



Meet the Staff Deb Walker

Deb Walker, who refers to herself as 'Debra, like Zebra' just incase anyone spells it wrong, has been with the Lifestyle team here at Illawarra Diggers for ten years.

Born in Bulli hospital, Deb grew up in Tarrawanna going to Tarrawanna public school and then Corrimal High School. Tarrawanna in the late 1960's and 1970's was a combination of houses and large open paddocks where many kids kept horses, including Deb. Much of Deb's childhood was spent riding her horse through the paddocks, over to Towradgi where her grandmother lived and up along the fire trails which traversed the escarpment.

A few years after high school Deb decided to spread her wings and took off to the mining town of Dampier in WA where she worked in back of house hospitality. After saving up some travelling money, Deb and her friend bought a car and travelled up to Broome before making their way to Darwin where they settled for about six months before making their way all the way down to Victoria. With the travel bug well sated by her mid 20's, Deb settled back in the Illawarra. A couple of years later had her first daughter Shiree with her second daughter Emma following three years later. Deb's son Jacob, taking his time as boys tend to do, arrived eight years after that! Deb and her hubby built a house in the Pioneer Beach estate in Woonona where they lived for many years. The selling point of that house, when they moved out years later was that one could admire the ocean views whilst 'perched on the throne'. Of course there were plenty of other ocean viewpoints throughout the house but this one was a particular favourite as it guaranteed quiet-time with a view!

Re-settled in Bellambi, these days you'll find Deb and her hubby, their four dogs and Eddie the parrot enjoying a somewhat kid-free life.. until Jacob turns up with his washing and looking for food! Deb's Mum Shirley lives in a cottage at the back of their property and is famous, particularly with the Lifestyle team, for her lemon meringue pie!

When Deb is not herding animals or children, or cooing over her two grandchildren, she is either working in her garden or pouring her heart into her work here at Illawarra Diggers. Most days you'll hear Deb before you see her with her infectious laugh echoing through the hallways bringing a smile to everyone to hears it. Deb's knack of making people feel at ease and making them laugh brings warmth and joy to lives of our residents and our staff too. We are lucky indeed to have her as part of our team!

Fathers Day Lunch



CEO's Message

Welcome to Spring and a Happy Father's Day to all our fathers, grandfathers and great grand fathers for last month. In this edition we have some wonderful family photos from our Father's Day event and since then I have seen lots of sun safe hats about the place.

As I write this article, our PM has just announced a Royal Commission into Residential Aged Care. While the terms of reference have not yet been set for the Royal Commission, this is an opportunity to engage in a much-needed, constructive national discussion about the future of aged care, including how as a society we will deliver the quality services our growing ageing population will need.

The first of a two-part series on aged care 'Who Cares?' aired on Monday 17 September on the ABC Four Corners program with the second part on Monday 24 September.

There are likely to be a number of distressing stories aired making complaints of poor quality care. We acknowledge that in recent times there has been increasing community concern about the quality of aged care.

We believe there is no room in our community for poor or inattentive care and we have zero tolerance for criminal abuse, assault or negligence.

We believe that all older Australians should be able to expect high quality care and strive to provide that each and every day at Illawarra Diggers

If you or your family have any concerns about the care you (or your loved one) is receiving, please contact myself or a member of our care team.

If you prefer or feel more comfortable, you can directly contact the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) for advice and support or make contact with the Australian Government's Aged Care Complaints Commissioner:

- Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN): <http://www.opan.com.au/advocacy/> on 1800700 600

- Australian Government's Aged Care Complaints Commissioner: <https://www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au/internet/accc/publishing.nsf/Content/Home> on 1800 550 552

At Illawarra Diggers we remain committed to providing the highest quality care and are here to support you and discuss any queries or concerns you may have at any time, especially in regards to the Four Corners programs or the upcoming Royal Commission.

September also sees us getting closer to finally finishing our building program. The Auxiliary Wing refurbishment is mostly complete and we are now able to contact Fire NSW to seek their inspection and approval to allow the Occupation Certificate to be issued. This will take a number of weeks but we will be able to start using the offices and consult rooms but may have to wait up to 6 weeks to occupy our final 6 rooms. Which will also mean we can look to convert the current doctor's consult room back to its original purpose of Hair Salon.

