

DoveTale

SUMMER 2015



- Celebrations for Foundation Day
- Chaplains at all UA sites
- Cookbook funds community garden
- Teeing off for charity

News from across Uniting AgeWell communities



Executive Director & CEO Message

January marks a year since I began as Executive Director & CEO at Uniting AgeWell. It has been a rewarding time as we have faced and met many challenges across the senior services sector, and developed a comprehensive plan for our future that meets our vision to be a creative leader enabling communities to age well and individuals to live to their potential.

Across the year I had the opportunity to travel around Victoria and Tasmania and meet the many dedicated staff and volunteers who deliver our services every day. I have been particularly impressed with their dedication and willingness to live out UA's values of respect, partnership, wisdom, stewardship and fairness in everything they do. It is these people who ensure the individuals we support continue to experience a sense of wellbeing, choice and independence at every age and stage of their lives and feel valued members of their community.

We continue to integrate the six Uniting AgeWell elements into the Uniting AgeWell Service Model – Connect, Being, Assist, Restore, Care and Palliate and Restore. The AgeWell philosophy is built on the recognition that everyone's journey is different and UA's services can support their needs at all times.

It's important that Uniting AgeWell is able to respond to the changing senior services environment. A significant achievement during the year was ensuring UA was prepared for the introduction of Consumer Directed Care (CDC) in July – a fundamental change to the way aged and community care is funded and operated. Our Business Development and regional teams spent months working to ensure UA was fully compliant by the July 1 deadline. I am delighted to report that UA's CDC service model has already been acknowledged by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency as showing best practice and one of the most progressive in the industry.

The year also saw redevelopment work at many of our sites. We began construction of a new wing at Manor Lakes in Wyndham Vale, Victoria and work is underway to modernise our older sites at Condare Court and Carnsworth in Victoria. Minor works are also being undertaken at sites across Victoria and Tasmania, including new dining rooms and bars at Strathaven and Strathglen, Tasmania, and refurbishments to bedrooms, courtyards and lounge areas. Major garden landscaping works have also been completed at sites including Strath-Haven in Bendigo.

Uniting AgeWell is fortunate to enjoy fabulous community support, including from Uniting Church congregations across Tasmania and Victoria. The broader community is also integral to UA's ability to provide its services. Our annual Golf Day in November was a wonderful example of this community support in action. Thanks to the 36 companies that joined the day, we raised \$50,000 for our inspiring Wishing Well program. You can read more about that on page five.

I am proud to be leading such an inclusive, progressive and caring organisation. Uniting AgeWell is a practical expression of the Uniting Church at work and as we lead into Christmas, it is a time to reflect on the many blessings and gifts we have, both personally and as an organisation. I wish you all a very joyous Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Kind regards

Valerie J Lyons
Executive Director & CEO



11th Birthday celebrations across Uniting AgeWell

Strath-Haven Bendigo residents Shirley and Gene Marshall with Manager Integrated Services Marlene Connaughton Facility Services Manager Victoria Garry Knight, and Executive Director & CEO Valerie Lyons in the Bendigo Garden.

From masquerade balls and rock 'n' roll grooves to garden parties and sporting adventures, Uniting AgeWell sites across Victoria and Tasmania swung into party mode to celebrate the 11th birthday of the organisation.

Festivities kicked off at Noble Park and Manor Lakes in Victoria on October 5 and finished on October 15 at Kings Meadows in Tasmania. The events captured the excitement and importance of UA's annual Foundation Day.

Strath-Haven Community in Bendigo officially opened a magnificent new garden with a huge water feature, rock creek bed, meandering paths and places for quiet reflection.

With roses, lavenders, kangaroo paws, crepe myrtles, magnolias, weeping cherries and citrus trees among the delightful greenery, the garden gives residents a great reason to get outdoors.

Each year, Foundation Day recognises the outstanding achievement of a Uniting AgeWell staff member with the UA Employee of the Year.

This year's Employee of the Year was Mary Sincock, a Lifestyle and Activities Officer at Noble Park who has worked with UA for over a decade.

"What motivates me is the smiles on the people's faces," says Mary. "I'm in people's homes, it's where they live. I get the pleasure of coming in and presenting an activity that we hope brings some enjoyment."

General Manager – Victoria South East, Carol Fountain, said Mary was a dedicated and inspiring staff member who got things done while others were thinking about it.

"Staff at Noble Park say the energy and positivity she exudes is truly uplifting and they feel very lucky to have her as part of their team."

