



ILLAWARRA
DIGGERS
CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY'S AGED
NOVEMBER 2018 EDITION



CEO's Message

Hello to all our readers.

This edition of our newsletter celebrates two big events for us – the opening of new and refurbished wings; and the Remembrance Day service for 100 years since the Armistice Day, 1918.

THE BIG OPENING

Our opening event on 31 October was very well attended by residents, family, staff and many guests.

A beautiful and heartfelt welcome was given by resident Eleanor Thornton on behalf of the residents of Illawarra Diggers. Eleanor invited all guests to “our home” which set a wonderful theme for the event. The Wollongong City Council was represented by Councillor Jenelle Rimmer who spoke on behalf of the Lord Mayor and the local community. State Members Paul Scully and Ryan Park attended as did Federal Member Sharon Bird. Their presence, especially as they were not being invited to speak at the event, was greatly appreciated.

We also were very pleased to have the CEOs and senior management of some of our fellow aged care providers Warrigal, IRT, Multicultural, Blue Haven and The Flagstaff Group. We have a very supportive not-for-profit community in the Illawarra and it was wonderful that they gave their time to attend.

Our recently retired Chairman Barry Glover spoke on behalf of the current board and was followed by our very special guest of honour. Distinguished Professor Dr Graham Farquhar is the 2018 Senior Australian of the Year. Upon being named Senior Australian of the Year on Australia Day this year, Graham said the year would give him a chance to push favourite causes, like making good use of the talents of senior people. Graham was

a wonderful gentleman, very humble and we were very privileged to have him drive down from Canberra just to dedicate our new works.

Unfortunately we have not been able to occupy the last 6 rooms in the Auxiliary Wing nor utilize the new doctors consult and examination rooms etc as we are still awaiting final fire engineering works to be complete to allow sign off by the NSW Fire Service and the Certifying Authority. A frustratingly slow process.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

This year, with the permission of our residents, we moved our Remembrance Day even to Saturday the 10th of November, one day early. With the big 100th Anniversary being observed on the 11th, we wanted to have our young cadets available as well as the residents who might otherwise have other commitments. It was another beautiful service with many residents and family members attending.

The cadets provided the catafalque party as well as assisting with the wreaths and took the time to mingle with our residents as well.

There were many great photos from both of these events with many of our residents featured.

If any family ever want photos of their resident family member then please ask at the office or directly to Joanna Limpic, Lifestyle Manager, as we are more than happy to email you the photos.

Finally thank you to all the staff who worked so hard to make both events flow so well and make it all look so effortless. That includes ensuring our residents are able to attend looking and feeling their best.

Take Care

Peter

A MESSAGE FROM *The Lifestyle Team*

A warm hello from the Lifestyle team, as always. It seems impossible that we are already just weeks away from Christmas with time seeming to hurtle by at breakneck speed. Our annual Christmas High Tea will be held on Saturday 15th December and invitations will go out to families in the second last week of November. The RSVP is Friday 7th December so, if you will be joining us, please let us know. We ask you to be mindful that this event is always booked out and due to space limitations in our main dining room, we are only able to accommodate two guests for each resident.

This year Illawarra Diggers has continued to build on community relationships. Our alliance with Western Sydney University continues to flourish with students from the Bachelor of Science (Therapeutic Recreation) completing second and third year work placements with the Lifestyle team. Students on placement are afforded the opportunity to engage with our residents under the guidance of myself and the team to design, implement and evaluate individual interventions as well as group activities using the principles of Therapeutic Recreation. Our residents have enjoyed the interaction with the students and some of the programs implemented continue to be implemented by the team after the students have completed their placement.

Another wonderful relationship is with catholic primary school, St Columbkille's Corrimal who have visited us on several occasions to sing and mingle with our residents.

This month we were treated to a forty-student strong section of the school choir group. The group sang some beautifully harmonized songs before taking a short ‘social break’ to have some one on one chats with our residents in the audience, which was just delightful for all involved.

Our residents love spending time with younger generations. Another special mention goes to a local community after school group, Kids for Peace, which was set up as an avenue for handing down ‘old fashioned’ values such as gratitude, respect and tithing. Kids for Peace come into Illawarra Diggers after school to perform a variety of acts including dancing, reading of poetry and singing. It is also an opportunity for our residents to engage and for the kids to understand and appreciate our elderly community.

Our volunteer team is growing slowly but steadily and we consider ourselves very lucky to have three wonderful volunteers who come in two full days every week to help us out. If you'd like to become part of our Lifestyle volunteer team, please get in touch.

