



CARING FRIENDS

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Ryder-Cheshire Victorian
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GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The year is rapidly drawing to a close, and what a busy year it has been at the Homes! I hope that you enjoy reading this report on our activities and news over the last six months.

Occupancy at the Homes

Now that all three of our buildings are open after nearly four years of disruption due to renovation works and COVID-19 lockdowns, it is really pleasing to see that our occupancy rate is back to 2019 levels. On average more than 80% of rooms are occupied at any given time, and often it is a full house. It means that once again we can provide accommodation to as many people as possible. We hope current residents are enjoying our upgraded facilities.

WiFi Access Now Available

As well as recent renovations and fire safety upgrades, we are very pleased to offer residents WiFi access in all rooms in Buildings 12 and 14. This has been a major project, and it has been made possible by the incredible skill, hard work, and generosity of committee member Steve Kues. Steve planned and installed the system and donated some of the essential hardware components. WiFi access is a wonderful service which

improves the quality of the experience for residents. Many thanks to Steve for this project. Thanks also to Steve and his daughter Chloe for reworking the website for the Homes.

Naming of Don Sinclair House

In October we invited members of the Sinclair family to join us for an afternoon function at the Homes to remember the late Dr Don Sinclair by officially naming our building at 10 Donaldson Street as Don Sinclair House. More on this event later.

Confirmation of Our New Patron

Our former patron of the Homes, the Honourable Linda Dessau, retired as Governor of Victoria and was replaced by Professor Margaret Gardner. With each change of Governor, we need to reapply for patronage, and we are very pleased that Professor Gardner has agreed to be our patron. It is an honour to be able to maintain this important relationship with the new Governor, and we look forward to the possibility of inviting her to visit the Homes.

Also, on the topic of Government House, committee member Anthony Brooks and his wife Alison represented the Homes at a reception at Government House to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. Anthony and Alison were fortunate to meet outgoing Governor Linda Dessau and talk to her about the Homes.



▲ Kathy – opening welcome (Don Sinclair House)



◀◀ Don introducing Sarah and Andrew
▶ Sarah, Don and Andrew



The gardens in bloom

Ryder-Cheshire Rose

Staff and Volunteers

Post graduate student volunteers are an important part of life at the Homes. Recently we farewelled Nick Dodd who had been with us since 2019. We are very grateful to Nick for his extensive support over this time and we wish him all the very best back in his hometown of New York.



▲ Jane, Leo with Wilby, Jan, Bruce and Nola

On a sad note, we mourn the recent passing of Nola Jones who was a much-loved volunteer from Shepparton. Nola and her late husband Leo would regularly stay at the Homes to fill in for Sr Jane while she had time off, and their hosting of Christmas lunch for residents at the Homes was legendary. Nola, Leo and his guide dogs Molly and later Wilby, were a wonderful part of life at the Homes for over 20 years and are all sadly missed.

Our staff and volunteers work together to keep the Homes running smoothly every day of the year, and to provide the welcoming and supportive atmosphere of a 'home away from home' for our residents. Thank you to our Manager Sandra and Assistant Manager Leila, who lead the team, and everyone involved in this amazing team effort.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED

Donations

Thank you to all our donors and supporters, and those who leave a bequest to the Homes. Your thoughtfulness and generosity make it possible for the Homes to continue our mission of providing friendly, safe, and affordable accommodation for residents and their carers.

Every donation is very important to us, and they are often used to support a particular project around the Homes. As an example, we recently identified that the ground level lighting along the paths between the buildings had been damaged during the renovations and was creating a safety hazard at night. We were planning to repair and upgrade the lighting and were greatly assisted by donations from the Rotary Club of Rosanna and the Ivanhoe and Heidelberg branches of the Commonwealth Bank, which enabled us to act on this very quickly.

Committee of Management

My sincere thanks to all the members of the Committee of Management for their time, hard work and dedication to the Ryder-Cheshire mission for the relief of suffering. And in particular, a big thank you to committee member Brenda Brook who is retiring after many years of dedicated service to the Homes.