Regional employees of the year were also awarded: Victoria North West – Tracey Frochot, Lifestyle Coordinator at Strath – Haven Community in Bendigo; Victoria South East – Leanne Brummel, Administration Officer at Strathdon in Forest Hill; and Tasmania – Maxine Verrell, ECA at Kings Meadows.

Residents and clients who turned 90 or 100 this year, or who are in their 90s and new to UA this year, received special commendations.

Staff with five, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and even 35 years of service were recognised with certificates, volunteers received awards and achievements in Occupational Health and Safety were recognised. 🌿



Wishing Well fulfils Keith's dream

Keith George's wish to fly in a Tiger Moth plane for the first time in 63 years was granted when the 88-year-old took off from Lilydale Airport thanks to the Uniting AgeWell Wishing Well program.

Keith gained his private pilot's licence in 1952 in a Tiger Moth but due to various circumstances was sadly never able to fly again.

Yet his love of flying has never waned and one of his most prized possessions is his pilot's licence and flight log book.

In October, Keith's family cheered him on as he returned to the skies in a Tiger Moth courtesy of the Wishing Well. The program helps people supported by Uniting AgeWell achieve their dreams, no matter what they might be.

From flights in a helicopter to a romantic Valentine's dinner, or an encounter with white lion cubs, the wishes are as diverse as they are individual. No dream is too big or too small.

Keith, a resident at Uniting AgeWell's Strathdon Community, was kitted out in a traditional flying jacket, goggles, hat and scarf for his memorable flight over the Yarra Valley.

"It was almost a Godly feeling to be up there in the air, in control," he said. "The take-off was wonderful, the landing was even better, the way the pilot approached the airfield."

"Flying myself, I had a lot more things to think about. This time I just thought about me and looked to the land below, and loved it when he did steep turns this way and that way."

Keith's daughter Ruth Cahill said the Wishing Well was a wonderful way of enabling families to do something special for their loved ones.

"As you get older memories become more important, so trying to connect dad back to things from his past, like his flying, is such a positive thing for him," she said. 🕊

Give the gift of a wish

You can help make dreams come true by giving to Uniting AgeWell's Wishing Well.

Donate online at www.unitingagewell.org, or by phone at 03 9276 5712

Cheques payable to Uniting AgeWell can be sent to Uniting AgeWell, Marketing & Community Relations, 10 A'Beckett Street, Kew Vic 3101.





Charity golf day hits new heights

One hundred players from 36 companies gave up their time, energy and commitments to attend the Uniting AgeWell Charity Golf Day on November 23 and help raise a record \$50,000 for UA's inspiring Wishing Well Program.

The sunny skies and stunning Commonwealth Golf Club provided a magnificent setting for players to enjoy 18 rounds of golf and networking.

Players started the day with a light brunch before venturing onto the course and their quest for glory – including a hole-in-one. However, the elusive hole-in-one prize, a Mazda CX5, went unclaimed.

The day ended with drinks and canapés in the club house followed by presentations and prizes.

The on-course competition was keen with very little between first, second and third placed teams.

The combined team of Selectus Salary Packaging (Ray Peters and Hung Tu) and Genus Landscape Architects (Jason Davidson and Oliver Stone) took out the Perpetual Trophy honours with a score of 58.25.

Runners Up were the combined team of Vivir (Clay Santos and Peter Magor), Uniting AgeWell (Michael Browning) and Cam's Window Cleaning (Cameron MacSween) with a score of 58.75.

Uniting AgeWell Executive Director & CEO Valerie Lyons thanked Uniting AgeWell's key sponsors and business partners for supporting the Charity Golf Day and UA's Wishing Well program.

She said the program brought hope, joy and happiness to the people Uniting AgeWell supported. Read how the program helped make Keith George's dream come true on page four.

Uniting AgeWell would like to thank everyone involved in the day for their support and making the day such a success. 🏌️

Particular thanks go to **Platinum Sponsor** Selectus Salary Packaging and **Gold Sponsors** Cura Pharmacy, TKGS Building, Dominant and Stella Renovations.

Silver Sponsors were: Russell Kennedy, Michael Reading Electrician, Gemini Catering Equipment, Jeff Williams Building Services, Tena, Blue Apache, Thomson Adsett, Grant Thornton, CH2, Flexiplumb, Solutions Three and SP&R Airconditioning.

Hole-in-One Sponsor was Adco Construction, **Hospitality Sponsor** PFD Food Services and **Drinks Cart Sponsor** Lion Food Service.



Chaplains making their mark

Uniting AgeWell reached an important milestone in September, with the appointment of chaplains at all 20 sites in Victoria and Tasmania.

Director of Mission John Clarke said it was the first time in the organisation's 11 years every site had a dedicated chaplain.

