

# AIR MAIL



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RAAFA

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## Befitting accolade for unsung community hero



Kaye Seeber 2nd from left with some of the Mums Cottage Volunteers

One of Erskine Grove's longest-term residents, Kaye Seeber, has been awarded the title of Senior Community Citizen of the Year at the 2023 Community Citizen of the Year awards, during Mandurah's Australia Day ceremony this year.

The annual awards recognise individuals and groups who have made notable contributions to their communities during the year, and those who have given outstanding service over several years.

And so, it came as no surprise to anyone who knows Kaye that she was bestowed the prestigious award as a result of establishing WA Mums Cottage in Mandurah back in 2016, an organisation that seeks to empower and improve the lives of mothers and their families

experiencing distress or domestic abuse and, in short, provide women and children in crisis with a safe place to visit during the day.

"It was a real surprise to be nominated, and then to be awarded the title of Senior Citizen of the Year was a tremendous honour and very humbling, particularly as I know full well the quality of the Mandurah locals who were nominated for the award," says Kaye, who set up the not-for-profit organisation after securing funding through community donations and grants.

"It was a bit of a blur when they called out my name, and I was quite emotional as my late husband Mike was so involved in helping me set up the charity.

"But I did feel very honoured and I was really happy to be able to acknowledge all the friends and people who have helped me over the years, I couldn't have done it without them and I will be forever grateful."

According to Kaye, the citizenship ceremony, held during the Australia Day celebrations, was also a touching event, with over 80 people officially inducted as new Australians.

"It was a huge crowd, and what I loved most was that there were 80 people who were able to witness what the people of Mandurah do for each other, how they help and the various ways they contribute to the community.

"It was also lovely to have the recognition for Mums Cottage and



International Women's Day

the positive difference it has made to the lives of people passing through it and needing our support over the years."

Kaye explains that the vision for Mums Cottage was to be an open house that is always available for those struggling financially, with social or mental health issues, or those escaping from domestic violence situations - basically any local Mandurah women in need of help.

"We've never really had any government funding for our operating costs, but we've received LotteryWest assistance for special projects and have around 50 active volunteers across Mandurah who support us in many ways, not least helping with our ongoing fundraisers, which are a major source of income for us," adds Kaye.

"We're very grateful for any assistance we can gain as, currently, we have around 60 visits a month from women who are often living in poverty and may have insecure housing."

Mums Cottage has a vibrant op shop and garden cafe at 25 Davey Street in Mandurah, which is the fundraising arm of the charity. It's open Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 2.30pm for the purchase of preloved clothes and bric-a-brac, as well as coffee, cakes, cookies and more. This means locals can support the charity by visiting the op shop and enjoying the delicious treats on offer at the cafe.

Alternatively, if you would like to assist the wonderful and important work undertaken by Mums Cottage by becoming a volunteer, Kaye would love to hear from you. Please contact her on 0466 129 730.

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### PURPOSE

Pursuing excellence in care and heritage

### VALUES

Respect; Care; Honesty

### APPROACH

Creating RAAFA communities open to all

THE RAAFA WAY



# President's view



By Clive Robartson AM

Hello again. The highlight of this edition of Air Mail is the official handover to the Aviation Heritage Museum of Tornado GR4, ZG791. We were pleased to have the Chief of Air Staff, Royal Air Force, Sir Michael Wigston KCB, CBE, ADC call by on his way to the Avalon Air Show to hand ZG791 over to the people of Australia. And we have it in our museum! Detail of this event are highlighted elsewhere in this edition.

## CEO appointment

It is with great delight that I can share with you the appointment of former WA Police Assistant Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of St John Ambulance in Western Australia, Michelle Fyfe, as the incoming CEO of RAAFA.

The RAAFA selection committee agreed unanimously that Michelle is the strongest candidate for the role due to her incredible skill set and leadership qualities, her commitment to service and commitment to the most vulnerable in our society, and her strong alignment with RAAFA's values.

As you will know, John will be retiring soon, after 10 years dedicated to leading, and growing, this fine organisation. More on that in the next edition.

## AFA National Conference

I am excited to announce that we will be hosting the Air Force Association, National Conference in October this year.

The conference will take place over four days beginning with welcome drinks on Tuesday, 17 October and concluding with a commemoration service and farewell lunch on Friday, 20 October.

The entire conference is open to all members of RAAFA with many opportunities for non-members to participate as well, from attending the full four days to just participating in one of the many social events.

The program is still taking shape, and a draft outline of the schedule is:

Tuesday, 17 October – evening welcome drinks

Wednesday, 18 October – main conference, followed by gala dinner

Thursday, 19 October – members only conference, followed by a casual dining experience

Friday, 20 October – commemoration service and farewell lunch

As mentioned, the main conference will take place on Wednesday, 18 October with a focus on the current defence environment and how the Air Force Association is supporting members and the Air Force. The conference day will be followed by a gala dinner, both held at Rendezvous in Scarborough. The main conference is open to both members and non-members but space is strictly limited and with the focus on the current environment we expect tickets to sell quickly.

We encourage you to visit [afaconference.org.au](http://afaconference.org.au) to register your interest and like or follow our Facebook page (RAAFAWA) where regular updates will be posted.

## AFA National

I was also pleased that the AFA National President, Carl Schiller OAM, CSC and Secretary Peter Colliver OAM were able to attend the Tornado handover.

Carl and Peter, assisted by our National Vice President, Peter McDermott AM, CSC have over recent months assisted the Association in drafting a new Constitution that was approved at the National Annual General Meeting on the 8 February this year.

The changes made to the Constitution are not unlike those made by WA, to enable the Air Force Association Limited to meet requirement set by the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission (ACNC) as a public benevolent institution with the focus of providing benevolent relief to people in need.

The new Constitution establishes two bodies that will administer the affairs of AFA Limited. There will be a Board of Directors, (yet to be appointed) and a Federation Council, the later consisting of the Presidents (or their nominee) from each State Division to act as an advisory committee to the Directors of AFA Limited. The Federation Council met on the 14 March to commence the process of developing a Council Charter and to determine meeting procedures.

## Politician visits

The recent Federal Cabinet meeting held in Port Hedland brought a flurry of federal politicians to WA with a brief stop-over in Perth. We were honoured to have the Deputy Prime

Minister, Hon. Richard Marles MP, Minister for Defence and Federal Member for Corio, Victoria and The Hon. Mark Butler MP, Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care pay us a visit.

They arrived with their respective entourage on 20 February at the AFME in Bull Creek. Over a light lunch in the RAAFA Club we were able to brief the Deputy Prime Minister on the work of RAAFA in WA. The Deputy PM was aware of the Association's presence on the east coast, but he had little knowledge of our activities in WA.