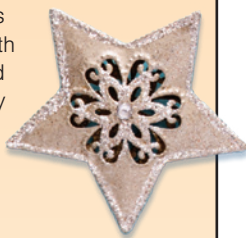
In Closing

It has been a busy year at the Homes, and once again my thanks and good wishes to everyone involved in this big team effort, and to everyone who supports us in our work.

There are many difficulties around the world at the present time, and I know that we all join together in the hope for peaceful resolutions and a brighter future for all in the coming year.

I wish you a safe and happy Christmas and holiday season, and a very good year in 2024.

Kathy Oswin.



MANAGER'S REPORT

Looking back over the last 6 months we can reflect on the ongoing contributions of many people. Both in the day-to-day operations and the achievement of finally having all three buildings open, it has been a period of much hard work.

I know we are all looking forward to enjoying time with family and friends over the Festive Season.

Leila and Iwan took a well-deserved holiday in July. They travelled back home to Indonesia and had a wonderful time catching up with family and friends, and of course enjoying the local cuisine and warm weather. Leila went to her 45-year university reunion, over ninety participants from all over the world flew to central Java and enjoyed 5 days together in a beautiful resort.

We were truly fortunate to have a very kind resident Robert who conducted several handyman jobs in Iwan's absence, this was a huge help, and we are so grateful for his time and assistance.

Nick our longest serving student volunteer left to return to the US in August. We enjoyed a going away dinner and then afternoon tea with donuts! Nick stayed at the homes for 4 years and it would be fair to say, the most challenging, with renovations and COVID-19, which resulted in no volunteers, and a new manager. Nick took it all in his stride and helped to ensure there was a level of calmness and dependability during these difficult periods. He is certainly missed at the Homes by staff, volunteers, and residents alike. I know Nick was looking forward to enjoying a proper pizza back in New York as he could not believe the tiny pizzas here in Australia!

Leila celebrated her birthday with a morning tea, and she had a surprise visitor, Nicky our previous Manager! It was a delightful surprise to everyone who had not seen Nicky since she left the Homes in 2021, and great to see her looking well. Nicky baked the most delicious cheesecake, and it was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The Volunteer Students have been extremely busy in the second half of 2023. Occero undertook a 12-week placement for his Social Work degree, and Bahgeha did a 4-week placement at a local primary school. Kingsley completed his second year of Bachelor of



Prosthetics and Orthotics. A big congratulations to Hoa who has completed her Master's in Supply Chain and Logistics. We are so fortunate to have a wonderful team of Volunteer Students who not only study full time but also assist in the office and ensure residents are welcomed.

The cleaning team of Iwan, Joy, Jehan, Bahgeha and Pornchanok continue to do an outstanding job ensuring the rooms and public areas are of the highest standards. The feedback from the residents is always so positive and complimentary.

Christine and Patricia have hosted enjoyable Sunday Afternoon Teas for our residents and we hope to continue the Sunday Afternoon gatherings in 2024. Shona, another student volunteer also assisted in hosting; it is good to see younger volunteers at the Homes. Christine and Patricia not only volunteer for the Homes but also the Rosanna Rotary Club, they do a great amount for the local community, and we are so grateful to have them as part of our team.

It was with great sadness to hear of the passing of John Walkley, the president of Friends of Eaglemont on 11 November 2023. John was highly active within the community. I first met John in January 2022 when he and other Friends of Eaglemont volunteers attended our monthly garden working bee, which continues to this day. John's leadership and his drive to include others and improve the local area will be missed. Our condolences were sent to Bronwyn and James.

It is certainly the end of an era. We were all incredibly sad to hear Nola Jones passed away in September 2023. Famous for her Christmas lunches, Nola together with her late husband, Leo volunteered in the office for many years. Nola will be missed by all who knew her.

Finally, we all enjoyed a wonderful gathering for the naming of the Don Sinclair building. It

was the first event since COVID-19 and hopefully in 2024 we will be able to have further celebratory events.

From all the team we wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Best wishes from Sandra, Leila, Iwan, Occero, Hoa, Kingsley and Bahgeha.



