NEWSLETTER No 3

Summer 2010

Christophorus House
retirement village

index

Editors letter 2
Maintenance Matters 2
Acknowledgments 2
Message from the CEO 3
News from the Hostel 4

ARTICLES
Reflections on Life's Journey 5
Trivia answers 5
Concerts at Christophorus House 3
Remembering our friend, Betty Lenehan 6
An Oldie but a Goodie! 6
Footcare for the Elderly and Orthotics..... 6-7

CALENDAR
of EVENTS 8

Dear Members and Friends

It has not been possible to get a Spring Newsletter to you this year. Our Annual Report for this year's AGM, however, will hopefully fill in that gap as it reports on the many activities and movements not just in recent weeks but over the whole year. If you would like a copy, please feel free to phone me to get a copy.

In this Newsletter we feature our regular *News from the Hostel* to update you on its many activities. There is also an article by Rose-Marie on *Reflections on Life's Journey* plus Footcare for the Elderly, Diabetic and those with Poor Circulation. Also featured is a warm farewell to our resident Betty Lenehan by Rose-Marie who also fondly remembers the many concerts given by *Jacqui Ciddor and Friends* over the years. We extend a warm welcome to our two new residents to the Village: Mrs Madalene Johns and Mrs Jean Williamson. We trust you have settled in well now and are enjoying the beautiful gardens and serene atmosphere of this place. A much deserved reward! I know only too well how hard moving house can be particularly if you have lived in your home for 20-30-40 plus years!

With Christmas just around the corner, I take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas. So, until next year, happy reading!

Monika Bebb
In the Self Care Liaison office

Maintenance Matters

The main entrance to the Village at 396 Pacific Highway now has a new, wide apron entrance to the driveway, facilitating vehicles to **enter** on the left and **exit** also on the left on to the widened apron, making for a smoother flow of traffic.
The Self Care drop-off point is at the south end of the Hostel, opposite the new bus shelter. It is best accessed by driving straight down the driveway all the way down to the turning circle at the bottom of the hill and coming back up again to the space allocated alongside the large round lawn where it is sign posted "Self Care Resident parking". Should this be occupied, then parking is available in the upper car park or out on the highway or opposite in Old Berowra Road.
We will be introducing a new parking card system for residents to give to their visitors such as doctors, podiatrists, visitors as well as service vehicles such as delivery vans. Each resident will receive two cards so that when their visitor arrives, they should give them a card which needs to be displayed in the window of their car. The card will have the resident's Unit number displayed on it so that should the vehicle need to be moved then the visitor can easily be located.
Please be mindful and ask your visitor (or other) not to park in the turning circle BEFORE 1pm on any Thursdays as the garbage and delivery trucks make full use of the driveway on this day.
We will also be introducing the **Taxi Stop** signs at three locations along the driveway. The first will be located at the upper car park next to the bench outside the gates of the Hostel. The second stop will be at the new bus shelter and the third stop will be at the bench at the turning circle at the end of the driveway. Residents are advised that when making a booking for a taxi to advise them at which taxi stop you will be waiting.
The Hostel roof has had major restoration work done as well which ensures at least another 10 years life. And it all was done in time before the much need rain we have had!

Hayden Ibbett
Maintenance Supervisor

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Hostel Hours: Staff on duty at all times, 7 days per week (After Hours after 6pm 0403 575 079)
Patron: John D Shaw; **Board Members:** Robert Allerdice (Chairman), Mary Arndell, Graham Long, Sune Nielsen, John Kingsland; **CEO:** Milan Telford; **Hostel Manager:** Andrea Nguyen; **Self Care Liaison Coordinator:** Monika Bebb; **Maintenance:** Hayden Ibbett and Walter Janssens. Christophorus House is a Not-for-Profit organisation and has operated since 1984.

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This Newsletter is usually published 4 times per year: September/Spring, December/Summer, March/Autumn, June/Winter. If you have a suggestion, some information or wish to publish an event or an item, please contact Monika on (02)9476 3161 ext 2 or email mbebb@christophorushouse.com.au

From the desk of the CEO

I am writing this on Remembrance Day, 11th November, when armistice was announced in the First World War conflict. Whilst the war and this day occurred now over 90 years ago, the deeds and the sacrifice made by so many will never be forgotten. These events are still very much alive and fresh in the memories of some of our residents. We enjoy the peace and quiet of our Village life coupled with the peace that we enjoy in this great land of Australia, which was fought for and delivered to us by the sacrifices of earlier generations – lest we forget.

