

Open Door Magazine

Summer 2020

2020,
YEAR OF
CARE STAFF

NATIONAL
VOLUNTEERS
DAY

QANTAS
JOINS MACG
FAMILY

CEO Message

This time last year, as we all prepared for 2020, none of us could have imagined that our lives were about to be impacted so quickly and dramatically. But through it all, what I have witnessed from our staff has been something we can all applaud.

The strength of character and sense of community that our McKenzie family displayed has been nothing short of inspiring.

And, by 'family' I am referring to our staff, residents and families. I couldn't be more proud as CEO to see how everyone came together to look after one another, care for our colleagues and residents, and provide constant words of encouragement and support.

This year, on International Nurses Day and Aged Care Employee Day, we celebrated our wonderful staff across our McKenzie homes, to show our appreciation for the genuine care, empathy and support given to our residents.

We cannot thank our staff enough for the teamwork they display each day, by supporting and working seamlessly together to deliver the best standard of care for our residents.

The hardwork and dedication of care staff has truly been recognised this year, not only across the McKenzie Aged Care Group, but around the world.

On behalf of the Directors and Leadership Team, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and safe New Year.



Qantas Staff join the McKenzie Family

When the pandemic hit, we knew we had to quickly plan for a 'surge' workforce that was right for our residents and the McKenzie cornerstones. We scanned alternate industries for appropriate support. We knew that Qantas had outstanding customer service training and were well equipped emotionally to work during a pandemic. Thus the relationship began and what an incredible story it has become!

As the situation of the pandemic unfolded, there was a need to be creative with activities and remain connected with families. This is where the Qantas team became invaluable.

Customer Service Manager, Matt, has worked with Qantas for 13 years, and spent a few months working in our lifestyle team at Seaton Place, Cleveland.

Matt was a regular performer in the Qantas revue musicals, and has in the past taught English in Japanese aged care homes.

These skills, coupled with 'first class' customer service skills, made him an instant hit with our residents and staff.

Little things make all the difference when you are on a long haul flight, and they make all the difference in aged care too. Jaye, our Lifestyle Coordinator explains; "Matt bought a lilac shirt so that residents knew he was part of the team. He took time to learn everyone's name on his first day."

Two of our residents carry their handbags everywhere with them, and one morning he was chatting and walking with them, carrying both of their handbags for them."



Qantas Team Member, Matt with resident, Bett

Matt loved his time with us, "it's an opportunity of a lifetime to make a real difference in people's lives."

Sam Scott, Facility Manager, sums it up: "We know we can't take the place of their family, but we were trying to ensure that our residents were all receiving as much contact from everyone as possible and not just in a care needs capacity. They felt very safe and loved. Matt helped with that. He fit right in – it felt as if he had been here for years"

This positive experience was echoed by Michelle Jarvis, Facility Manager of our Charlesbrook residence in Templestowe, Victoria.

"The feedback from residents, staff and families was overwhelmingly positive. Our two Qantas employees, Fergus and Kath, were absolutely wonderful with everyone, so positive, happy and inspiring. Families kept commenting how bright and happy they were when involved with Skype. They honestly fit into the Charlesbrook Family immediately and it felt like they have been here forever. Thank you so much to McKenzie for this initiative as the outcomes of our residents emotional wellbeing is a priority."



Qantas Team Members, Kath (left) with Joyce and Fergus (right) with June

Jacque was another addition to the MACG family, and was welcomed with open arms at our Lynbrook facility in Victoria. "It was an absolute honour and privilege working at Lynbrook Park. The staff were so welcoming and the residents were a joy to be around. I loved every minute there and thank you so much for the opportunity. I feel so lucky".

We had 16 Qantas staff working across our facilities. They did everything from helping with Skype calls to spending time chatting with residents to assisting with activities, to running Q&A travel sessions!

We felt very lucky to have had them.

Keeping Loved Ones Connected

If you're part of our Facebook community, you would have seen the many ways in which our Lifestyle Teams have brought our residents and families together.

We have especially seen how creative and compassionate our staff are during recent times where they have adapted and stepped outside the square to help our families stay connected with their loved ones while keeping residents safe and happy.

