

OpenDoor

Winter 2014



The most valuable gift is the gift of time.

All aged care facilities benefit from the support of volunteers whether it's in spending time with residents, running special activities or putting on a silly hat to make them smile.

One volunteer who is always prepared to put on a silly hat is Mary Thompson at Sutton Park. Mary's mother was the first resident to walk through the door at Sutton Park over ten years ago. While her mother is no longer around, Mary has kept up her connection with Sutton Park ever since and is considered a valued member of the team.

Kathy Devitt, Regional Operations Manager for Melbourne says nothing is ever too much trouble for Mary, who has even taken courses and learnt new skills in order to offer the residents more activities.

"Mary really epitomises our McKenzie cornerstones," said Kathy.

Jeanette Granville, Lifestyle Coordinator at Sutton Park enjoys working with Mary a great deal.

Continued next page

At a glance

Aged Care Reforms

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Keith's column

Grief is a strange thing, unique to each person. Sometimes it seems to have a life of its own and can be triggered by a meeting, a place, a song, or it just happens when we're out shopping.

The Dietitian's corner

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Continued from front page

“Mary is so passionate about what she does. She puts her whole heart and soul into every little thing,” she said.

“The residents really respond to her because she is so genuine.”

This year, Mary’s ongoing contribution has been recognised by Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) Victoria. She has been made a finalist for the Volunteer Awards at the Awards for Excellence being held in mid June.

Mary says she is honoured to have been nominated, and is very excited about the awards night.

“I’m overwhelmed really. Mum was the first resident here, the first to turn 100. I volunteer as a way of saying thank you for all the love and support she was given here.”

“Seeing the smiles and happiness in residents is a reward in itself really. I like to say they’re all my mum now.”

Volunteers can lend their support in a number of ways from companionship to outings, lifestyle activities and special events. All skill levels and any amount of time possible is appreciated.

If you or someone you know would like to get involved in areas such as music, cooking, arts and craft, woodwork, gardening or anything else, please get in touch with the Lifestyle team at your nearest facility.



Aged Care Reforms

As many of you will be aware, on 1st July the Federal Government’s aged care regulations will come into place. The reforms, passed in 2012 as part of the Living Longer, Living Better package, will apply to new residents entering aged care after 1st July 2014.

We would like to reassure all existing permanent residents that these reforms will not effect you. All residents who have signed a Permanent Residential Agreement prior to this date are protected from the new regulations.

Residents entering the aged care system after 1st July 2014 should be aware of the changes to financial means testing that may impact their fees, as well as a number of other changes.

If you have any queries regarding the aged care reforms, please contact Client Relations at your facility. You can also visit the My Aged Care website at www.myagedcare.gov.au



Keith’s column

The Normalcy of Grief

“I couldn’t cry when my mother died, nor did I shed any tears at her funeral, but attending this Memorial Service brought some needed emotional release.”

During the month of May, Memorial Services were conducted in each of our homes.

Grief is a strange thing, unique to each person. Sometimes it seems to have a life of its own and can be triggered by a meeting, a place, a song, or it just happens when we’re out shopping. It’s important that we let it happen because repressed grief can be damaging to our emotional and physical well-being.

One author writes about “the normalcy of long-term grief,” especially in relation to the loss of a child at any age. She says, “though the episodes (of grief) become further and further apart in time and shorter in duration, they have close to the same intensity of gut-staggering grief as the first occasion.”

Often people find it difficult to comfort a grieving friend. Another writer speaks of “the simple but difficult gift of being present to each other” in our desire to bring companionship and comfort to those who grieve. He speaks of those who stay away because they feel they have nothing to say and there is nothing to do. The author reminds us that it is in “humble, unpretentious presence” that we can be a source of consolation. Of course, we need to be wise in discerning when to be there and how to be there.

Keith Cameron-Smith
Resident and Staff Support Officer

Keith is available to talk to all staff and residents about grief, life and everything in between.

Meet the Staff



Monica Elston

Regional Operations Manager

What do you like best about your job?

I love that my job provides me with the ability to interact with a wide demographic of people on a day-to-day basis. I am able to utilise my skills and contribute to the ongoing success in caring for our residents.

What do you like to do outside work?

I am very passionate about V8 motor racing and I travel Australia following it. I used to race speedway and hill-climb cars while growing up and have always had this interest. My favourite racer is Jamie Whincup.

When you were young, what did you want to be when you 'grew up'?

I wanted to be a professional show jumper. I rode horses for many years and remain a passionate follower of horseracing.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

I'd go to the Monaco Grand Prix to see the fabulous race cars and enjoy the luxurious surroundings.

What is your favourite quote?

I live by the philosophy, "Best day, every day, for everybody".



Emilio Angelini

Cleaner - Supervisor at Newmans on the Park

What do you like best about your job?

I love the people the best! The residents always make me laugh!

What do you like to do outside work?

I enjoy going bike riding on the weekends. I also love watching the Moto GP.