He was very impressed by what he saw and heard, overwhelmed might best express his response. Along with Minister Butler a brief visit to the Aviation Heritage Museum also impressed them both. The visit gave us the opportunity to showcase WA and to advise these Federal Ministers about our ongoing commitment to advocacy, veteran care and veteran living.

We also had a visit at our Merriwa Estate by Minister Amanda Rishworth MP with Tracey Roberts – Federal Member for Pearce to discuss the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card. We are certainly having an impact on Federal Parliament.

## Division Council changes

I am pleased to announce the appointment of a new 'appointed member' to the Division Council, Denise Bowen. Denise comes with outstanding experience and qualifications, with over 40 years in the health and aged care sector as a nurse, midwife, health care administrator and as a solicitor. See her full details elsewhere in this edition. We are so pleased to have you in our team Denise.

## Vale – Eileen Southern

It is with sadness that I advise the passing on 15 February 2023, of RAAFA's first female State President and first post war serving person in this role. Eileen served as president from 1996 to 2000.

Born in 1933, Eileen joined the WRAAF, initially as a clerk and was posted to RAAF Base Pearce. While stationed there she met her future husband, Airman Arthur Wight. Arthur's postings took them to Malaya, where their two children were born, and Butterworth before returning to Perth. In 1982 Eileen married Wayne Southern.

Eileen initially became interested in the association in 1987, joining the WRAAF Branch where she became involved in the Branch's activities before being elected Branch President. Eileen had been very actively involved in both the Branch and Association and during her period as State President she saw the implementation of many changes.

## ANZAC Day

Thank you to those members who responded to my plea for interest in marching in the Perth parade on ANZAC Day. We will be raising a contingent to march and I encourage members who are able, to come along and bolster our numbers under the RAAFA banner.

Our secretary, Norm Waldie, has agreed to lead the RAAFA group and I will be on the saluting dais for the march-past. All our villages will be conducting services on ANZAC Day and I encourage you to attend one.

Remembering the past and those who made the supreme sacrifice is part of our culture. "Lest we Forget".

## AFA Conference 2023



Looking Forward: Innovation, Services and Support

*Save The Date*  
**17 - 20 October 2023**

Rendezvous Hotel Scarborough  
148 The Esplanade, Scarborough WA 6019

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or post to **Julie Stearne, 18 Bowman Street, South Perth WA 6151.**



# CEO's perspective



By John Murray

## Budgets

We now face major shifts in the residential aged care funding, staffing and compliance requirements with a significant

increased expenditure and uncertain revenue funding from the federal government.

This makes for a difficult budgeting development program, with our managers and senior executives endeavouring to define the context with increasing interest rates, increases in aged care worker salaries and inflationary pressures impacting supplies that support our operations.

Through good governance and management, RAAFA has been able to maintain a cash positive financial position when in excess of 70% of residential aged care facilities across Australia currently operate with a negative cash position. Many are closing their facilities or handing them over to other organisations.

## Veterans' space

Work has been ongoing in our veterans' space, including

discussions with the Department of Veterans' Affairs to develop a further eight veterans' hubs across Australia. RAAFA plans to provide supportive services for the hub including housing for seniors, community-based DVA home care and nursing care, supported by veteran's advocacy services.

This links well with our continued work on the Andrew Russell Veterans Living centre to be built in Cannington and our recent attendance at the inaugural Homeless Veteran Forum in Victoria.

## Solar power

RAAFA is set to reduce its electrical energy consumption as well as become a more environmentally friendly and sustainable organisation.

On the journey to move towards a 'net zero' future and become less reliant on fossil fuels I am pleased

to advise that solar panels have now been installed on the roofs of McNamara Lodge, Alice Ross-King Care Centre, and Karri and Tuart Lodge.

Another giant step in the right direction.

## Rules approved

The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety has advised that the changes to the WA Division Rules (Constitution), as approved at the Special General Meeting held on 28 October 2022 has received their endorsement.

This will enable the role-out of the additional RAAFA membership classes shortly.

Thank you for your patience as we work towards improving the RAAFA membership experience.

## CEO appointment

■ We are delighted to announce the appointment of former WA Police Assistant Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of St John Ambulance in Western Australia, Michelle Fyfe, as the incoming CEO for our operations.

After a decade at the helm, our CEO John Murray is retiring and will be stepping down from the role in June, following a two-month handover period with Michelle.

RAAFA undertook a comprehensive process with one of WA's leading recruitment agencies and an internal selection panel for the recruitment to our top job, with 37 strong applicants for the position, and all six of the short-listed candidates already in senior roles with reputable WA organisations.

Our chosen candidate, Michelle Fyfe, has dedicated more than 30 years of her life to serving the WA community, and it is this life of service that strongly aligns with our organisations values, as well as her passion for the delivery of excellent care, and advocacy for some of the most vulnerable in our society that shone through during the selection process.

Michelle has an incredible skill set and leadership qualities and is committed to care. We are very excited that she has agreed to lead our organisation into the future.

RAAFA is steeped in history – first established in 1929 when we opened our doors to support Australian Flying Corp members returning from service in WWI. Today it is a complex organisation operating in a challenging sector and Michelle has demonstrated experience in successfully navigating difficult environments.

Supported by outstanding references by some of Western

Australia's pre-eminent health and industry leaders, we have every confidence that Michelle will bring the right skills, attitude and energy to drive our successful organisation through the challenges the aged care and seniors' housing industry faces for the betterment of our employees, residents and members.

Our CEO, John Murray, has led important change in the organisation, building a solid foundation through the implementation of robust systems and processes, including a strong governance framework, and significant expansion of services.

In addition to her career with WA Police and four years at the helm of St John, where she navigated the private ambulance service through the most challenging period faced by the health sector, Michelle is on the Board of Parkerville Children and Youth Care and is a commissioner with the WA Football Commission.

Michelle stepped down from her role at St John in July 2022.

After taking a well-deserved break to spend time with her children and grandchildren, Michelle applied for the CEO role at RAAFA because she was excited about the prospect of delivering excellent care for older Australians.

Michelle said "I am passionate about contributing to the care of people in the later years of their life, particularly those who dedicated years of

service to protecting our country and caring for our people – now it's their time to receive that care.

"Through the experience gained in my thirty years of service, I feel I am well equipped to successfully navigate RAAFA through the challenges this sector is facing."

On behalf of the Board, and everyone at RAAFA, we want to thank John Murray for his decade of service leading and growing our organisation, and for his continued support in this important transitory phase.

RAAFA looks forward to welcoming Michelle Fyfe into the organisation in May 2023.



Michelle Fyfe with John Murray

## Your Division Councillor – Denise Bowen

■ Denise Bowen was appointed to Division Council in January 2023.



Her career has been diverse with four decades' experience supporting the health and aged care sector as a nurse, midwife and director of nursing, health administrator and as a solicitor with HBA Legal. As an experienced health practitioner, Denise has extensive knowledge in clinical governance as well as the issues and challenges facing the health sector.