We provided a menu of ways for families to stay in touch through video and messaging services and our teams have truly gone above and beyond.

One of our Lifestyle Coordinators at The Ormsby, Buderim took residents on a 'Virtual Scenic Trip' around the local area.

Our amazing team at Seabrook, Deception Bay, filmed clips of residents sending messages to their families, while other homes took the time to text photos to family members so they can see what their loved one is up to. These are such great ways to keep families visually connected on both sides.

It is important to keep residents connected to their local community. Across many of our homes, the relationship they have built with local schools has continued, with students sending in drawings and letters to all the residents. It has been such a beautiful display of community support.

Our staff have also done what they can to keep up with routine. At Seaton Place, Cleveland the wonderful team arranged for weekly one-on-one Music Therapy sessions via skype for residents as well as regular services with their local church via YouTube.

Residents are also giving back where they can, with The Ashley's Lifestyle Team assisting with making washable masks for the local hospitals.

These are just a few of many acts we have been seeing around our homes and it doesn't stop with our Lifestyle Teams, all staff members are getting involved in any way they can. Thank you to all our staff for the amazing work you do in going above and beyond for our residents.



Virtual Music Therapy session at Seaton Place



Volunteers Changing Lives

National Volunteer Week is the annual celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers.

It provides an opportunity for the McKenzie Aged Care Group, on behalf of our residents, their relatives and staff, to thank our volunteers for all the amazing work they do and the positive contribution made to our resident's lives. The theme of this year's National Volunteer Week was "Changing Communities. Changing Lives". Volunteering plays a vital role in the development of social cohesion and social connection – both of which help alleviate loneliness which as we know has a very real effect on physical and mental wellbeing.

Residents are often missing the family and friends that know them best and this can lead to feeling socially isolated and disconnected. With the help of our volunteers, we are able to include in their care, the little things that make a difference: a smile, an ear to listen to their worries and hear their stories, and sometimes just a presence – to sit and quietly provide company.



All volunteers, through their generous contributions, are helping to change communities and change the lives of our residents.

The start to 2020 has been disrupted by COVID-19, which has challenged us in ways we could not have imagined. If this time is showing us anything, it is about the universality of the human experience, and the need for empathy, compassion and patience.

Through this time the presence of volunteers in our facilities was greatly missed by all. The residents and staff welcomed our amazing volunteers back with open arms.

Our sincerest thanks for all the wonderful work our volunteers continue to do for our homes.



Remembering Our Fallen Veterans

The spirit of ANZAC and all it stands for... courage, mateship and sacrifice, echoed across McKenzie Aged Care homes as we came together to honour this sacred day.

As the nation came together on April 25th to commemorate our fallen soldiers, gathering in driveways to "light up the dawn", each McKenzie home held dedicated services for residence to show their respect for this special day of remembrance, in lieu of traditional dawn services.

The Ashley residents joined the rest of Australia by standing proudly on the street path at dawn to remember the diggers. Seabrook residents 'lit up their communities' with flameless candles and placed poppy sprigs on their doors. They held a day of reflection and laid wreaths in their own time.

The lovely volunteers at The Powerhouse Museum presented The Terraces residents with a big screen showing of their 'War and Peace' exhibition with a beautiful ANZAC tribute. At Charlesbrook they had a live stream from 'Three's Company Trio' band member Laurel McKenna, who dedicated her songs to the fallen.

In recognition of our soldiers, Rosebrook residents shared photos of themselves or loved ones who served, on a beautifully dressed table of remembrance.

Residents at The Ormsby contributed throughout their service. Colin played ANZAC favourites, including hymn "Onward Christian Soldiers", on the grand piano, with Mike reciting the Prayer of Remembrance and Bruce placing the beautiful wreath, handmade by the residents, on our presentation table. Also displayed was a print of an ANZAC soldier from Sidney Nolan's Gallipoli series and three beautiful hats, kindly contributed by the local Returned and Services League (RSL).

Veterans proudly donned service uniforms and medals, honouring our diggers, their families and each other as they reflected with staff during the minute silence and ANZAC day atmosphere. The Australian National Anthem was sung with pride before the afternoon gave way to a shared drink and games of two-up.

