐦



Artist Lorraine Wigraft with a work in progress

Art like 'good medicine'

The works of award-winning artist Lorraine Wigraft will be on display at Uniting AgeWell's 13th Annual Strathdon Community Art Exhibition in April.

This year's exhibition at Forest Hill will have a fresh new look with specialised lighting and updated exhibition stands to highlight the wonderful work of so many talented artists.

The exhibition, from April 14-17, promises to demonstrate beauty, raise emotions and challenge preconceived ideas when it showcases contemporary and traditional works by local and interstate artists.

Lorraine says it is a wonderful event that raises money for a great cause and knows how to showcase art.

Her talent developed at an early age and she has been drawing and painting for more than 50 years.

"Art is like good medicine and has helped me cope through traumatic experiences in life" she says.

Lorraine will be joined by fellow guest artist Zhong Hua Fan, a renowned artist and member of the Australian Guild of Realist Artists (AGRA).

Award-winning artist and Fellow of the Australian Guild of Realist Artists, Christine Cafarella-Pearce, is the guest judge of the exhibition.

The exhibition will kick off with a cocktail party on April 14, where prize winners will be announced. It concludes on April 17 with a raffle draw for a magnificent quilt handmade by the Strathdon Quilters.

Prizes will be awarded for a number of categories including The Joyce & Fred Carsten Award, Best Animal or Bird Work, Best Miniature Work and Best Work under \$250.

For more information or to purchase tickets for the opening night cocktail party, visit strathdonartshow.org.au or contact T: 9276 5706.

Entry to the exhibition is \$8. Opening night tickets are \$15. All proceeds raised will go towards the Strathdon Community lifestyle program. 🌿

Front cover: Marj Drew is able to remain independent at home thanks to Uniting AgeWell's community services

We appreciate your feedback and welcome any story ideas.

Contact: Communications and Social Media Advisor, John Le at JLe@unitingagewell.org or 03 9276 5718.

Uniting AgeWell is an organisation of the Uniting Church in Australia