Denise holds a Diploma of Nursing, Post Graduate Diploma in Midwifery, Masters and a Post Graduate Diploma in Health Administration, Certificate in Health Economics, Bachelor of Applied Science and a Juris Doctor, Graduate Diploma Family Dispute Resolution and is an NMAS accredited mediator.

Denise is married with five adult children and 10 grandchildren and her passion over the last three years has been to owner-build their 'ever after house' on an 11-acre property in the Swan Valley.

Restoring the property and sheds, their objective is to achieve self-sustainability. Whilst the house is not quite finished, it has been a labour of love and has included establishing a 50-tree orchard, chook runs and rainwater systems. Denise says the vegie gardens and livestock are next on the list.

In her spare time, Denise volunteers with the SES, something she has done for the past 15 years and provides mediation at the Gosnells Community Legal Centre.



# Terrific turnout for Tornado handover



**LtoR RAAFA Vice President Pat Hall, RAAFA President Clive Robartson AM, AFA President Carl Schiller OAM CSM, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Wigston KCB CBE ADC, His Excellency The Honourable Christopher Dawson AC APM, Air Marshal (Ret'd) Mel Hupfeld AO DSC, Air Commodore Robert Lawson OAM, WOFF-AF Ralph Clifton**



**Peter Tingley MLA**



**LtoR Sir Michael Wigston, Brian Willey, Erica Ferguson**



**Museum Volunteers**

The 24 February was an auspicious day for RAAFA – it was the day that celebrated the culmination of more than four years of preparation, planning and hard work and saw the official handover from the RAF of the Aviation Museum's latest exhibit - a Tornado GR4.

The Tornado is an exciting and significant addition to the museum's collection. It has enabled RAAFA to continue to tell the story of the close relationship between the RAF and RAAF, a story that began with a Spitfire, then a Lancaster and now continues today with the Tornado.

And as the RAF, RAAF and RAAFA have each celebrated their respective centennial anniversaries over the last few years, this generous gift is a reminder of the strong ties that have existed between our organisations over the last century.

Thank you, Royal Air Force, for this special gift to RAAFA and, indeed, our nation.

And thank you to the many VIPs and special guests who attended the handover ceremony, including RAAFA's Patron, His Excellency Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM, Sir Michael Wigston KCB CBE ADC, Chief of Air Staff RAF, Mel Hupfeld AO DSC, AFA's National Patron, and Carl Schiller OAM CSM, AFA's National President.

## Vox Pox from Tornado GR4 handover ceremony

"This new exhibit, the Tornado GR4, stands as part of the national narrative and is also a testament to the RAF and RAAF personnel who flew in or worked on it during their career.

"It is also incredible kudos for the museum and its ever-expanding collection. This new exhibit will certainly boost the profile of the museum locally, nationally and worldwide - indeed it is set to become a global attraction."

**Hon. Peter Charles Tinley, MLA Member for Willagee**

"This morning's event was everything we dreamt it would be and feels, in many ways, like the culmination of so much hard work between our two organisations.

"To have two chiefs here today who understand the shared history of the RAF and RAAF is an immense privilege, and for the significance of the gifting of the GR4 to be recognised by so many important people, including Air Marshal Mel Hupfeld, is very special indeed.

"It has been an incredible journey from receiving a letter about an aircraft, to now having delivered a Tornado GR4 half way across the world. In the process, we have

successfully brought our two organisations even closer, while at the same time forging precious personal lifetime friendships."

**Erica Ferguson, RAF Wing Commander**

"The sentiment behind the handover of the Tornado GR4 by the RAF to the RAAFA is one of generosity and a deep friendship and partnership between not just our air forces, but also our nations.

"Indeed, today has been a real thrill and a unique blend of joy, excitement and deep emotion. As an aviator, a previous chief of the Royal Australian Air Force and a proud Australian, I feel honoured to be a part of this momentous occasion."

**Mel Hupfeld AO DSC, Air Marshal (Retired)**

"Today we celebrate the culmination of four years of planning, the delivery of this wonderful gift to the people of Australia, of Tornado ZULU GOLF 791. We are so grateful to have received this gift, and understand it is the only one to have been gifted outside of the UK.

"Be assured that we will look after this grand lady, and with our care she will undoubtedly out live all of us. We commit to caring for her."

**Clive Robartson, RAAFA President**

"This is such a significant day for me personally given I have such a long history with the museum and having visited it regularly when I was a teenager and Air Force cadet back in the 1970s, and then having gone on to become a member of the RAAF for over nine years and to now volunteering at the museum every month.

"I know my way around the Tornado very well from a mechanical perspective; for me it's the smell that is so evocative - the smell of hydraulic oil.

"There are three aircraft in this museum that I have worked on and I never get bored with spending time in them or showing members of the public around these incredible feats of engineering.

"This new exhibit will be a huge drawcard to the public, both in Australia and all over the world."

**Brian Willey, engineer**

"This occasion is incredibly significant for the museum, it's such a big gain for us and will no doubt increase our visitor numbers both interstate and internationally. There is nowhere else in the world that has such a significant private aviation collection."

**Bernie Oliver, Museum volunteer**



# Nursing – making a difference

According to RAAFA's Quality Coordinator, Janice Vickery, nursing is one of the most rewarding professions there is - and after a highly successful nursing career spanning more than half a century, most would say that Janice is more than qualified to make such an assertion.

"As I was growing up I always thought I wanted to be a teacher, but then in my last year of school I decided at the last minute I wanted to become a nurse; it was a decision that came to me in a flash and I've never looked back," says Janice, who was born in Geraldton and brought up in the Wheatbelt.

And so after school, 17-year-old Janice left her home and family and headed to 'the big smoke' in Perth, where she trained at the WA Government School of Nursing before going on to specialise in critical care and then undertaking her nursing degree at what is now Curtin University when she was a few years older.

"As a nurse, you can just do so many different things, there are seemingly infinite choices and areas in which to specialise and yet I can't think of another profession where you are given so much autonomy and so much scope for growth," says the mum-of-one whose daughter is a

qualified GP working in New South Wales.

"Plus, there are so many learning opportunities and so many avenues for career progression, particularly in the aged care sector."

During her career, Janice has worked at many of Perth's major hospitals, including Royal Perth and the Mount Hospital, as well as at Peel Health Campus in Mandurah where she worked for over eight years.

During that time, she specialised in education and quality management, also pursuing another passion which is supporting diversity and inclusion. To that end, she was excited to travel to Sydney in early March to participate in the Sydney Harbour Bridge walk as part of the World Pride celebrations.

"Specialising in education means I have the best of both worlds, yes I'm a nurse but I can also educate and guide people, and as a result I can also fulfil my love of teaching," adds Janice, who has a wide variety of interests outside work, including yoga, gardening, painting, embroidering, mosaics, birdwatching and forest conservation.