Thank you to all the dedicated McKenzie staff and residents who helped in the preparations to make this day and its presentations special, in remembrance our fallen service men and women.



Lest We Forget

In commemoration Remembrance Day, Ron Wollington, a resident at CapellaBay in Queensland, put pen to paper and wrote a poem.

Ron's poem, titled 'Remembrance Day' is a wonderful tribute to all those who fought and died in wars.

The black and white photo was taken in 1945 when Private Ron Wollington was 19 years old.

Ron was enlisted in the Royal Ulster Riffle Brigade and he often talks about the comradery and old fashioned mateship that has lasted a lifetime.



Remembrance Day

Remember at this time in our hearts, when we sent many to fight,
So much blood lost be it death or wound, a terrible sight.

Many returning badly wounded, lucky to be alive,
How on earth did so many survive.

Men, women and civilians died, all for a cause,
The eleventh of November at the eleventh hour we all pause.
All those sons and daughters, who died hero's, we salute,
Not only on a battlefield, but at home by bombs, we also salute.

We will always remember those who died,
Or were maimed because of war,
Ask any government when is the next one,
They will answer 'we are not sure'.

Speaking for Australia, they have never shun a fight,
In all kinds of wars, they fought with all their might.
Today and every day we praise our fighting women and men,
We pray for no more war, let the dead rest in peace, AMEN.

By Ronald Wollington



THE LIFESTYLE CORNER

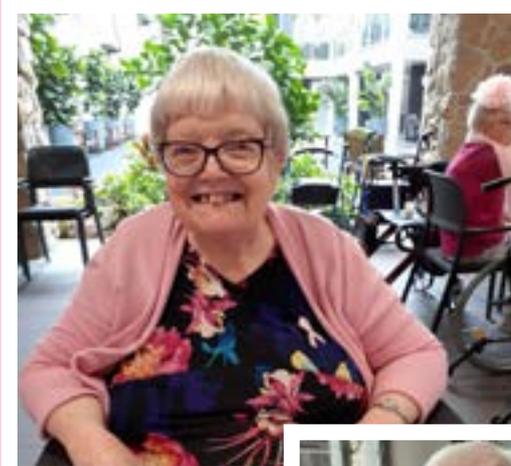
With restrictions on bus outings, concerts and visiting entertainment for Aged Care, our Lifestyle Team has worked hard to keep the monthly activity calendars full of fun, creativity and variety.



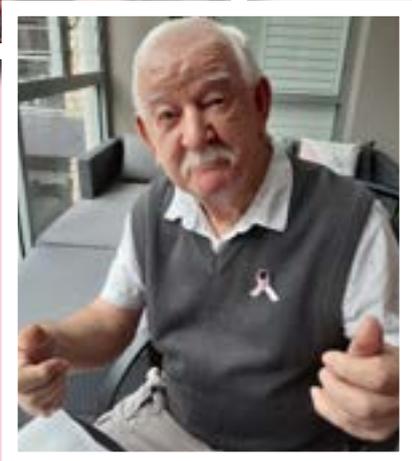
The residents at Buderim Views enjoying a cookie making class



Residents at Sutton Park had a great time making pancakes



The Terraces hosted a High Tea for Breast Cancer Awareness Day



SandBrook had an 'Armchair Travel' session to Germany for Oktoberfest and enjoyed happy hour with German folk music and a spot of yodelling

