



Barry Campbell (middle) surrounded by dignitaries at the turning of the sod.

Sod turned on \$20m redevelopment at Rodney Park.

A NEW CHAPTER IN THE RODNEY PARK VILLAGE HISTORY WAS STARTED ON MAY 31, WHEN THE SOD WAS TURNED ON A \$20M REDEVELOPMENT OF THE RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES IN MOOROOPNA.

To be known as Mooroopna Place the newly redeveloped building will include an additional 10 residential care beds, bringing the total to 100. Mooroopna Place was the previous site for Waratah Lodge, Grevillea Lodge and Boronia House that each held 30 beds. Residents from those facilities were temporarily moved to Hakea Lodge and Maculata Place at Tarcoola late last year.

Redevelopment of the site is due to begin in June with building contractors AW Nicholson Construction committing to providing between 6 and 10 local traineeships, and employment for more than 150 people over the course of the build

expected to be finished in September 2020. Additionally, AW Nicholson Construction has committed to sourcing the majority of contractors for the project from the Shepparton and district area.

The sod was turned by Shepparton Villages Life Member, former president and Rodney Park Village pioneer Barry Campbell.

Mr Campbell headed up the Tarcoola Building Committee in the late 1980s with the specific goal of establishing Mooroopna's first and only not for profit residential care facility for the aged. Aided by Santo Varapodio who headed the fundraising committee

along with an energetic committee, they raised in excess of \$1million – an extraordinary result at the time – and played a pivotal role in the establishment of Waratah Lodge which was opened in July 1990. Boronia House and Grevillea Lodge followed in November 2002. Barry Campbell was president of Shepparton Retirement Villages in 1989 and 1990, and again in 2003–2005.

Federal Member for Nicholls, Damian Drum spoke at the sod turning, paying tribute to Shepparton Villages Board and management for their continued investment into aged care.

Board President Frank Dawson said Mooroopna Place is the second significant project and investment that Shepparton Villages has made over the last three years, with the completion of the \$34m Maculata Place in Shepparton opening in October 2018.

“The Board of Management has been incredibly focussed on providing the best possible infrastructure for the elderly in our region, which continues the commitment made by the Rotary Club when Shepparton Villages was first started over 50 years ago,” Board Chair Frank Dawson said.

“The Mooroopna Place redevelopment holds significant historical significance, with many Mooroopna community members as well as the Rotary Club of Mooroopna involved in the initial construction of Rodney Park, and to this day, it remains the only aged care facility in Mooroopna, so we are very keen to ensure it mirrors the standards we have applied in Shepparton at Maculata Place,” Mr Dawson said.

Morning tea followed the event with a chance to view some plans for the new build, due to be completed in September 2020.



CEO Kerri Rivett gets her flu injection.

Message from the CEO

As most of you will have already read, it was a significant day for Shepparton Villages when we turned the sod on the Mooroopna Place development.

It was fantastic to have around 100 residents, families, staff, Mooroopna community people and officials attend the ceremony.

Life Member Barry Campbell did a hearty job of turning the sod to much applause and building works will now begin in June with Nicholson Construction the appointed builders.



Shepparton Villages Board Chair, Frank Dawson addresses the crowd at the sod turning.

The build will involve the demolition and rebuild of the oldest part of the building, formerly Waratah Lodge and the total gutting and redevelopment of Boronia House and Grevillea Lodge. The end result will be a modernised home that caters to the changing needs of those coming in to care and respects the model of care we run at Shepparton Villages which centres around consumer choice, respect and dignity.

We acknowledge that Mooroopna people are very passionate about the old site here, and the part it has played in their lives and we acknowledge the work done to establish an aged care facility in Mooroopna. However like many things, time has marched on and it is time for a change.

We begin the busy task now of taking on yet another huge project and I thank our staff and residents in advance for their assistance and their patience.

Meanwhile, we have been super busy everywhere else at Shepparton Villages, and I'm pleased to say that both Maculata Place and Hakea Lodge passed accreditation for a further three years recently. This is a huge accomplishment for all our staff involved and I thank them for their professionalism and attention to the role they play in our residents' lives.

The I wish I'd Asked program has been a wonderful addition to our residents – uniting young people with the elderly to share conversations

over activities has been a great way to link the generations.

I attended the Dance Showcase at Westside in Mooroopna recently where the Shepp Villages Silver Warriors joined with the Wanganui Secondary College students to perform a dance routine – all super stars and it was a great night!

Huge thanks to Kyla McGregor at Wanganui and the students for their commitment to our residents. We have also had computer lessons at Wanganui with residents learning more about how to drive their iPads and phone from the students. Fantastic stuff!

The cold weather has certainly settled in, and in preparation we had flu vaccinations for our staff. I rolled up my sleeve to get the first shot and while there is short term pain, the long-term benefits are huge. This is a particularly bad season for the flu, so it was good to get our staff through the program.

I know many of our sites have had events and activities that have kept us all entertained and busy. Thank you to the lifestyle and leisure staff and volunteers who put a lot of effort in to these activities, and to our care staff who ensure our residents are able to enjoy them all.