Recently we held our Annual General Meeting which was well attended and the business of the day was transacted smoothly. The special resolution updating the CHRV Constitution was passed without any issue and unanimously. Thanks go to our Chairman of the Board Robert Allerdice for having made this change in such a smooth fashion. There was, as always, a nice social occasion afterwards. With Christmas around the corner, another social event to put in your calendar will be the 'Carols by Candlelight Evening' at CHRV, commencing at 6.30pm on Wednesday, 15th December. Last year everyone enjoyed themselves at this event and for the children that come, there may well be a visitor from the North Pole!

Progress is being made in our pre Development Application (DA) with Hornsby Council, in relation to the building of 12 new independent living units (ILUs) proposed on two properties we have purchased adjoining our boundary, over the past 5 years. The traffic report is complete and concept drawings have been made. Should Council approve the pre DA, the Board still requires to undertake a financial viability examination prior to final approval, for building works to go, once building project costs are finally determined. Word of mouth has spread and there are now 3 prospective residents interested in buying loan licenses for the new units.

Building works for the extension of the Hostel living area, to be known as the Evelyn Latter room, following her generous bequest to CHRV, will commence on receipt of the DA approval and most likely by the time this newsletter is in the mail.

The Village is currently at full capacity with no vacancies in the self care and with all rooms taken in the Hostel. There are two respites in the Hostel at this time with a view to permanency and there are enquiries occurring weekly for respite and residency. This is quite a turn around from a year ago. CHRV appears to be the 'flavour of the month' with the local hospitals and our good reputation has spread word of mouth. Residents overall appear to be content with the quality of service and with their living environment, which now that it is spring, has seen the gardens at CHRV blossom.

My Christmas wish to all the residents, families, staff and friends, is that you all enjoy a light filled and peaceful holiday, and that in the coming year you will all be enthused to meet the new challenges that await us all, with good spirit and strength.

Milan Telford
CEO

Concerts at Christophorus House

As arranged by Jacqui Ciddor and Friends
Looking back over the last 10 years, the exquisite strains of classical music, played by Jacqui Ciddor and her group of musicians, has reverberated in our midst. For many years Jacqui Ciddor and Jeanette Tsoulos were joined and complemented by singers, and more recently, Elizabeth Nurthen, oboist has joined and enriched the group.
Earlier this year, we were graced with a concert of Chopin, Preludes, Mazurkas and a Study – this in the year of Chopin's 100th anniversary of his birth – these were piano solos, beautifully rendered by Jacqui. Then Handel was centre stage, with Elizabeth playing Sonata in b accompanied by Jacqui – a much loved and well known repertoire. This was followed by Piano Duets for four hands – Debussy and Grieg, then Shubert duets with oboe and piano – CPE Bach, Pierrie and Bosza. We felt that we sat in a mini Opera House for that hour of music making of the highest and deepest quality.
Thank you, musicians, for sharing your talents so generously. May I persuade friends of Christophorus House that these concerts are very special and that you are invited to attend?

Rose-Marie van Hoogstraten
Resident, Christophorus House

News from the Hostel

Report by Linda Dunn

Bus outing to: Epping Boys High School

"Morning of Music" Concert on Wednesday 22nd September – Rose-Marie van Hoogstraten

Busloads of Senior Citizens converged on Epping Boys High School for this celebration of the end of Year 12 and their 'tribute to the wider community who had supported and tolerated them through the years of their growing up', as spoken by the School Captain in the introductory words. This was an inspired alternative to *Muck-Up Day*. At least 1,000 people filled the hall to overflowing, amongst them six from Christophorus House which included Hostel staff Linda, Kylie and Walter. We were, first of all, served morning tea by greatly attentive students and then sat back to enjoy a most outstanding and professional concert of choral and solo items – piano, clarinet, guitar, alto sax, vocal/guitar and senior jazz band, concluding with well known items by the Year 12 Massed Choir: *I Am Australian, Waltzing Matilda and The Town I Loved So Well*, among them. As I sat there, I thought: well, the future of the world has great promise in the hands of these students! What a contrast to the media usually highlighting youth problems.

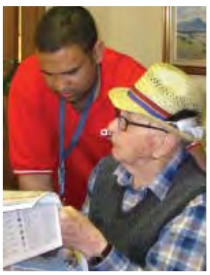
What a showcase of Sydney Schools and what a joy for us all. Well done, Epping Boys, and thank you Linda for organising this for us as a joint Self Care/Hostel outing.