What led you into the aged care sector?

Opportunity. There is always plenty of work available and I love working in my local community.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

I'd love to go to Europe. Definitely for the food!

What is your favourite quote?

"Tidy house, tidy mind!"



Leah Franklin

Group Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) Manager

What do you like best about your job?

I love the opportunities I have to travel between McKenzie facilities. I also love that what we do ensures that we can provide adequate care for our residents.

What do you like to do outside work?

I love attending audience participation shows such as The Sound of Music, and my all time favourite, The Rocky Horror Show. I get dressed up as my favourite characters (see picture) and go along to The Astor Theatre in Melbourne. The whole audience sings along!

What led you into the aged care sector?

I'm a registered nurse; I've been working in aged care for 12-13 years. I got involved initially for lifestyle balance reasons and have been very happy ever since

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

San Francisco. I imagine it would have a diverse, alternative lifestyle quite similar to Melbourne. It's also where my favourite TV show, Charmed was set.

What's your favourite quote?

"If you're not living on the edge, you're taking up too much room!"

The Dietitian's corner



Rumbly Tumbly

If you've ever placed your ear directly onto someone's belly, chances are you would have heard a cacophony of sounds. Borborygmi is the scientific word for what most of us know as a growling stomach, something we all get from time to time.

For most people, the noises associated with digestion are not a problem and may merely be a source of amusement. It can be a problem for others, however, when teamed with additional wind, bloating, discomfort and digestive disorders.

Factors that increase borborygmi include –

Peristalsis – As part of normal digestion, our digestive tract undergoes a process called peristalsis, which involves rhythmical muscular contractions that help to propel foods and fluids down the intestinal tract. This movement can produce squelching and growling. Food intake stimulates this process, but you'll also set off peristalsis when your stomach and small intestines have been empty for over 2 hours.

Hunger – An empty stomach and small intestine provides a great amphitheatre for growls to resonate. This is when you will most likely hear loudest borborygmi at work.

Consuming gassy foods or eating too quickly – The common offending foods are cabbage, capsicum, Brussels sprouts, onion, baked beans, soft drinks and beer. Eating quickly can often result in swallowing more air than usual creating additional gas within the intestine. If wind is a problem for you avoid chewing gum and drinking through straws as these habits also exacerbate wind too.

Stress and anxiety – While not all stress is controllable, you will notice that reducing unnecessary stress sources in your life can help with many health problems, such as reflux, gastric ulcers, bowel complaints and general wellbeing, and reduce borborygmi at the same time.

Food intolerance – Eating more fructose (fruit sugar, commonly found in fruits, fruit juices and honey) than your body can effectively digest can cause bloating and abdominal

discomfort as well as borborygmi. An intolerance to fructose can be diagnosed via blood and breath tests.

Lactose intolerance – Those with lactose (milk sugar) intolerance may need to limit or omit milk, yoghurts, ice-creams and custards from the diet, opting for lactose free milks and soy alternatives instead. Hard cheeses are often not a problem with lactose intolerance due to minimal lactose content. Speak to your GP and dietitian if you feel you need further advice and strategies to deal with food intolerances.

Other bowel disorders – Conditions such as inflammatory bowel diseases, Irritable Bowel Syndrome and poorly managed Coeliac Disease can produce more pronounced borborygmi. Managing these disorders under the guidance of your GP or gastroenterologist can help to minimise side-effects.

Cherie Hugo

Accredited Practising Dietitian,
Director of My Nutrition Clinic
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Activities Tour



Arm-in-arm at the Armitage. Residents and staff thoroughly enjoyed dancing an Irish Jig to help celebrate St Patrick's Day.



Hats off to the Newmans on the Park staff and residents in their Easter bonnets



We recently celebrated International Nurses Day. We're so lucky at McKenzie to have a great group of amazing nurses including this bunch from The Terraces. If you'd like to see more happy staff, visit The Terraces Facebook page or the McKenzie blog to see a fantastic video.



Heritage Lodge residents were lucky enough to participate in a 12 week Art Therapy course run by local student Jhana, it was a very special experience for all involved.

Activities Tour



Bust-ing at the seams. SandBrook hosted a Biggest Morning Tea to raise money for the Cancer Council with chefs Ray and Dan giving everyone a giggle with their special cake for the occasion.



Sharpest tools in the shed. The men at Raffles have been benefiting greatly from workshops kindly being run with support from Bunnings in Tweed Heads.



Newmans on the Park residents have a balloonin' great time during Colour and Fun Exercise.



Beanie babies. Jenny at the Terraces has been knitting and crocheting for needy families in Zambia and Malawi. The colourful creations are greatly appreciated by people who don't own much else.



Budding beauties at Buderim. The ladies were treated to a pamper session with products provided by the local chemist. They had facials and makeovers with all delighting in the results.



Where in the world. Sutton Park residents enjoyed a visit from local school children in their national dress who came to share stories from the countries of their relatives.