"I'm really passionate about ensuring people never feel excluded, and instead feel accepted for who

they are. Showing respect, kindness and compassion is always a priority in my work, and these values tie in beautifully with everything that RAAFA stands for."

And so, with International Women's Day just finishing, what are Janice's reflections as a result of her 51 years of service within a profession that is historically female-dominated?

"When I graduated back in 1975 there was only one male in the class, and I'm glad to see that has changed over the years, but certainly we still need more men in nursing," says Janice, who also works for the Australian Critical Care Nurses Association, where she teaches advanced life support to rural and remote nurses throughout the state - another of her many passions.

"Yes, you need to be courageous in many ways to become a nurse, particularly in the aged care sector which is changing at an incredibly fast pace".

"Having said that, I would say to all women, and men too, who are



## International Women's Day

looking for a profession where they can make a huge difference to the lives of others and their family members, to consider nursing, as it's so incredibly rewarding. I can't actually think of a better career path and I would recommend nursing as a profession wholeheartedly."

## RAAFA Connect – Staying home with support

Nonagenarian Patty Gambier readily admits that she doesn't want to be anywhere else other than home.

And home for this sprightly and creative 91-year-old is Frederick Guest Village, not far from AFME in Bull Creek, where she has lived for the past six months after moving from her home in NSW to be closer to her daughter.

To support her in her new life in Perth, Patty is now a client of RAAFA Connect, which sees her receive social support visits every week and have a chat and a cuppa with a support worker with whom she can pursue her artistic endeavours.

"I've been active all my life but I realise that I can't do what I used to do," says Patty, a born and bred Queenslander who moved to Perth from a small town near Tamworth in NSW.

"I'm very pleased to have met Ann from RAAFA Connect and I'm loving her company. We have been painting poppies together each week, something I have really enjoyed."

Helene Kline, Patty's daughter, says her mother has also recently

taken up knitting again and is rediscovering her love of crafts and handiwork.

"Mum was a little isolated when she first came over to Perth which is why I contacted RAAFA Connect, to see if they could help with some social support," says Helene, who lives in the neighbouring suburb to her mum.

"We've been really impressed with the services we've received, the staff at RAAFA Connect are super friendly and it's great for mum to have found someone she has clicked with, and who she can enjoy her arts and crafts with."

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

"We will work with the client to coordinate a support plan tailored to their individual needs," says Lorraine.



## Stirling apartments surging forward

It may look just like a bare block of land, but work is progressing in the background at a sterling pace on the new Stirling apartment project at AFME.

Penny John, AFME Estate Manager, says the project team at RAAFA is currently working closely with the architects to finalise the design, the colour schemes, interior finishes and the landscaping.

"We're very pleased with the way the project is progressing," says Penny.

Keep watch for further updates in future editions on the progress being made on RAAFA's new Stirling apartments.





# Celebrating 20 years of community

RAAFA's Erskine Grove community, including around 250 residents, dozens of staff and, of course, the estate's dolphins, will celebrate 20 years of village life throughout the year.

Celebrations are still being finalised but will be rolled out as the year progresses. And, we have it on good authority that all events will contain a good dose of fun and frivolity.

Denise Nicolay, who is heading up the anniversary celebrations, says the calendar of events will acknowledge the enormous contributions made by countless individuals over the past two decades.

"There are so many wonderful moments to be remembered and we are currently uncovering lots of anecdotes about village life," Denise says.

"We are even learning how the initial group of residents dealt with their rubbish during the first few months, which is just hilarious.

"There are so many stories, and our committee is really enjoying the trip down memory lane as I'm sure our entire community will. Erskine has always been a vibrant community made up of incredible people who make amazing contributions to estate life, and we all think that is certainly worth celebrating."

The committee is currently finalising several events throughout the year, which will culminate in a special dinner event in October.

And the estate's very first resident, Barry Doherty, who is still very much alive and well, will take front and centre stage at many of the celebrations. He will be joined by a number of friends and neighbours who also made the move to Erskine back in 2003.



"There have been such great times over the years, with weddings, pool parties, opera singers, dress ups, Australia Day events, resident of the year presentations and even an interesting musical experience

that we've discovered, known as the RIFRAF quartet," laughs Denise.

"We very much hope that all of our residents, as well as previous managers and staff, will join us in the 20th anniversary celebrations."

## Aussie Day BBQ

The great Australia Day breakfast at RAAFA's Erskine Grove was a real community affair. Much like most events on the Estate, it was packed with laughter and interesting anecdotes, according to the dedicated band of organisers.

Highlights of the morning, which was officiated by long-term resident Bob Smoothy, included the raising of the Australian flag during a rendition of the national anthem, an Australia Day address, and even a poetry rendition, thanks to resident David East whose inspiration was

drawn from Charles Yelverton (CY) O'Connor, the infamous first Engineer-in-Chief of Western Australia.

"I thought the poems I read fitted with the spirit of our Australia Day celebration and they seemed to go down very well," explains David, who says he gained the idea for them from a trip up the golden pipeline to Kalgoorlie.

"At least nobody in the crowd threw rotten tomatoes at me, so I took that as a good sign," he laughs.

During the morning, a great Aussie breakfast was served, including sausages, beans, toast, scrambled eggs, bacon and tomato.

"It was a real Aussie breakfast and we had Australian-themed decorations too," says function organiser Paula Loser, who was also honoured with the estate's accolade of resident of the year.

"I almost had a heart attack when



my name was read out, I was very shocked and had the shakes for a while, but it was lovely to be recognised in that way."

## Home is where the heart is



Within a week of Nola Marshall - as she was then known - starting work at the ANZ bank on St Georges Terrace in 1964, 24-year-old Lyall Choyce had asked her out.

"And I'm still taking her out 56 years later," laughs Lyall, as he recalls the memory all those decades ago.

After a three-year courtship, Lyall - a born and bred country boy from

Kalgoorlie - married Perth-girl Nola on 28 January 1967 at St Andrews Church on St George's Terrace - just metres away from where they first met three years prior.

And from there the adventures began, with Lyall's job with the ANZ bank - where he

worked for almost 40 years - taking them around the State from Moora to Carnarvon and many places in between.

And fortuitously for Nola, she became one of the first women who was allowed to keep her job at the bank following her marriage, as it coincided with the company changing their policy to enable

women to go back to their role after their honeymoon.

"Nola was very much a city girl, so it did take her a while to adjust to moving around the State, but when she did, she loved it too and embraced being immersed in smaller, tightly knit communities," adds Lyall.

The couple went on to have two children, a son and a daughter, and whilst Lyall continued with his banking career, Nola worked in various different roles including for Meals on Wheels and also working as a kindy teacher.