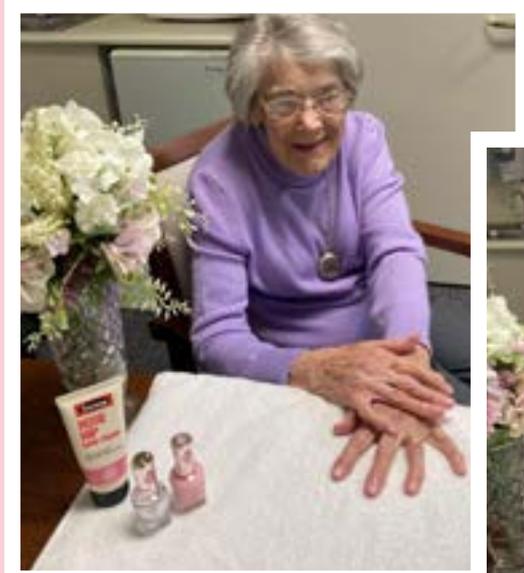




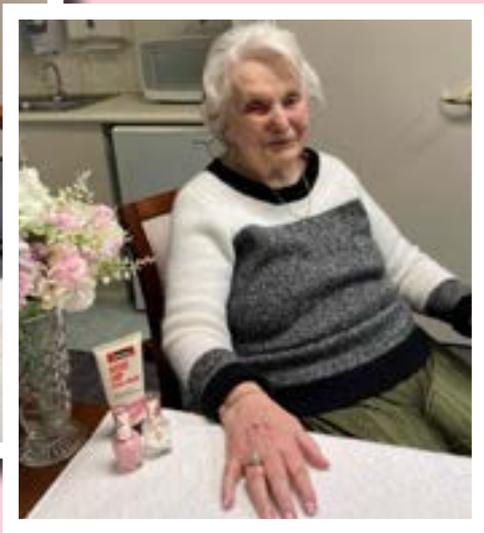
Dawn & Helene are very proud of the art they created in the Art & Craft group at The Ormsby



'Armchair Travel' to India at Lynbrook Park



The ladies at The Ashley treat themselves to a pamper session at the 'Lifestyle Spa & Salon'



Plenty of colourful hats were made by the group at Bribie



PET THERAPY

We have all felt the instant happiness when being greeted by our furry friends. Pets not only offer companionship but they have the ability to boost mental health and wellbeing.

For the elderly, studies show that interacting with animals reduces feelings of anxiety, depression and can ease loneliness.

Having regular social contact with animals provides a feeling of comfort, joy and may spark happy memories.

We have many staff who bring in their 'fur babies' to visit our residents. They look forward to the regular cuddles and pats, and the pets don't mind the attention either.

Acts of Kindness

2020 has been a difficult year for everyone in the aged care industry. Yet, in the midst of this pandemic, we are seeing more and more acts of kindness and generosity than ever before.

Amelia Earhart once said, "A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees". This perfectly summarises the effect that these small gestures are having at all of our facilities. Despite the strain on staff, and the fact that many residents are missing their families, random good deeds from the community are brightening up everyone's day. Here are a few examples:

A few weeks ago, staff at The Ashley facility were approached by a delightful young lady, 8-year-old Sasha. To thank them for the amazing work they do every day, she drew the staff lots of different pictures that captured their courage and dedication to caring for our residents.

Sasha said: "I did this activity to encourage the healthcare workers in aged care to keep going and never give up. I can guess that they are very tired and it's been hard work for them... This is my way of saying thank you for your great work!"



In another wonderful gesture, Domino's Pizza recently dropped off 10 free pizzas at our Newmans on the Park home to show their appreciation for the amazing job our staff do every day. Our staff thoroughly enjoyed this delicious treat!

A resident at The Ashley, Joyce, was tickled pink last month when she received a letter from a young man as her new pen pal. Joyce has loved the opportunity to share some great stories from her past with him and pass on some of her wisdom!



We were also overwhelmed with the gifts, flowers and chocolates left for our staff when we celebrated Aged Care Employees Day. The gorgeous flowers pictured below, came from June and her family at our CapellaBay facility.



These are only a couple of examples of the small acts of kindness we are seeing across our facilities each week.

All these good deeds make the day brighter for our residents and staff, and we are so appreciative of the kindness shown by all throughout this challenging period.

There is no doubt that this crisis has brought out the best in our communities, and we could not be any more grateful.

Tales from the Tiny Tea Room

at Bribie Cove Retirement Village

Over these last few months we have all adapted to a new way of living and have stepped outside the square to stay connected to friends and family. One of our residents, Eileen has shared with us a story of how residents at Bribie Cove Retirement Village have found a way to keep the community spirit going.