"The role of chaplaincy is more important than ever because they help people transition into care, and also through the challenges of ageing and dying well," he said.

"Pastoral and spiritual care is really important in delivering our age well philosophy."

The chaplains are Uniting Church ministers or pastors, or lay people from the Church community.

The newest chaplain is Ian Wheeler (above), who is looking after three Tasmanian sites – Kings Meadows, Aldersgate and Strathdevon.

Ian brings a wealth of life experience to the role, having worked in the Australian Army, horticulture and heavy industry and the Launceston City Mission, a crisis centre for homeless men.



Ian says even though the communities at Uniting AgeWell are very different to the clients of Launceston City Mission and other industries, a common need of humans is to feel connected and have a sense of community.

"The most important part of my role is to hang out with people, hear their stories and share their personal journeys," he said.

Megan Coote (below), based at Box Hill, is Uniting AgeWell's longest-serving chaplain. She will retire at the end of the year, having spent the last 12 years meeting the spiritual and emotional needs of older people and their families.

Megan says over the years she's come to understand we are all spiritual beings, even though not everyone is religious, so it's equally important for her to just sit with people and provide an ear and listen to whatever is on their mind.

"I have enjoyed working with the residents and providing pastoral care and helping create a new and supportive community for them where they are able to live life as fully as they are able," says Megan.

"It can also be a time when people are able to look back on their lives, with time to think about its meaning. Providing care and meeting their spiritual and emotional needs is important."

Megan leaves her role at Uniting AgeWell on December 31, but hopes to return to Box Hill as a volunteer in pastoral care or creative arts.

John said chaplains not only provided support for the spiritual and emotional needs of clients, but also their families, who often needed support as their loved ones settled into care. 🌿





Playing up to residents

Residents at two Uniting AgeWell sites are being encouraged to come out of their shells – and their rooms – through a unique program involving trained actors.

UA is one of just two organisations to introduce the hugely successful Play Up program in Victoria.

Designed to help residents struggling with their transition to aged care or who self-isolate, it involves trained actors wearing a distinctive 'fezz' hat role-playing with residents, singing familiar songs and generally having a laugh.

A six-month pilot program began in early 2015 at Strathdon in Forest Hill and Condare Court in Camberwell, and it has seen fantastic results. Gladys and Leon Brunton (pictured) have thrived under the program.

Condare Court Lifestyle Coordinator Liz Marsh says they are much more communicative after the visit by Play Up and happy to be involved in activities.

Liz says some people have a clear, physical reaction to the entertaining visit, which is tailored to a resident's needs, while others show more subtle mood changes.


"It's certainly made a difference to everyone involved," she said.

Frank Italiano visits Strathdon once a week and performs to residents identified as needing his support.

"Every single person is different. It's like playing to 20 different audiences a day," Frank said. "Even from week to week their responses can be different."

Frank is thrilled when residents show a response. One resident who would rarely venture out of his room now plays jovially with Frank's puppet dog, joking and laughing with Frank and the fluffy creature.

All the Play Up actors have completed training through the Arts Health Institute. UA carers and lifestyle staff also did three days of training, while the rest of the staff did a half day introduction to the program.

The program will continue at Strathdon beyond the pilot period, and it is hoped it will eventually roll out to more sites. 



Family recipes encourage healthy eating and living

The culinary tastes of Uniting AgeWell's Noble Park Community have been mixed together to create a professionally produced cookbook aimed at encouraging healthy eating and living throughout the community.

From Seed to Table was officially launched by Uniting AgeWell Executive Director & CEO Valerie Lyons with a special lunch on, November 20.

About 50 residents, clients, volunteers and guests attended the launch and taste-tested recipes from the book prepared by the Noble Park chef, including Spicy Pumpkin & Cumin Soup, Sticky Date Pudding and Butter Chicken.

A team of volunteers led by Michelle Thompson, Community Programs Coordinator at Noble Park created the delicious collection, filled with recipes submitted by residents, clients and volunteers to ensure much loved family recipes don't get lost through the generations.

"Many of us in the Noble Park Community have fantastic recipes we've used for generations that people are always trying to get hold of," said Michelle.

"So we came up with the idea of putting together a professionally produced cookbook filled with recipes that have sentimental value for people – recipes their grandparents used to make, recipes they used to cook for their children or recipes that have been handed down over successive generations.

"There is a lot of cultural diversity among our residents and the recipes reflect that diversity.

"Our recipes range from Kotopoulo Kapama from Greece to Vindaloo from India to Pho from Vietnam and even the basic meatloaf and pavlova!"