Residents and visitors will no doubt notice that we have ripped up all of the 12 month old carpet from the foyer and adjacent high traffic areas and replaced it with vinyl. This was a difficult and expensive decision but we felt it was necessary as the carpet was continuously soiled and difficult to keep clean. Following much difference of opinion amongst the carpet supplier, carpet layers and carpet cleaners, as well as our principal contractor, as to who owned the problem, we decided to just go ahead and do the work anyway. We are keeping the carpet in all the wings but the new vinyl will provide a much better surface for our residents in high traffic areas and will be much better able to keep looking its best.

After the completion of Keira, Warilla, Corrimal and Wollongong Wing refurbishments, it was identified that many rooms have poor circulation space. While not affecting all residents, those in wheelchairs or with larger walkers may find the access past the beds a bit awkward. Illawarra Diggers have been working with the builder to redesign these rooms to provide a better living space for residents. This will result in some rework and

reconfiguration of a number of rooms in these wings. Some will just need a bedhead extended; others will need the bed relocated. Every effort is being made to maintain the best layout and best amenity for each resident.

These works will take place during the day while the resident is out of the room and may take several days to complete each room. This will be communicated to each affected resident before any works are undertaken.

We have our opening function on 31 October and Dr Graham Farquhar has agreed to officiate. Dr Farquhar is an Australian Biophysicist, a Distinguished Professor at the Australian National University and is the 2018 Senior Australian of the Year. We will be very honoured to host him.

Finally, as it is still fresh in my mind, today we held our first parent's club for staff and their children and grandchildren. Lifestyle Deb hosted about a dozen of our staff with their young babies and toddlers. Many of our residents came down to the sails courtyard to enjoy the beautiful sunshine wonderful company of our little visitors. Thanks to our mums and grandmum for bringing such wonderfully well behaved children to visit with each other and our residents and staff. I hope it will be a regular event.

Take care

Peter

A MESSAGE FROM *The Lifestyle Team*

A warm hello from the Lifestyle team as we commence our Spring programs. We are excited to bring you some interesting outings over the coming months. We'll be heading to Tulip Time in Bowral at the end of September and then heading to Sydney Harbour in November for a morning tea harbor cruise. Our December program has already begun to take shape as it will be upon us before we know it. This year we will be hosting our annual special Christmas Afternoon Tea on Saturday 15th December. Please mark your diaries accordingly and

keep a look out for the invitations which will go out in the first week of November. Once again, we will be inviting two family members per resident and two children to the event. Seats fill very quickly as this event is so popular so please get your RSVP in as soon as you can.

This year is the centenary year of Armistice. As there are many special commemorative services being held in the area, we will be holding our Remembrance Day service on Saturday 10th November so that anyone wishing to attend external services on the centenary day may do so without missing the service we hold in-house. It has also allowed us to secure the attendance of all the service participants we usually have on the day to help us make the ceremony feel as authentic as we can.

The building renovations have also included a full refurbishment of our recreation room. In addition to new flooring and lighting we are upgrading our military memorabilia showcase. We are very lucky to have some amazing relics from by-gone era's and service to our country which have all been carefully packed away. Once our new custom-made cabinetry has been installed, all of our service memorabilia will go back on display for all. This upgrade will also include a new platform for wreath's to be laid during wreath ceremony's on ANZAC and Remembrance Day.

We are delighted to have two new volunteers come on board with us. Jeff and Dean spend two full days with us each week, Dean primarily working in our gardens bringing them back to their former glory and Jeff spending one on one time with our residents. Both gentlemen have been a blessing and we are very grateful for what they do here. We would love to have more volunteers on board so if you'd like to find out more about volunteer opportunities here at Diggers, please contact Joanna from the Lifestyle team.

We are very much looking forward to hosting families and friends of residents on our grand opening day at the end of October and hope to see you all there. We will have entertainment and some of our residents will be doing guided tours of the facility to showcase where they live. It will be a great day indeed.

Best Wishes,

Joanna, Deb, Hannah, AJ & Jess.