"My sister and I decided to continue our social connection by meeting for morning coffee and afternoon tea on our back patios. The 'Tiny Tea Room' tea house was soon operational.

During this time one of my neighbours has dropped over yummy slice, another handed a wonderful spinach and feta dish and my sister brought sultana fairy cakes. Knitting and craft has produced shawls, scarves, rugs and jumpers while three of our neighbours have cooperated and collaborated to produce a limited edition of designer masks to be used personally in home if required. Morning coffee at 'Tiny Tea Room' has turned into wonderful catch up on kindnesses and well wishes happening throughout the village.

We are fortunate that during our shut-in time, the International Space Shuttle provided at least two passes above Bribie Cove. Still keeping our physical distance, residents were able to look skyward and obtain a clear view of this technological phenomenon. It is sobering to remember that when this Shuttle blasted to space, COVID-19 was completely unknown and the 'Tiny Tea Room' wasn't an embryo of an idea. Now both are helping me to understand our fragile humanity and the importance of my place in the worldwide community. Stay safe, keep well, know you are loved; WASH YOUR HANDS!"

Global Pen Pal Program

At our Burleigh Waters home, SandBrook Lifestyle Coordinator, Linda started a 'Pen Pal Postcard Club'. Residents filled out a 'get to know me' questionnaire and enclosed it in beautiful cards created by the club members. Linda then addressed these to different aged care and retirement homes all around the world.

So far, they have received responses from residents in America and Canada, recently receiving a gift pack from a Canadian retirement community.

Residents are eager to continue sending their love and bringing unexpected smiles to the faces of people who were once strangers, creating a sense of community from across the other side of the world.



McKenzie Locations

Queensland

Bribie Cove

199-213 Goodwin Drive
Bongaree QLD

Buderim Views

383 Mooloolaba Road
Buderim QLD

CapellaBay

260 Old Cleveland Road East
Capalaba QLD

GlasshouseViews

96 Peachester Road
Beerwah QLD

SandBrook

10 Executive Drive
Burleigh Waters QLD

Seabrook

15-29 Bonton Avenue
Deception Bay QLD

Seaton Place

111 Smith Street
Cleveland QLD

The Ormsby

112 Burnett Street
Buderim QLD

The Terraces

74 University Drive
Varsity Lakes QLD

Victoria

Charlesbrook

1 Innisfallen Avenue
Templestowe VIC

Lynbrook Park

42 Olive Road
Lynbrook VIC

Newmans on the Park

33 Newmans Road
Templestowe VIC

Rosebrook

441 Waterfall Gully Road
Rosebud VIC

Sutton Park

126-134 Exford Road
Melton South VIC

The Ashley

17-21 Ashley Street
Reservoir VIC

New South Wales

Heritage Lodge

194 Byangum Road
Murwillumbah NSW

Raffles

Peregrine Drive
Tweed Heads South NSW

Seaton Stitchers

There is nothing more special than seeing the deep friendships and bonds that form between McKenzie residents through our lifestyle activities.

At our Seaton Place facility in Queensland, one group of ladies have found a great way to connect with each other; every week they get together to knit and chat!

Nicknamed the 'Seaton Stitchers', the group has been getting together for over 3 years now – ever since the facility first opened. Some of the women keep busy working on their individual projects for family and friends, while others work hard to provide items for community groups in need.

This includes making beanies and scarves for local charities that support the homeless such as the Night Ninjas. Other items, such as blankets, are made for their fellow residents or to sell in the Resident Shop.

The weekly meetings are a lovely time for the women to sit and chat with their friends and learn more about each other. More importantly, in recent times it has become a second family to many in the group as lockdown restrictions prevented them from seeing their own families.



Find us on Social Media

At McKenzie we love sharing what we do with you. The best way to keep in touch, connect and engage with us is through social media. All our residences have their own Facebook page and we are also now on Instagram sharing some terrific photos and videos.

Make sure you follow us and join our online community.

Facebook: Search 'Facility name - McKenzie Aged Care Group'

Instagram: @mckenzieagedcaregroup

LinkedIn: Search 'McKenzie Aged Care Group Pty Ltd'



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