Until next time, keep warm!

Kerri Rivett
CEO – Shepparton Villages



Lyn and Noemi chat about the amazing stories of Noemi's past life. The two have become friends as a result of sharing and recording Noemi's story.

Volunteering at Shepparton Villages has gifted Lyn Eadie new friendships and a new project.

Lyn who has been volunteering for two years and can be seen wielding a texter on the whiteboard most Tuesdays at Maculata Place for the word quiz, has just recorded and written resident Noemi Couatts' life story.

"We got to know each other through the word quiz, and were chatting one day about life before air conditioning and it gave me the idea to talk to Noemi more about her story," Lyn said.

Over four or five weeks, Lyn recorded her chats with Noemi, unsure how far it would all go, but after a while was able to type up the recordings and has since presented Noemi with a hard copy, electronic copy of the recordings and voice files for her to keep.

Noemi migrated to Australia from Italy when she was young, one of five siblings. She has many wonderful stories of how her mother coped with life in what felt like "outback Australia" just the other side of Echuca.

Washing in the Murray River, cooking in the extreme heat, keeping food and drinks cool by dropping them down a well and even putting out a potential bushfire while eight months pregnant with a hessian bag!

"The youngest was pretty spoilt and had no idea of how tough it was for us, so I thought this would be good for her to find out a bit more. When she read the story, she cried and said she had no idea," Noemi said.

Lyn said Noemi's sister no doubt heard of the great resilience and determination Noemi and her siblings and her parents showed in relocating to Australia.

"It just struck me the wealth of experiences Noemi and other residents have here," Lyn said.

"It is such a privilege for Noemi to share her story with me and to trust me. I enjoy writing and thoroughly enjoyed putting this together.

A huge thank you to our care staff

We celebrated International Nurses and Carers' Day during May by providing lunch and dinner to our hard-working staff.

The day is a great opportunity to thank those who care for our residents. Unlike nursing or care in the hospital setting, working in aged care allows nurses and carers to develop a long-lasting relationship with the residents, in many instances becoming an extension of their family.

Shepparton Villages also presented a gift to all nursing and care staff this month as a token of appreciation. The gift, a nurse's watch, was a hit with staff.

My Dad wrote his story and it is fabulous to have it, because we just wouldn't know things otherwise."

Lyn is keen to help other residents tell and record their stories and says she wouldn't have had the opportunity if she hadn't been a volunteer.

"My mum was in care in Melbourne, and I just wanted the opportunity to give back and this seems like the best spot to do that."

If you are interested in volunteering – it may just be playing a game of cards with a resident or accompanying our residents on an outing – or perhaps you have a skill you'd like to share, we would love to hear from you!

To find out more about volunteering, call Monica on (03) 58 320 800.

Happy snaps from the Villages

There's always something happening around our three sites at Shepparton Villages. Here are a few photos from our events and social outings these last few months.



Edie Poliness gets some one on one IT help from Wanganui student Jasper Watts at the Wanganet Cafe organised through I Wish I'd Asked.



Edie Fleming and Alma Lucas enjoy a cup of tea at Hakea Lodge.



Annette Nish with daughters, Pam and Joy.



The crowd at the Mooroopna Place sod turning event.



Edward Penhall takes care of the leaves at the Men Shed.



Fire Warden Murray Burls had it all under control during a fire drill at Tarcoola Reception.



Joan Kelso enjoys a spot of baking with Mary Hehir and Grace Sandilands watching on.



Kevin Ritchie from Tarcoola ILUs attends the Wanganet Pop Up Internet Cafe.



John Weight with Tamisha Humphries and Aron Rudge during the IWIA Thursday chats.



Residents from Maculata Place enjoy a day at Nagambie's Buckley Park.



Residents at Hakea Lodge join in a sing-a-long.



Patricia Crosbie from Maculata Place enjoys a spot of gardening, with DT Janice Bennett.



Joy Stone of Hakea lodge.



Lawrence conducts morning exercises at Banksia Lodge.



Robert Paterson (resident) enjoys a day by the Nagambie foreshore with volunteer (obscured) John Williams.



Banksia Lodge's new volunteer John Anderson attends a service.



Eileen Torney, Norma Lebehan, Cynthia Poole, and Hakea visitor Maria Weight chat at the Banksia Residents meeting.



The amazing Silver Warrior dancers with the dance students from Wanganui Secondary College.



Kialla Gardens ILU resident Marie Walsh chats with a Wanganui student.



Lynette Armstrong with Jade Cooper and Aleisha Wilson during the Wanganui IWIA chats.



The I Wish I'd Asked project has introduced the Wanganui students to residents at Tarcoola for a weekly chat and catch up.

IWIA collaboration provides mountains of moments

Shepparton Villages has been partnering with the I Wish I'd Asked project since it first came to the region back in 2018.

Co founders Danny Finley and Eva Gruen approached us with the request to introduce young people to our elderly residents, so that conversation and friendships could be formed.