And after enjoying their country life, the couple decided to move into RAAFA's Erskine Grove retirement village, and bought a house in the second stage of development back in 2004.

"We actually put a deposit on the first stage, but then changed our minds as we thought we might be a bit young to move into a retirement village at that stage," explains Lyall.

"But then we had another think and ended up changing our minds again 18 months later, and I can honestly say we've never looked back after making that decision.

"We continued to tour around Australia in our caravan, and always enjoyed the fact that we could come back to Erskine after locking up and leaving for a few months away.

"And then when we got fed up of caravanning we went overseas a number of times, which we loved."

Today, Lyall and Nola admit they are homebodies and, whilst they still enjoy various activities on the estate, they are also quite happy to stay home and relax.

"We still very much enjoy each other's company and have just celebrated our 56th wedding anniversary, so I guess that decision I made to ask Nola out all those years ago was definitely the right one," laughs Lyall.



# Exploring the facilities

Since moving into RAAFA's Erskine Grove retirement village almost a year ago, Grant and Dawn Barclay joke that they're getting their money's worth out of the facilities.

"We use the gym and the pool regularly, I'm getting involved in the workshop and I've also joined the pool group on a Tuesday night," explains Grant, who describes himself as a £10 Pom, having moved to Perth in 1967 with his family when he was just 14 years old.

"My wife Dawn has joined a card group and is involved with various craft groups, and we're both enjoying the indoor bowls and often participate at events held in the recreation centre.

"And on top of the amenities we also love the fact that everything is so easy here, the staff in the office are always so helpful if you have any issues and it's so convenient that you can see a hairdresser, beautician, podiatrist, massage therapist and even a doctor on

the estate. Everything is on our doorstep which we think is brilliant."

Despite being born into a service family himself - Grant started out life in an army camp in Aldershot, the home of the British army - he admits that it was RAAFA's reputation above anything that attracted them to the estate.

"We had older neighbours who spoke very highly about Erskine and when we came to have a look ourselves we really liked it, particularly the fact that the homes are brick and tiles and everything is so neat and tidy.

"So we put our house on the market in April last year and couldn't believe it when it sold in just three days and we needed to move out within two weeks. Fortunately, there was a house here at Erskine waiting for us and we were able to move in four weeks later."

As Grant explains, it wasn't just the high level of security and safety that attracted the couple to the

estate, it was also the fact that they would no longer need to maintain their garden or have to do home maintenance, such as climbing up ladders to change light globes, fixing things around the house or trimming trees.

"We like to go on cruises and we also like to go away in our caravan, so the fact that we can leave the house safely was really important to us, and we also really appreciate the fact that the gates are locked at night, there's a security patrol and, on top of that, everyone looks out for each other.

"We've also loved how sociable the estate is and how we've made friends very easily. We've really



enjoyed all of the social occasions we've been to and because we're located very close to the bowling club, we're able to walk across for some drinks or a meal, and then easily walk back home again.

"We're really happy here, and we wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

## Move worth the wait

If there's one piece of advice that newcomers to Erskine Grove, David and Barbara Paterson, have for others following in their footsteps, it's to make sure to declutter when you make the move.

"If you're downsizing, like most people who move into a retirement village, you need to be prepared to shed some of your possessions," says 72-year-old David, who moved into Erskine with his wife Barbara in mid-November last year.

"We were very happy to let go of a few possessions so that our new home wasn't cluttered, and we were on the waiting list for a few months, so we also had time to decide what we would take and what we would let go."

Since moving into the popular estate, David and Barbara have been making use of the numerous

facilities, with David starting to play pool, getting better at darts and also becoming a volunteer grover driver. Similarly, Barbara has become a regular at water aerobics and the couple have also enjoyed participating in the happy hour sessions each week.

"We loved the estate when we first came to visit, particularly because it's so neat and tidy, it has a great ambiance and it's also so close to all the facilities we want, including the estuary and the ocean as well as shops and various amenities.

"Previously we were living in Silver Sands, so we haven't moved very far, but we were keen for the lock-up and leave lifestyle of a retirement village as we go overseas a few times a year, and we also have a caravan that we like to take trips in regularly."

On that note, the couple are also quick to point out it was a definite plus that they were able to find a village where they could securely park their caravan and know it was safe.

"In fact, we feel very safe in the estate and are also amazed at how quiet it is at night, there's certainly no raucous parties, even after happy hour," laughs David, who was born in Victoria and moved across the Nullarbor to settle in WA when he was 19 years old.

"We have found everybody incredibly friendly and welcoming at Erskine and we love both the layout of our new home and its location, it's everything we wanted really.



"My only other advice to anyone considering making the move is to do their research and homework, and read the small print as not all retirement estates are equal.

"Having said that, I would certainly recommend RAAFA Erskine Grove. We were on the waiting list for around seven months but it was worth the wait and we have no regrets whatsoever."

## New volunteer takes the reins



LtoR Nora Wingrave, Pat Houston and Jill Deacon

With National Volunteer Week fast approaching in mid-May, it seems appropriate timing to introduce the new librarian at RAAFA's Erskine Grove estate who has taken over the reins from the incredible Jill Deacon, who held the position for over 19 years.

Pat Houston took up the role in February and admits she has big shoes to fill given Jill's many years of dedication and devotion to the role.

"I'm very excited to take up

the volunteer role as I love books and if I'm honest have always been a wannabe librarian," admits Pat, who moved into the popular estate just over 18 months ago.

"I'm very much aware that Jill did an amazing job almost two decades and deserves huge recognition for everything she did, I'm just hoping I can do half as good a job as she did."

Pat explains that she spent over a year volunteering at the Save the Children bookshop, which she enjoyed very much.

And currently, she is on the lookout

for good books to add to the collection at the library, which is located in the community room.

"If there's anyone at the estate who's just finished reading a book that perhaps they've received as a Christmas present, I'd love to hear from them," she says.

"At this stage I'll be popping in every day to sort and put away the books, and really just spend time amongst them, as reading is a passion of mine.

"I'm loving my role, I always wanted to be a librarian so it really is a dream come true for me later in life."



# Forum addresses veteran homelessness

RAAFA was proudly represented at the inaugural Veterans Homelessness Forum on 2 February, which was held at ANZAC House by RSL Victoria in partnership with RSL Care SA.

Ian Craig, Head of Clear Skies and Tonia Zeeman, Chief Operations Officer, were the RAAFA representatives who headed over to Victoria to take part in the forum, which was focused on helping to tackle one of the most significant challenges facing the veteran community nationally - homelessness.

According to recent data from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, veterans are at higher risk of homelessness, they're more likely to be homeless for longer, less likely to access mainstream services and also face a multitude of factors placing them at risk of homelessness.

"It was an incredibly valuable forum, particularly to be able to confer with experts around Australia who

are involved in helping to tackle this issue," said Ian.