Special Event

Melbourne Cup Day

Great excitement was in the air for preparation of the Hat Parade, cocktail party and Sweep for this event.

Residents enjoyed welcoming the arrival of friends, relatives and visitors on the day. The hat competition created a lot of excitement, interest and fun among all. The judges were facing a difficult task and kept busy selecting the winners. Wonderful prizes were provided for the winners: 1st Prize for Elaine, 2nd Prize for Patricia and 3rd Prize for Joy. I would like to express my appreciation to Milan and Andrea as our judges. Special thanks to Patricia and Elaine for their creative artwork and organising the Fascinators and Chapeaus. Thanks also for the great involvement and organisation of the sweep by Bill, Pat, Linda and Hayden who ensured that everything ran smoothly during the sweep. Melbourne Cup Day was a great success!



Music therapy program

Tribute to Joan Sutherland

In memory of world renowned Opera singer, a legend in the Australian Opera world, a musical

Tribute was dedicated to the memory of Dame Joan Sutherland. One of our residents, Mrs Margaret Taupin, performed a selection of operatic pieces and melodies which thrilled our audience. We congratulate Margaret on her great performance!

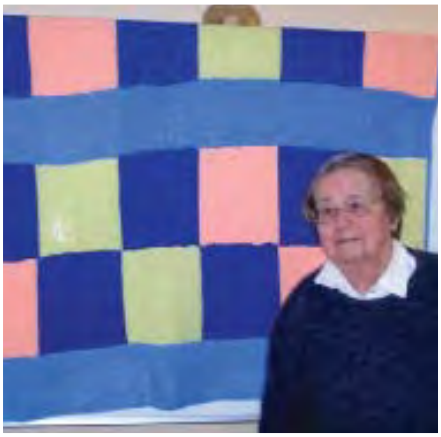
In Memoriam: Dame Joan Sutherland

Joan Alston Sutherland was born in Sydney on 7 November 1926. When she was 18, she began to study singing seriously with Aida Summers, though she was earning her living in a mundane secretarial job. In London, Sutherland studied at the Opera School of the Royal College of Music. She made her debut there on 12 May 1952 in an act from Geoffrey Shaw's *All at Sea*. Dame Joan passed away on 10th October 2010 after a long illness.

Individual Project

Knitting for Comfort:

Congratulations to Louise Desenberg for completion of her knitting projects. Louise knitted three full size comfort rugs; she displays great design, excellent skill and competency throughout her work.



Reflections on Life's Journey

Our life, in some ways, is like that of the caterpillar and butterfly. We grow from an egg. We enjoy eating and grow strong and mature. When we have reached our full growth, we begin to change like the caterpillar. We watch the caterpillar lose interest in eating as it turns a golden cream colour, as if radiating light.

The caterpillar begins to spin itself into a cocoon where it is all-enclosed and separated from the world. Then we wait a long while – patiently – to see what happens. Inside, the caterpillar gets smaller and smaller and begins to look like a little, shrivelled up brown nut: the chrysalis. And if one looks closely at the chrysalis, it has features all pressed into this – wings, body, eyes and head. Nothing seems to happen. The chrysalis, if cut open, is just liquid – all chaos – but great transformation is taking place just in this chaos.

In due time, the cocoon breaks open as the beautiful butterfly, or delicate moth, emerges in preparation for flight. It is very vulnerable at this stage and if touched before the wings have had time to totally dry and become formed, the butterfly will never be able to fly. But when untouched, the mystery of flight emerges.

We, too, go through this journey which can sometimes look daunting and which takes great courage. But when we arrive on the other side, having stayed with the process faithfully, we will also have wings. Many Jewish children painted butterflies on the walls of the gas chambers – they subconsciously knew of this wisdom.

When we have suffered greatly and born this courageously, we build up inner strength, which will be there for us into the far distant future.

Rose-Marie van Hoogstraten
Resident, Christophorus House

Trivia answers

Here are the Trivia Answers from the last Newsletter's Quiz

1. Hippiatrics is the study of diseases of horses.
2. The Australian Banksia plant is named after Sir Joseph Banks.
3. Odontology refers to teeth – and there is an interesting article in this Newsletter on teeth health.
4. Os is the symbol for Osmium. It is a metal used in a few alloys and in industry as a catalyst. At one time it was to be encountered in the nibs of high-quality fountain pens, compass needles, long-life gramophone needles and clock bearings, thanks to its extreme hardness and corrosion resistance.
5. The melting point is highest in iron at 1535ºC whereas copper comes in at a mere 1085 ºC!