The cookbook is part of an overall project at Uniting AgeWell Noble Park to promote healthy eating, exercise and community engagement. This includes establishing a full-scale community garden space with outdoor kitchen facilities, lawn bowls and Men's Shed.

Construction is underway with landscaping to continue in the coming months. The finished space will encourage social engagement and connections between residents, family members and local communities.

The project also aims to participate in the free food movement, giving locals free access to the garden's bountiful harvest. This in turn will nurture and build community relationships, encourage healthy eating and increase social engagement.

From Seed to Table is now available in time for Christmas at \$25 a copy, with all proceeds going towards the community garden. To secure your copy, please call the team at Noble Park on 9554 0717. 🐦



Sharing family secrets

Every time Meilyana Charlie makes Mango Panna Cotta, she is transported back to her childhood home in Indonesia.

"Mango Panna Cotta is a simple recipe I learnt from my cousin, it is very refreshing and popular in Indonesia where the weather is often hot and mangoes are plentiful," she says.

Meilyana's dish is one of 73 family recipes submitted by Uniting AgeWell staff, clients and volunteers to a delicious new cookbook, *From Seed to Table*.

She volunteers at the Noble Park site and helped bring the cookbook to life.

Cooking is a passion that connects Meilyana (pictured above with her daughter and Community Programs Coordinator Michelle Thompson) with her past.

She started cooking at the age of 10, often helping her mother prepare food to feed the

family and sell in their small café in Indonesia. "I love making this for my family and friends today as it is seen as a delicacy and also reminds me of my childhood growing up in Indonesia."

Administration Officer Nicole McKenzie also contributed three traditional family recipes: Samoan Chop Suey, Marinated Raw Fish in Coconut Cream, and; Mussels in Garlic Sauce, each holding a special place in her heart.

"I love making Samoan food, it's beautiful, delicious and very comforting. Living in Australia on my own, it reminds me of my beautiful friends and families in beautiful Samoa," she said.

"Mussels in Garlic Sauce brings back memories of the fun times I had as a child, learning how to cook from my beautiful sister, father and mother in New Zealand." 🐚

Maggie Beer Foundation grant for community garden

Uniting AgeWell is excited to have received a \$2,500 grant for its Noble Park community garden project from the Maggie Beer Foundation.

UA is one of just 10 Victorian senior services organisations to have received the grant from the Foundation's Wellbeing Garden Program.

The initiative supports the development of gardens in aged care residences and encourages home grown fruit and vegetables.

Robyn Reeder, Manager Integrated Services at Uniting AgeWell Noble Park, said they were extremely grateful to the Maggie Beer Foundation and the funds would help bring the community garden project to life.

"We look forward to establishing an ongoing relationship with the Maggie Beer Foundation and hope to invite Maggie to visit the garden upon completion," she said. 🐚



Bike show raises cancer funds

More than 150 motorbikes from across the ages roared into Sorell for the inaugural Uniting AgeWell Sorell Rise and Shine Bike Show on October 17, to raise funds for Melanoma Tasmania.

There was a 1937 Scott Squirrel, a 1958 Ural M72 (a Russian motorcycle), a 1942 Indian Junior Scout, a contingent of motor scooters, as well as other beautifully presented motor bikes from all corners of the globe.

Sixty nine motorcyclists entered their bikes in one of the Show's prize categories, including Best American; Best European; Best Japanese; Best Pre-1980s bikes and Best Mobility Scooter. The bikes were judged by the Uniting AgeWell Sorell residents.

There was also a category for Best Residents' Mobility Scooter – specifically for the seniors who live at Uniting AgeWell Sorell and an opportunity for them to dress up their rides.

Rumney MP Tony Mulder judged the category and awarded the prize to Alison Tatnell, who dressed her scooter in a 'bride' theme.

Event organiser, Uniting AgeWell Sorell Project Officer and melanoma sufferer Ken Harriss, said residents got into the spirit of the event and began decorating their scooters the day before.

"All up it was a fantastic day that raised over \$1,500 for Melanoma Tasmania," Ken said. 🐣



Volunteering keeps Isabella engaged

Uniting AgeWell resident Isabella Shorrock is proof that you are never too old to learn – or give your time to help others.

Isabella, a resident at Uniting AgeWell's Ningana Community in Sorell, received a Highly Commended award in the Volunteer Contribution category at the Tasmanian Aged Care Awards in November.

The awards recognise and reward the outstanding achievements of staff, organisations, volunteers and community groups providing services for older Tasmanians.