"There is a big difference in talking to people about homelessness, and those who are experts in veteran homelessness and have experience, skills and insight that are so valuable to RAAFA as we continue to work on our Andrew Russell Veteran Living (ARVL) program in WA."

As guest speakers shared their learnings as a result of supporting veterans who have lived experience of homelessness, several common themes emerged, including the need for partnerships, prevention and treating the root cause of homelessness.

"One of the biggest takeaways was the need for just one clear, coherent voice in talking to government and politicians to bring about better collaborations and better outcomes," added Ian.

"We very much feel that together we can share our expertise and provide a united front to represent veterans across Australia."



**LtoR Ian Craig, former Governor-General, General Sir Peter Cosgrove, Tonia Zeeman**

During the forum, participants were captivated by a short video produced by RSL Care South Australia where veterans shared their raw and emotive journeys that led them to homelessness.

A second Veterans Homelessness Forum is planned for later in the year, where more collaboration and

work will be shared. Watch this space for more updates on this important issue, which RAAFA is very much committed to.

If you'd like to be part of the solution, and would like to help make the ARVL program come alive in WA, donations can be made via our website ([raafawa.org.au](http://raafawa.org.au)).

## Saying goodbye

Many of our residents would know and be very fond of Sandy Komen, our General Manager of Connected Living, who was a highly valued member of our organisation.

And you may also know that the RAAFA team said a sad farewell to Sandy in mid-February, when she left our team after six years of loyal service to return to her family and friends in her hometown in Victoria.

"During those six years RAAFA has come a long way and Sandy has been a key leader and driver in the change we have seen within our organisation," said Tonia Zeeman, Chief Operations Officer.

"Sandy's role has been both demanding and, at times, very challenging, but she was always able to keep a focus on the important things, as well as support her managers and team, get things done, be responsive to residents' needs, and still make time to thank people and celebrate success."

Sandy's accomplishments are too numerous to name, but highlights include her major role in the Cirrus and RAAFA Club development at AFME, implementing a 24-hour call monitoring service across all villages and overseeing numerous amenity improvements across RAAFA's estates, including the Meadow Springs Club makeover, the major pool renovation and gym expansion



at Erskine, and the work that is about to commence at Cambrai Club.

"I've been blessed in my life to meet and work with some remarkable people, and Sandy is absolutely one of them," adds Tonia.

"She is focused, persistent, engaged, she builds great relationships and she has a brilliant head for budgets and financials, as well as IT. Sandy thinks outside the box and is a critical thinker, but perhaps most importantly, she lives RAAFA's values every day.

"She is already greatly missed but we wish her all the very best for the future and her return to her hometown in Victoria."

## Armchair travel a hit

Residents at RAAFA's Alice Ross-King Care Centre have been spending time traveling the world, without having to leave their armchair.

And that's thanks to a recent donation of three sets of virtual reality goggles, as a result of fundraising activities undertaken by AFME resident Tony Carter.

For those who haven't tried it themselves, virtual reality technology generates images and sounds that make it feel as though you are immersed in a three-dimensional, life-size environment.

The goggles strap on to the head and move so that the user feels, for example, like they are in the middle of an African safari, swimming with a pod of dolphins, or even walking around a capital city.

Waruna Ranatunga, Occupational Therapist at ARK, explains that because most of the residents are not able to travel due to physical or cognitive limitations, the new technology is broadening their ability to experience different countries and cultures, all while sitting in the comfort of their chair.

"It stimulates people's cognition and emotions in ways that regular television does not," says Waruna. "And it can also activate old memories and positive emotions, so that residents really do take a trip down memory lane.

"The new virtual reality technology has opened up a whole new world for our residents and we're extremely thankful to Tony for all his

fundraising efforts to enable our virtual armchair travel to become a reality."

One resident who recently experienced the technology for the first time said he was extremely grateful for the experience and was most impressed with its clarity and ease of use.

"You feel like you're actually present, in fact I had the feeling that I was on the edge of a mountain overlooking a magnificent view," says Rae.

"Having the ability to move my head and look at the scenery either side was fantastic, and on many occasions, I felt like I could reach out and touch things coming towards me.

"Many of the residents are going to love this experience so huge thanks to the person who donated the goggles for us to use."





# Celebrating a centenary

Gordon Lodge resident Vera Harrison reached her centenary on 19 March surrounded by many members of her large family, which includes three children, seven grandchildren, 22 great grandchildren and four great, great grandchildren.

And remarkably, Vera celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday halfway around the world from where her life started on 19 March 1923, in a small village called Sherburn Hill in County Durham in the Northeast of England.

It was there that she undertook her schooling and went on to work as an auxiliary in the local hospital, and it was while she was walking home after duty, down by the nearby river one day, that she happened to bump into her future husband, Doug Harrison, and love blossomed.

But, in 1941, Doug was posted to bomber command Squadron in North Yorkshire, which meant they were separated by more than 25 miles – a significant distance in those days. However, the couple went on to marry at the local church on 21 February 1942, after which

they were able to have a short, week-long honeymoon in Blackpool.

As was typical in the war years, Doug spent the next four years at war, during which time Vera worked in an ammunition factory, fixing detonators on to bombs – a high-risk job by any measure.

Happily, Doug returned from war and the couple had a second honeymoon in Blackpool, after which they started their family, having a son and daughter who were born in the 1940's, and another daughter born in the early 1950's.

Fast forward to 1977, and the pair followed their two daughters and their husbands by emigrating to Australia on what turned out to be the very last boat to carry migrants from England to the land 'down under'.

And whilst the couple initially settled in Kelmscott and then Bayswater, it was only when they discovered RAAFA's estate at AFME that they felt truly at home and decided to make the move to Bull Creek, back in 1990.

"Once dad found the RAAFA estate



he felt it was just like he was back in the RAF, he just loved it and so did mum," says daughter, Janet Chapple.

"They both really immersed themselves in the estate, dad enjoyed working at the museum workshop and also as a volunteer guide, and they both were very involved with the estate newsletter as well as fundraising events. That really was their life and they enjoyed everything about living within their beloved RAAFA community."

And now, more than 30 years later, Vera is still enjoying living at AFME and celebrated her birthday surrounded by family and friends, several of whom flew in from Sydney to help her celebrate.

"Mum can still remember lots of moments and happy times during her lifetime, and we are able to take a trip down memory lane with her as we helped her mark her big 100<sup>th</sup> birthday milestone. It really is a remarkable achievement," adds Janet.

## Welcome to Amity

Wow, what a turnout we had at Amity Village Albany to welcome 14 new people to the estate and celebrate in great RAAFA style at the February meet and greet.

Everyone was welcomed, whether they be old friends becoming new neighbours, new people to Albany or those just new to Amity Village.