The IWIA project was born out of the idea of alleviating loneliness among our elderly, but along the way it has also assisted young people who also felt a little isolated or lonely through new friendships.

Conversations between the “bookend generations” have been captured and recorded over cups of tea, games of cards, fireside chats and a wonderful array of activities.

Shepparton Villages has hosted a visit from Wanganui Secondary Schools students each Thursday afternoon to spend time with residents, chatting and sharing afternoon tea.

Independent Living Unit (ILU) residents have joined the dance students at Wanganui to choreograph and present a dance piece as part of the Wanganui Dance Showcase, while others have

attended the Wanganui pop up internet café, where the young have taught the elderly how to best use their phones, iPads and computers.

“There have been so many magical moments, really amazing goose bump stuff, just beautiful,” Danny Finley said.

Other students have learnt about the War via regular meetings with members of the RSL, while the leadership students at Wanganui spent time talking with Banksia Lodge residents about their life.

PR, Marketing and Fundraising Manager at Shepparton Villages Jo Breen said the project with IWIA had been extra special, providing interaction and bringing young people in to the villages.

“The students have been just so respectful and so wonderful. Our residents look forward to their visits and there have been a lot of good friendships formed which is just beautiful to see. We are so grateful to Danny and Eva for bringing the IWIA pilot project to Shepparton and to David Earle at Shepparton South Rotary for his ongoing support as well. I think we’ve struck a real winner for all here.”



The Shepparton Villages stall as part of the careers day.



The “magnificent seven” graduates of the Carers in Training intake are now accepting shifts at Shepparton Villages following their staff induction day.

Innovative program delivers job ready employees

It was a fantastic day for seven new Personal Care Worker (PCW) students starting a paid career with Shepparton Villages recently. The seven are graduates of the first intake of the innovative collaboration “Carers in Training” conducted by GOTAFE Shepparton and Shepparton Villages.

The students started in October 2018, spending one day on site at Shepp Villages and one day in the classroom at GOTAFE. The program was successful in securing funding to undertake three intakes each of 10 students, with the second intake soon to start.

The hands-on training has led to short term contracts for all seven of these former students who are now employees of Shepparton Villages, with the contracts to roll over into the workforce.

The collaboration was designed to ensure care workers are “job ready” with a combination of classroom and hands on site training.

With a shortage of care workers in the industry, Shepparton Villages

and Shepparton GOTAFE worked to design a program that would meet the future needs of the aged care industry in this region.

Funding was secured to fully support the course, with no cost to students.

“The end result is seven work ready graduates who are now filling shifts at Shepparton Villages,” Shepparton Villages’ Student Coordinator Mel Andonoudis said.

“It’s a great moment having them all together today to undertake their induction into our workforce.”



Shepparton Villages had a special attraction at the recent Careers Expo – resident Kevin Ritchie!

Kevin was a drawcard for the Shepp Villages display, chatting with students about life at the Villages. As the president of the Tarcoola Support Group, Kevin has a finger in a few pies and has been instrumental in assisting with the I Wish I’d Asked (IWIA) project to bring young and elderly people together (see page 6).

The Shepp Villages team had a display at the expo which gave students from Goulburn Valley schools a chance to explore different career options by talking with people from various industries.

Shepparton Villages also presented to the graduate nurse intake information evening at La Trobe University in Shepparton a few months ago to provide another health care career option for graduating nurses.

“It’s all part of ensuring our young people see aged care as an option for a career,” CEO Kerri Rivett said.

“Often the industry struggles to recruit nursing and care staff, but we’ve had a proactive approach with our Carers in Training program with GOTAFE and our links into the community through various schools,



Kevin Ritchie poses for a selfie with Julie Marshall.

organisations and expos such as the Careers Expo. We welcome anyone interested in the sector to give us a call about a career pathway in aged care which can be extremely rewarding,” she said.

A Place to Call HOME fundraising appeal

We have recently started our “A Place to Call Home” fundraising appeal to assist with the \$20m redevelopment of Rodney Park.

Mooroopna Place will be a new 100 bed home for residents of the Mooroopna area, and while the majority will be financed by Shepparton Villages, there will be some assistance required from the banks.

Everyone deserves a place to call home and we want to deliver the best possible home for our residents that mirrors the quality provided at Maculata Place.

The campaign has already raised around \$46,000. Shepparton Villages Board President Frank Dawson said:

“It’s important for people to remember that funding for buildings is separate from funding for care and while Shepparton Retirement Villages has had no additional government support for buildings and infrastructure, it is committed to providing the highest standard possible for both accommodation and care. We continue our call on the Federal Government to review and assist with the funding model for care within the aged care sector. Meanwhile, we need to fund the building at Mooroopna and are calling on the generous people of the Goulburn Valley to assist us.”

If you would like to make a donation to our A Place To Call Home fundraising campaign, you can do so by filling in the form below and returning it in the reply paid envelope supplied. All donations are TAX DEDUCTIBLE and larger donations can be pledged over a period of time.



To discuss your donation confidentially, contact Jo Breen on T (03) 58 320 800.



Please detach and return in the replied paid envelope



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