"I am extremely honoured and grateful for the recognition and would like to thank everyone especially the staff and management at Ningana for allowing me to be involved with so many different activities at the site," Isabella said upon receiving her award at the Launceston Country Club Village.

The 77-year-old began volunteering soon after moving into Ningana in January 2014. She became a Pastoral Care Volunteer as part of UA's Listen Well program, working closely with the site's chaplain to provide one-on-one support to residents.

Proving that learning is a lifelong process, Isabella also achieved her food safety certificate and now runs coffee clubs, cooking groups for residents and catering for special events such as open days and 'pre-Christmas' Christmas lunch at the site.

"Isabella leads by example. Her involvement with cooking has encouraged many residents to participate to their ability, including people living with dementia or people with significant mobility issues," says Ningana Manager Integrated Services Melitta Baker. 🐣

Concerts raise money for carer respite program

11



Comical story telling, boyish charm and ground-breaking musical numbers were all on show for a series of fundraising concerts for Uniting AgeWell's Music For David program.

On Sunday, October 25, the vocal powerhouses and camaraderie of Nathan Ley and Jeremy Kleeman, treated the audience in the beautiful settings of St Michael's Church on Collins Street, to an afternoon of music and laughter.

Audiences were again left in stitches when the comic story of 'The Persian Princes' or 'The Road to Shangri-la', filled with excerpts from opera and musical theatre, played on Sunday, November 29 at the Toorak Uniting Church.

Both shows were organised by the Friends of Music For David, and raised almost \$5,000 for the program.

The Music For David program provides people with dementia their favourite music on an MP3 player.

It not only provides a meaningful, relevant and enjoyable activity for the person with dementia, but supports carers by giving them short-term respite from the demands of their loved one.

Music For David was established in memory of The Reverend David Hodges, the Minister at Toorak Uniting Church until his retirement in 1983. Uniting AgeWell supported David and his partner, musician David Ross-Smith, from 2011 until his death a year later, with music playing a significant role in David's care.

The last concert for the year, A Music For David Christmas Concert, featuring award-winning pianist Hoang Pham and soprano, Rosemary Ball, will be held on Sunday, 13 December 2015 at St Aidan's Uniting Church, North Balwyn.

For more information, contact David Ross-Smith on 9809 0550 or davidshrs927@gmail.com 



Contemporary, traditional artwork on show

Uniting AgeWell's annual Strathdon Community Art Exhibition will be held from 14-17 April, 2016.

Celebrating its 13th year, the exhibition will showcase contemporary and traditional art works by local and interstate artists.

It will feature guest artists Lorraine Wigrift and Zhong Hua Fan, and award winning artist and Fellow of the Australian Guild of Realist Artists Christine Cafarella-Pearce as guest judge.

The exhibition is a major fundraising initiative for the Strathdon Community, with proceeds going to its lifestyle program.

For more information visit strathdonartshow.org.au 



Supporting young people with dementia

Uniting AgeWell is supporting people with young onset dementia in the Geelong region with a new social group aimed at helping them live at home for longer.

The Young Onset Dementia Social Group was launched in October following consultation with Alzheimer's Australia Victoria (AAV).

Teresa Roberts, Uniting AgeWell's Team Leader Western Region, saw a need for such a group after her sister-in-law was diagnosed with dementia when she was aged in her 40s. She eventually went into residential care and died earlier this year at the age of 47.

"I felt that she would have been much better at home, so developing appropriate supports for people like her became a passion of mine," Teresa said.

Working with AAV clients, UA held a series of workshops with people with young onset dementia and their carers to determine what support they required.

The Young Onset Dementia Group, the only one of its type in the Geelong region, involves weekly activities that are determined by the group and generally involve an outing.

The six-hour sessions also give carers a break and has enabled them to form their own support network.

The youngest person in the group is 53 years old. Teresa said because of their age, participants were more active and had different needs and expectations than older people with dementia.

She said the training room at Kalkee Community had been changed into a lounge area that was more comfortable and appealing – like any lounge room at home.

"We're hoping to provide a really vibrant program for people that's appropriate to their needs. It's about keeping everyone active and connected in the community," she said. 🌿

Welcome to the new look DoveTale

Uniting AgeWell has so many inspiring and interesting stories to tell and we want to make sure you never miss out on what's going on.

So we've expanded and updated our newsletter to a bright and friendly format with big pictures and interesting stories from across the organisation.

We appreciate your feedback on our new look and welcome any story ideas for future editions.

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

Front cover image: Lillian Martin resident Doris Thackery (left) rode on a Harley Davidson Trike Bike up Mt Wellington with volunteer Susan Moore courtesy of UA's Wishing Well program.