With over 60 residents attending this very happy morning tea it was a lovely welcome for people to their new home and an introduction to the relaxed RAAFA lifestyle.

Special thanks to those who provided the delicious array of treats to enjoy.



LtoR Joy, Julie, Mal and Brian

## Sharing a passion

At RAAFA Challenger Court, resident Frank Corless is sharing his love of art with fellow residents and RAAFA members. Frank is a talented retired art teacher who is enjoying sharing his passion and says the classes have invigorated him and are easily the favourite part of his week.

So far, the group has enjoyed trying different styles to write their names and have worked up to learning how to draw faces and understand techniques for proportions. They have had great fun and despite feeling nervous at tackling such a difficult subject, have all been really happy with their progress.

"Frank is a very talented artist and extremely patient and I find the classes very relaxing," commented Maxine Stone, with Maureen Acton saying, "Frank is just fantastic, I never imagined I could draw faces like this so soon." Joan Slater added, "I'm over the moon with Frank. The art classes are so good for my mental health. Frank has the

patience of Job and I'm shocked with what I've achieved."

If you have ever wanted to give art a try, why not join in this supportive community environment, which is now open to Challenger Court residents as well as RAAFA members.

Art with Frank takes place in the RAAFA Challenger Court Activity Centre every Thursday afternoon from 1.00pm to 3.00pm with most materials donated by Frank.

Contact [challenger@raafawa.org.au](mailto:challenger@raafawa.org.au) to join or for more details.



Maxine Stone

## Training to save a life

With the introduction of defibrillators across all RAAFA sites the team at Amity Village Albany were keen to be in the know on how to use it if the need ever arose.

St John Great Southern First Aid came to the rescue and provided a useful demonstration for all staff and residents. You will find the defibrillators in Amity on the wall between the residents' workshop and gym.

Fingers crossed we never need to use it.





# Social aspect appealing

■ New residents to Cambrai Village, Shelley and Patrick McGinn, agree that their new home is situated not so much in a village, but in its very own exclusive suburb.

"The roads here are so wide and it really feels like our very own private suburb," says Shelley, who moved into Cambrai with her husband back in September last year.

"We had been talking about downsizing as we had a larger house and quite a big garden and my husband will be the first one to admit that he loves gardens but not gardening," laughs 74-year-old Shelley, who was born in Nottingham and emigrated to Perth when she was 21 years old in 1970.

After looking at a few different retirement villages, the sociable couple were invited over to a friend's house at Cambrai for a look around the home and the estate.

"That really sold us on the place, but we were told we might have to wait a year or so," said Shelley.

"So we were really delighted when, just a few months later, we were told there were homes available and we ended up looking at three properties, and it was the third that we happily settled on, as we loved it from the moment we first walked in."

Shelley and Patrick chose the three-bedroom home and then turned one bedroom into a sewing/craft den and another into an office. Given both are very involved with the Limelight Theatre (Shelley being the current president and Patrick the bookings officer), the couple felt they needed a desk each and space to work.

"We honestly love our new house and where we live and can't speak highly enough of the residents and the staff at Cambrai," adds Shelley.

"This has been a really good move for us and we love the sociability of the place as we are very social people who like to make new friends and join in with things."

"I initially thought that perhaps the homes could be too close to each other, but I really don't feel that at all and I love the fact that I can wave to my neighbours while I'm gardening and chat to people as they're passing."

"Everything feels like it's brand-new as we treated ourselves to some new furniture with the money that has been freed up from the sale of our previous house, and we honestly couldn't be happier with the place we now call home."



## Furry friends move into Gordon Lodge

■ Gordon Lodge has some new residents – and they're a huge hit.

The new additions come in the form of furry, four-legged friends with a difference – they're robotic and are voice and touch activated.

Angela Lowe, Facility Manager at Gordon Lodge, explains seniors in aged care often crave something to love, and frequently may talk about the beloved animals they've owned during their lifetimes.

"Our family initially increased with the purchase of a Labrador and a cat, and it's fair to say that our residents have fallen in love with them," says Angela.

"There's been a huge emotional response from residents and these interactions have also sparked many

conversations. Our seniors often look for them and are keen to adopt them as their own for the day or night."

At the time of writing, the furry menagerie has increased to four lifelike Labradors, as well as the cat, which have been funded by raffle donations and support from suppliers including Hartmans and Ian Sampson from Round House Solicitors and Barristers.

Residents chose the names Alfie, Bonzo, Rex, Benji and Cat for their new pets.

And the best thing, according to Angela? "They don't need feeding, walking or poop scooping," she laughs.

## Your chance to Vote! Cirrus Apartments finalist

■ RAAFA's Cirrus Apartments and RAAFA Club at AFME have become finalists in the 2023 National Retirement Living awards in the Best Luxury Retirement Living Development category, sponsored by Tunstall.

For those who haven't heard of them before, the national awards celebrate high achievement across all parts of the retirement living sector and contain nine categories, and one special award, recognising people and companies doing great work to ensure senior Australians have an enjoyable retirement.

Penny John, AFME Estate Manager, says RAAFA strives for excellence in every area of its operations and the organisation was delighted to have been nominated for the prestigious award.

"Throughout the entire development and building process for Cirrus Apartments and the RAAFA Club, RAAFA worked closely with our architects, Cameron Chisholm Nicol, to bring about a truly modern approach on how we could best

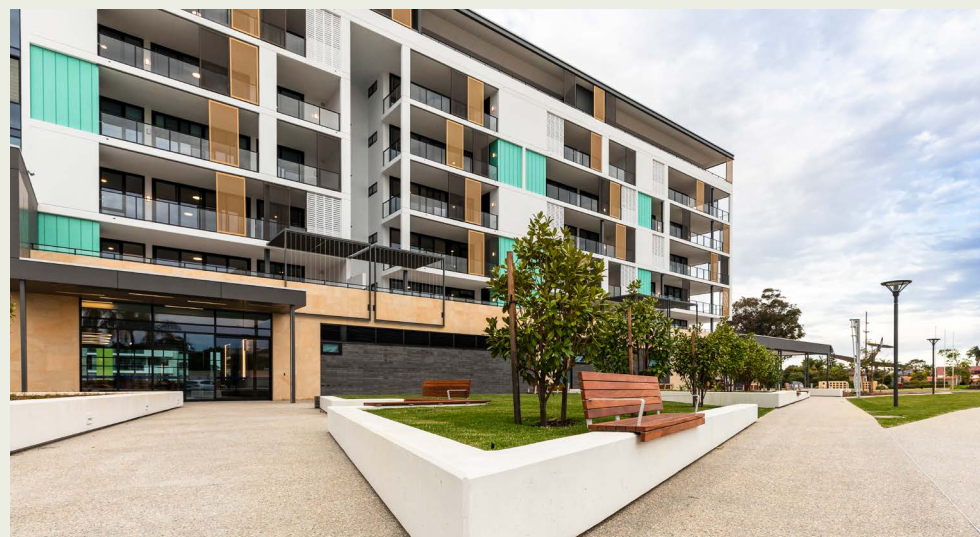
respond to the needs of our current and future retirees," she says.