Congratulations Margaret! You scored a full 5 points for all the correct answers. Thank you for participating!

Remembering our friend, Betty Lenehan

Betty had been a resident here at Christophorus House for 9 years until recently when she resettled into Kari Court in St Ives. Her whole life has been devoted to caring for others: her family, her wider family, in her profession as a registered nurse and her many friends and neighbours over the years which include those at Christophorus House.

In her hey day, Betty has been a very active and experienced gardener. She and Dulcie, her next door neighbour, who was also a devoted gardener, had spectacularly beautiful front and back gardens. Betty also gardened in the general grounds around the Cottage and whenever her eye caught the need for it.

Betty was also a fine seamstress and participated in our Christmas Fairs, sewing felt strips with appliquéd shepherds, stars, kings and crib scene, to hand cards on in this for sale in aid of Christophorus House.

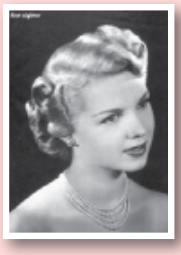
Events in the Cottage were always supported by Betty who brought tasty homemade cakes for tea and would lend a hand with the washing up and setting in order of the room after the event.

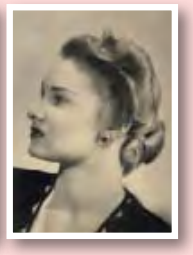
When Joan went from Self Care into the Hostel, Betty agreed to take on her cat and care for it. She also went over daily to help Joan in any way she could.

Betty, you have woven bright and beautiful colours into the tapestry of life in Self Care at Christophorus House. For this, we thank you!

Rose-Marie Van Hoogstraten
Self Care Resident

An oldie but a goodie





Grandma used to use this hair conditioner! Have you seen it on shelves recently?

Ingredients:

1 cup of water, 2 egg yolks, 2 tsp baby oil

Instructions:

1. Beat the egg yolks until they're frothy.
2. Add the baby oil and continue beating.
3. Add the water and beat some more.
4. Distribute throughout your hair.
5. Rinse thoroughly.

Have you ever wondered how many chemicals are in your hair conditioner?

Sourced from the Spring 2010 issue of the ATMS Newsletter.

Footcare for the Elderly, Diabetic and those with Poor Circulation

The Importance of Footcare

Elderly foot care is an important part of health for seniors.

Feet are one of the most vulnerable parts of the body, yet most people tend to neglect them. For the majority, this is not too serious but for the diabetic it can have dire consequences. People who have had diabetes for a long time often have damage to the nerve and blood supply of their feet, poor circulation also often accompanies age. The symptoms of nerve damage include numbness, loss of feeling, tingling, burning sensations or pain. Those of impaired blood supply include pain at rest, especially at night; pain in the calf whilst walking, and feet that feel cold to the touch. Every year, thousands of people have toes, feet and even legs amputated because of diabetes-related foot problems. Most of these could have been prevented by proper foot care. When you have diabetes it makes sense to take a lot extra care of your feet.

Personal Hygiene

Wash your feet daily with mild soap and tepid water but do not soak them. Never use Epsom salts or washing soda in a footbath.

Dry them carefully especially between the toes which is where germs such as Athlete's Foot can easily breed. Use a soft towel and a gentle "blotting" action.

If your skin is dry, sparingly apply a good quality non-medicated moisturising cream.

If you use talcum powder, choose a non-medicated one such as baby powder. Apply it in the morning and wash off at night as it can encourage growth of germs if left for too long. If the skin between the toes becomes moist, apply surgical spirit at night.

Skincare

Get into the habit of examining your feet daily for any cuts, cracks abrasions, corns or hard skin, any of which can lead to infection. If any of these are present, bathe with a mild antiseptic, apply a sterile dressing and see your chiropodist, doctor or hospital diabetic department without delay.

Corns and Calluses

These are thickening of the skin, caused by pressure and rubbing from footwear and are a source of infection which may go undetected because of the hard skin covering, especially in those cases where nerve damage is present, as the pain may not be felt. It is essential that they are properly treated as soon as possible, otherwise serious damage can occur.