▲ Leila's surprise birthday

◀ Nola with Leo hosting a Christmas Day lunch



NAMING OF DON SINCLAIR HOUSE

On Sunday 28 October, committee members, supporters and members of the Sinclair family attended the official naming of Don Sinclair House, followed by afternoon tea.

Don's involvement with the Ryder-Cheshire organisation began in 1962 when he joined the Victorian Foundation and became Treasurer, a role he retained for more than 50 years. Joining the Ryder-Cheshire Victorian Homes Foundation in 1982, he was President of the Committee of Management from 1991 until his retirement in 2016, some 25 years. Don was involved in the setting up and then the expansion of the Homes, and later in guiding renovations such as the installation of lifts and air conditioning. He gave very generously of his time and skills and was involved in every aspect of the life of the Homes.

happy occasion. One of the highlights of the occasion was Don's daughter Sarah and son Andrew telling us some lovely stories about Don and the early days of the Homes, and about the times Leonard Cheshire visited the Homes and the Sinclair family.

Don has left a great legacy of service to the Ivanhoe Homes, to the broader Ryder-Cheshire community and to the mission for the relief of suffering. We are very proud that Don Sinclair House now bears his name.

▼ Sinclair family members



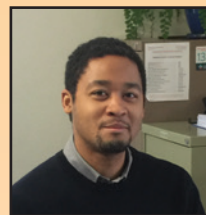
▲ Andrew and Sarah
Ann, Sarah, Don ▶
and Andrew
speaking

The opportunity for members of the Ryder-Cheshire community and the Sinclair family to join together and remember Don made for a very



NICK - MOVING ON..

I have to say that my stay at Ryder-Cheshire was very much an unexpected experience for my time in Melbourne.



I had intended to come out and study, help out with my niece, and then see where the winds carry me. Looking back at my time there; the work we did, the people I've met, and the crew we had, I can't imagine what my time in Australia would have been like otherwise.

I quickly learned that Ryder fills a need that I was not even aware existed. Providing a safe and comfortable place for people to stay when they travel into the city to receive treatment. I'd like to think that I was able to help do my part in making sure anyone who stayed with us found themselves welcome. While folks may have had any number of worries on their minds when they arrived, the one concern they never had to have, was about where they were staying.

Talking with so many different folks from all across Victoria, and more than a few from other states as well, taught me a lot about Australia. I've had conversations about stories ranging from growing up on a farm, working in a factory as a kid in the 70s, working in a mine, traveling across the outback, and more things than I can even recall. Although I may have only travelled around Victoria during my time there, I was able to experience quite a bit of the country through the eyes of those who stayed with us.

At the end of my journey, I found myself returning home to New York. Having been away for a few years I had begun missing the place. While Melbourne was fun, there's no place like home. I have no idea what the future holds, but I look forward to seeing what other unexpected experiences I may find myself in.

I wish all the best to everyone at Ryder-Cheshire and hope you all enjoy the coming holidays



▲ Don wearing his medallion

DON HAMILTON - OAM INVESTITURE

On Thursday 14 September, together with a hundred other recipients, Past-President Don Hamilton was presented with his Order of Australia (OAM) by Her Excellency Professor the Honorable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria, at Government House.

Don was accompanied by his wife Ann, daughter Meg, and step-children Matt and Fran. The investiture was one of both ceremony and dignity. The Officers and staff at Government House were excellent and provided support and guidance at every step. Don recounted, when the Lieutenant Colonel who was briefing the waiting recipients in the ante-room he said, with a smile, "If any of you have a tendency towards displaying initiative,

forget it! You will be told what to do and when to do it. Improvisation is not welcomed."

There was one light-hearted moment when the Governor attempted to place the AC medal around the neck of a female recipient which required the sash holding the medal being placed over the recipient's head. Unfortunately the lady in question was wearing a hat and declined (refused?) to remove it, so after several failed attempts the Governor had to unclasp the sash, go behind the recipient to re-clasp the sash behind her neck and then move back to the front to shake her hand. Don can see an extra guidance note for next year's recipients suggesting that hats should not be worn, or at least have one which can be easily removed!