"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 as a result of us making the finals in this award category."

"And of course, we would like to acknowledge our architects Cameron Chisholm Nicol, and their entire team, for being our partners in this exciting project."

Both Penny John and Tonia Zeeman, Chief Operating Officer, plan to travel to the Gold Coast for the award ceremony on 22 June.

You can also take part by casting your vote in the People's Choice Award for Best Retirement Village or Community. Voting opens on 12 April 2023 via [retirementlivingawards.propertycouncil.com.au](https://retirementlivingawards.propertycouncil.com.au) and we'd love to have your support.





# Club Bites

Please have your RAAFA membership card available, as you may be required to show it as proof of membership when using the facilities available to you. For anyone wishing to visit a RAAFA Club who is not currently a member, you will need to be signed in as a guest by a current member.

## MEADOW SPRINGS CLUB 9582 5375

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

Bookings for lunch or dinner can be made at the bar.

### Weekly specials

Monday, Roast \$14.50

Wednesday, Club Night – meal \$14.50, chase the ace, bingo and horse racing

Thursday, Happy hour, 4.00pm



## MERRIWA CLUB 9400 3640

### Blue Gum Café

Pop down for our daily specials or sample something from 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, Devonshire afternoon tea, 2.00pm to 3.00pm

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

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

3rd Saturday, Sundowner bar opens 4.00pm

## Short stay accommodation

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

## CAMBRAI CLUB

9304 5400 or if unattended  
0417 922 658

### Weekly specials

Tuesday and Wednesday, Happy hour 4.00pm

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

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

Wednesday, Morning tea, 10.00am to 11.00am

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

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

### Events (check Club for details)

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

## 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 \$17.00

Tuesday, Fish and chips \$17.00

Wednesday, Pie day \$17.00

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

Friday, Chicken parmi day \$19

Monday and Wednesday, Happy Hour 4.00pm

A la Carte night 4th Wednesday of every month



Chinese New Year

## Introducing Phil



Phil Bedford is RAAFA's General Manager of Property and Sustainability and, after being in the job for over a year, he's of the firm belief

that RAAFA is a great organisation in which to work.

"There's a fantastic team here and

I'm really enjoying the role," says Phil, who has been married to his wife Nicola for close to 20 years and has two children - Evie who is eleven and Blake who is 6 years old.

Based at the central support office, Phil is responsible for a range of different areas of our property portfolio including unit upgrades, asset management, maintenance, capital works and sustainability, to name a few.

"Our property team renovates on average 140 units a year across

our estates, and that includes new bathrooms, new kitchens, new flooring and painting throughout," says Phil.

"That number represents a significant investment of money into RAAFA's homes annually, and I'm very impressed at the quality of the furnishings and fittings that are being installed."

Another significant project that falls under Phil's management is the rolling out of solar electricity at RAAFA's aged care homes.

"I have a real passion for aged care, where I have worked for the past six years," adds Phil, who was born in the Lancashire seaside resort of Blackpool, and who first came out to Australia as a backpacker in 2008.

"As well as enjoying the job, I'm also so happy to be able to live in Perth. For someone who was brought up in Lancashire, I just love the sunshine and the Australian lifestyle, as does my wife and kids."



# RAAFA Wellbeing Team

## CAMBRAI VILLAGE

Vanessa Priestley  
9304 5280

## RAAFA ESTATE MERRIWA

Suzanne Free  
9400 3778

## AFME

Jo Oliver  
9311 4562

## ERSKINE GROVE

Angeline Carleton  
9586 4309

## RAAFA ESTATE MEADOW SPRINGS

Mischa Matthews  
9582 5369

## RAAFA AMITY VILLAGE ALBANY

Ceridwen Fitzpatrick  
9841 8311

## Merriwa Estate

### Advocare

Learn more about your rights and how Advocare can support you.

Come along to the presentation on Monday, 3 April 10.00am to 11.00am in the Meeting Room to find out more about their programs, advocacy and aged care information, including The Charter of Aged Care Rights, The Community Visitors Scheme, information about Elder Abuse and much more.

Enjoy complimentary morning tea, along with the opportunity to ask your questions. Contact Suzanne to book your place.

## AFME

### Defibrillator training

AFME has recently purchased two more defibrillators bringing the total on the estate to six, which is a great effort when we have over 500 residents spread out across a large estate.

Bettina from St Johns shared her knowledge and both sessions were at full capacity, showing the importance of keeping our residents familiar on how to use this life saving equipment.



## Amity Village

### Be Connected information session

A government initiative aimed at getting older Australians online *safely*. Katie from Worklink visited Amity Village in February to talk about all the services that Be Connected offers in the region, and to gauge interest in running a support program at the Village.

With nearly 40 residents joining in on the day, there were a lot of suggestions!

In the coming months we will be hosting workshops on the topics suggested at the session and Katie and her team of experts will be offering free help and information on a wide range of technological topics.



## Erskine Grove

### Fun weekly exercise

If you're looking for a way to get your body moving, why not join our exercise classes, which are suitable for everyone. The exercises are done to music from the 50s though to the 80s.

Join Michelle 10.00am Wednesday mornings in the clubhouse. \$9 per class.

Michelle guarantees you will gain improvements in your mobility, balance, strength and even cognition. The best bit is they're fun, friendly, welcoming, and with zero pressure.

Michelle is a personal trainer with a passion for giving you the ability to continue living life to the fullest. Feedback so far has been great. Nola said, "I love that I can come along and do what I can, the best bit is the music! I just love it!" "I have found that I am now able to squat down to pick things up off the floor without bending or hurting my back," said Betty and Peta says "thanks for your great dancing classes, they are so much fun, I like that you give options to suit everybody."

For more information contact Michelle on 0421 884 214.

## Meadow Springs

We have two new initiatives to increase socialisation and inclusion, which are held on the weekends when the estate is at its quietest and residents may feel the loneliest.

### Monthly dinner

Especially created for residents who live in the lovely Mews section of the estate. Fellow residents on the estate volunteer to organise and prepare a wholesome home cooked meal for enjoyment together under the gazebo.



### Craft café

Held monthly in the newly refurbished wellness centre. A fully serviced dining experience is prepared for morning tea and lunch with a selection of craft made by fellow resident available for purchase. This initiative is for estate residents only and includes a volunteer driver to ensure all residents have an opportunity to attend if needed.

The last café saw over 80 residents come along and the feedback from both initiatives has been overwhelmingly positive and has residents looking forward and anticipating the next one.