Footwear

- Shoes that fit well can help prevent many foot problems. Ill-fitting shoes cause corns, calluses, ulcers and nail problems.
- Choose footwear with soft leather uppers without seams that will mould to your feet and let them 'breathe'.
- Wide toe caps with depth that will allow room for your toes to wiggle.
- Soft insoles and linings with no wrinkles or seams.
- Every time you put your shoes on, check that there are no pieces of grit or other objects in them.

Hosiery

Avoid stockings, tights or socks that are too tight as they may restrict the circulation, but also

avoid hosiery that is too loose as this can wrinkle and irritate the skin. Do not wear elastic garters as they may seriously restrict the circulation.

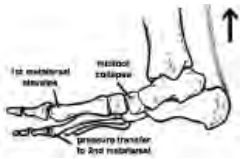
Tips on Footcare

- Take walks regularly to improve circulation.
- Do not sit with your legs crossed, nor walk about barefoot, even in the house.
- If your eyesight is poor, ask a member of your family or a friend to examine your feet on a regular (preferably daily) basis, but do not let them cut corns and calluses for you.
- Never use animal wool around your toes, it shrinks and may cut off the circulation.
- Do not use hot poultices.
- If you sit close to a fire, protect your legs with a blanket to prevent damage to the skin.
- Do not use hot water bottles as the heat can be dangerous. Use an electric blanket, but remember to switch it off before getting into bed.
- Do not use commercial corn pastes, paints or plasters, they can and do, cause serious damage.

Orthotics: The Modern Way to Prevent Foot and Leg Pain

Orthotics - Podiatric bio-mechanical orthotic devices, also called foot appliances, shoe inserts, foot beds or arch supports, are semi-permanent devices which are placed either on the foot or in the shoe to improve foot function in much the same way that spectacles improve imperfect eyesight. An orthotic may be designed to carry out any one or a combination of different functions. Made-to-measure devices include cushioned insoles, heel raises and various types of removable pads and with competent measuring give very good value. The more sophisticated custom molded variety requires specialist knowledge in order to manipulate the foot into the ideal position for mold-taking and various techniques are used. The end result of this process is a plaster cast of your foot which is held in the ideal position for walking and standing. From this the technician will fabricate a suitably corrective device from materials which vary from rigid plastic to soft foam. Often a combination of materials is used. Most people who consider using orthotics are suffering some form of pain, or at least discomfort, and will often be experiencing the first symptoms of some structural or functional abnormality of their feet or legs. Usually these minor abnormalities can be revealed by a simple examination which involves no more than making about 50 precise measurements and observations. Such conditions as knock knees and bow legs are well known but even more common is a similar sort of misalignment at the ankle joint which causes the foot to tilt while it is off the ground. On ground contact it is forced to tilt back in order to realign with the ground. Walking or running on such a foot is like riding a bike with a bent pedal.

Foot Pain and Other Ailments



One of the most common causes of foot problems is weakness in the instep which allows the foot to flatten, lengthen and twist just by a small amount every time you take a step and the foot takes the full body weight. It is due to fatigue of the foot muscles and is common in people with jobs that necessitate standing for long periods, or lifting heavy weights or who are overweight. It can also be caused by tiny faults in the shape of the foot bones. It produces a sort of wagging movement of the forefoot within the shoe during walking. As the forefoot swings sideways and back at every step, it keeps coming into contact with the shoe, and this repeated shoe pressure from a badly fitting shoe. It can produce corns, calluses, bunions and painful toenails.

Prevention

In order to prevent these problems, it is necessary to reduce the excessive sideways movement of the forefoot by stabilising the instep and the heel. One of the best ways to achieve this is by using a custom made support (called an orthotic) which limits the amount by which the instep is allowed to flatten.

Motion Control Orthotics

Orthotics which has their upper surface tilted to the same angle as that of the feet will allow the feet to function at their own natural angle and eliminate the wobble. This type of device is called a motion control orthotic. Shoes with firm heel counters do not eliminate this sort of wobble, they worsen it. Pronation is part of normal foot function and occurs when weight bearing causes the instep to partially flatten and is the result of the natural springiness of the foot. Over pronation, however, is detrimental and the basis of a lot of foot, leg, back and knee discomfort. It is one of the commonest problems to respond to orthotic therapy.

Some Conditions Which Benefit From Orthotics

Knee Pain – Over-pronation upsets the normal balance of the alignment of the foot, knee and hip and therefore puts a sideways force on the inner side of the knee joint. A suitable orthotic worn in the shoe usually overcomes this problem. Most people do not associate their knee pain with a foot misalignment, but this is very often the case.