A highlight of Don's day was when he and his family were introduced personally to the Governor in the gardens after the investiture. Even after putting a hundred plus one recipients through their paces, she was still charming and interested in what he and his family had to say.

▼ Receiving the OAM



Farewell morning tea with Talal, Sandra, Nick, Leila, Peter, Terry & Kathy ▼▶



SNIPPETS

We value your feedback and comments, a selection are:

"Thank you for a very comfy stay and so friendly."

"Lovely place, lovely service. Love the birds and gardens."

"Can't thank the staff enough, Wonderful accommodation to recover."

"Thank you for your kindness and hospitality."

"Ideal place if u need hospital accommodation close to Austin Hospital and the Repat Hospital."

"I have stayed Numerous Times. Staff, Accommodation and place itself is of the highest regard!!!"

"So grateful for Ryder-Cheshire homes - I stayed for 6 months while my partner was in Rehab and it was a godsend 'home away from home'.

The staff are super friendly and helpful. Thank you!"



REMEMBERING NOLA JONES

When I think of Nola I think of a genuine, warm, caring and little bit naughty and incredibly giving soul. Our paths crossed many times in life, firstly at Warranga Basin Sailing Club, when I was a small tacker and Nola and Leo managed the boathouse, canteen and campgrounds. Nola was always seen running about like a "blue-arsed fly" (Nola's words) constantly helping, organising and making sure everyone was looked after. I'm guessing not unlike her time spent nursing prior.

The next Nola crossing happened when she and Leo became friends with a couple that also camped regularly up at Southgate, Queensland. Believe it or not those happy campers were my Great Aunt and Uncle, what a small, small world.

Leo, Nola, Mollie with fellow Resident Carers ▼



Leo, Nola and Wilby ▲
Leo, Nola, Angie, Annette & Bronwen at a Volunteer Lunch ▼



However, maybe it was less coincidence and more the fact that Nola and Leo were just beautiful people, always open, quick with a laugh the love of a good yarn in a campground and meeting new potential friends. Nola, always checking in on, how are you going love, what are you up to, how's the family?

Ryder-Cheshire threw us together again, and I will be forever grateful for this lovely third coincidence. I adored each and every time the "Jones" were coming down for a stint of volunteering as it was always full of laughs, hugs, chats and plenty of funny shenanigans. For so many years Nola would do the lions share of preparing and cooking Christmas dinner for people who found themselves at Ryder-Cheshire during this usually festive time of year. Although these residents were all going through incredibly tough times, they would often comment on what an amazing Christmas day

they'd had.... being with Nola was like receiving a giant hug. Of course, there was the odd resident that would fall into her bad books and I would get to laugh with this skinny sweet lady with her fists balled up telling me "Ange they really better not get my Irish up, I tell you".

Nola dealt with so many personally hard times in her life. She chose not to dwell on these, but always looked outwards to what she could give of herself. Nola was not only a huge part of the Ryder-Cheshire family but for me a beautiful inclusion to my own family, my girls adored her and am eternally thankful for having had her in my life. Nola often spoke of her worry of having no children to pass on her treasures to. I believe Nola's biggest treasure was all she gave of herself, this we will always remember, cherish and treasure.

Angie



CARING FRIENDS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

Instead of receiving a hard copy, we can send it to you via email. Simply call our office and provide your email address, or go to www.rydercheshire.org.au and follow the links. Thank you.

REGULAR SOCIAL EVENTS

We are gradually resuming social events albeit slowly, with the health and safety of our residents uppermost in our planning. Please look contact our office staff for the latest information on any events.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

If you have time a few hours a week to assist at the Homes or act as Resident Carer over a weekend we'd love to hear from you! No pre-requisite skills required. For all enquires please call (03) 9254 2400.

DONATION

Ryder-Cheshire Ivanhoe Homes (ABN 94 074 894 677) receives no government funding and is financed entirely through its own efforts and the generous support of Caring Friends.

Donations of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible

Visit www.rydercheshirehomes.org.au to donate via PayPal



Donations can also be made via EFTPOS by calling the office or please fill in the form and send it to the address below

RCVHF Inc. 10-14 Donaldson Street IVANHOE VIC 3079

Amount \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