Stiff Ankle - Where problems are being caused by insufficient ankle flexion, an orthotic which raises and realigns the heel will often help.

Short Leg - Where the examination reveals that one leg is structurally shorter than the other, a heel raise for the shorter leg will work, provided the discrepancy is less than 2cm.

Back Pain is something else which most people do not associate with misalignment in the foot, but a leg length discrepancy, often intensified by excessive pronation or other significant differences in structure, will cause the pelvis to tilt and can aggravate or even directly cause back problems. This does not mean that all back problems are thus caused but an examination will reveal if it could be significant and many people have found a great deal of relief by the use of orthotics.

Rigid Feet - Some people have another kind of problem in that their feet are too rigid and have little or no springiness with which to absorb the shock of ground contact. This type of foot is often highly arched with the result that the heel and ball of the foot take a pounding. A perfectly fitting custom made orthotic will spread these forces over the whole of the sole of the foot and if it is made of resilient materials, it will also absorb much of the impact.

Claw Toes - Orthodigital devices for straightening claw toes are remarkably simple and extremely effective and can be made by your Chiropodist in a few minutes from quick setting silicone rubber which is molded around the toes and allowed to set in situ, thus ensuring a perfect fit.

Bony Feet - Normal feet, in addition to their springy shock absorbing structure, have a layer of soft resilient tissue just under the skin. Often in imperfectly functioning feet, this soft tissue layer will be very much overworked and if this continues long enough the tissue will become dissipated, leaving the sole of the foot all skin and bone, like the back of your hand. A soft cushioned insole in a suitable foam fabric will help. This type of insole can be purchased off the shelf and there are many good makes available, but beware of cheap ones that squash too easily as they will be ineffective.

Good foot care makes sense; your doctor and chiropodist are there to help you!

This article was sourced from The Institute of Chiropodists and Podiatrists 1996 ©

References: http://www.iocp.org.uk/node/64
http://www.harmonyfwcmedispa.com/orthotics.html

Calendar of Events in the Cottage for 2010

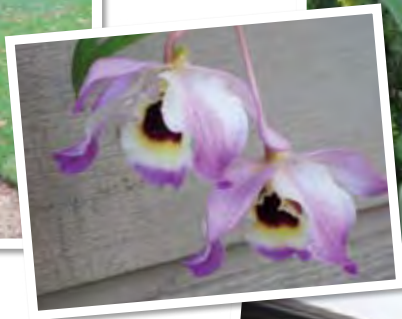
2010	Day	Event
DECEMBER	4	**10am** Service of the Christian Community with Rev. Lisa Devine. Please be seated by 9.50am. **Please note: this date has been changed from Saturday, 27th October.**
	5	**2pm** Sydney Welsh Choir and David Short at Galston Uniting Church. $15.00 includes afternoon tea. Please phone Monika for details.
	9	**11am** Heather's Abundant Jewels Christmas Stocking gifts. Display will be in the upstairs lounge area.
	11	**2pm** Advent Festival – Antonio Marques will be presenting the Christmas story. The program will be accompanied with music and poetry. $5.00 includes afternoon tea.
	15	**6.30pm** Carols by Candlelight – the Christophorus House Choir will be presenting a wonderful array of favourite carols to sing along to. Lower lawn area of the Hostel. A light supper will follow in the Hostel dining room. All welcome.
	17	**4pm** Drinks and Nibbles for Self Care residents in the Cottage.
	23	**7pm** Viewing of the Christmas lights in Sydney Road. Seats on the bus are limited. Please contact Monika if you wish to come.

The above events are held in The Cottage. If you wish to come to any of these, please contact Monika on 9476 3161 ext 2 beforehand to confirm times and dates as often changes occur due to unforeseeable circumstances.

REGULAR EVENTS IN THE COTTAGE

Bridge is on every Tuesday afternoon from 1 to 4pm.
First Class is held from February to November on the third Sunday of every month.
Board Meetings are held on the third Monday of every month.
Self Care Residents' Meetings are held every two months on a Thursday.
Social Group Meetings are held every three months on a Thursday.
Footbath/Leg Massage Therapy is on Fridays in the Hostel.

The Evelyn Latter Memorial Rose in full bloom!



The Tuesday Bridge group

Walter takes residents shopping