With best wishes,

Joanna, Deb, Jess & Hannah





Australian Senior Citizen of the Year Professor Graham Farquhar, who officially opened the extensions, with resident Eleanor Thornton, who welcomed guests on behalf of the residents.

Welcome to Illawarra Diggers - Resident Eleanor Thornton

Good morning and Welcome to Our Home

My name is Eleanor Thornton. I initially came to Illawarra Diggers for a couple of weeks of respite in 2012 and, after several more respite stays, I finally made this my home in December 2017.

On behalf of my fellow residents, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of our guests here this morning for this celebration of the extension and significant upgrade of our home.

I would like to specifically welcome:

- Distinguished Professor Graham Farquhar, who will be officially opening the extensions;
- Councillor Jenelle Rimmer, who is representing the Lord Mayor and the City of Wollongong;
- State Parliament Members Ryan Park and Paul Scully and Federal Member for Cunningham Sharon Bird;
- Chairman Michael Grew and recently retired Chairman Barry Glover as well as all of our Board members;
- The CEOs and representatives of our fellow aged care and charitable organizations in the Illawarra;
- The families and friends of our residents;
- Our local neighbours with whom we share our lovely little part of Corrimal;
- Representatives of Paynter Dixon Constructions, who were the principal builder for these works;
- Representatives of our suppliers who help keep our home running;
- And lastly to the staff who work with us to make Illawarra Diggers such a wonderful place to live.

We have a nice new home with very comfortable rooms and surrounds and special personnel dedicated to care for us with kindness and respect in all the facets of our daily needs.

There are also outside areas with gardens where we may sit and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine. It is a happy home.

In planning for this morning, a small committee of staff and residents was formed. We also asked our fellow residents what sort of entertainment we should have so that it was not just all talking and speech making.

Overwhelmingly our residents wanted to hear from the children of our community. It is also therefore my great pleasure to introduce the abridged version of the St Columbkille's School Choir who will perform two numbers for us this morning.

We hope you all enjoy your time with us on this special day. Thank you for coming. You are most welcome.



Official Opening of Illawarra Diggers Extensions NOVEMBER 2018



Opening Address

Barry Glover, AM, RFS, ED

Immediate Past Chairman,
Illawarra Diggers Aged
and Community Care



Good morning distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen and of course our band of Residents of Illawarra Diggers Aged and Community Care. The house on the hill.

Today sees another milestone in the history of this wonderful establishment.

Formed in 1946 by Wollongong Sub Branch of the RSL at the old Wartime Camp Hospital on the Mount Keira Rd to assist those who needed help after returning from the horrors and trauma of WWII, it was known as the Diggers Rest Home. It served its purpose over the years, but it was outdated and suffering the ravages of time and location.

A new site was required and so it was built and reopened on the present site in 1979 with only about 30 men. It was extended with the building of a new wing which was funded by Caringbah RSL sub branch and of course carries the name here today.

Three further extensions, including the current additions and renovations, as well as the inclusion of men and women from our whole community, will increase the number of residents to 105.

Over the years many changes and aged care living in our Communities have taken place that they never seem to stop.

Of course, the requirements of the ex service community lessened and the rise in aged care homes has made it easier to accommodate our whole community in places more convenient to the family home.

While at Mt Keira, ex-servicemen accounted for all of our residents. Since relocating to Corrimal in 1979 we have welcomed residents from across the broader community. At present time we have less than 10% of our residents from the ex-services community. When local aged members of the Defense Force reach need to move to residential care, Diggers will continue to welcome them.

On behalf of the board I wish to express our thanks to our current residents for their understanding during the disruptions that unfortunately occur in situations such as rebuilding etc. Also of course to our wonderful staff for their patience and smooth transition during the build. Also Members of the RSL Women's auxiliaries for their donations and visits and Xmas cheer over the years plus of course the same from sub-branches of the districts etc. The assistance from our volunteers and support from our community is much appreciated. I thank you all.



Official Opening of Illawarra Diggers Extensions NOVEMBER 2018



Comemorative Address - Neale Hayes, Former Major, Australian Army

Good morning ladies and gents. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your 100th Anniversary of Armistice ceremony. It's an honour to be here in Corrimal on Remembrance Day. Thank you to Joanna for inviting me, and for your good leadership in organizing this ceremony. Thank you to Captain Susan Sallans and the cadets from 26 Army Cadet Unit – Wollongong for providing the catafalque party. Well done.

A hundred years ago, the Allies and Germans agreed to a ceasefire which marked the end of combat in World War I. This war claimed 64,000 Australian casualties with 46,000 buried in places such as Tyne Cot Cemetery and Fromelles Memorial Park and 18,000 buried in unknown graves. At Menin Gate in Belgium, on the walls, are the names of thousands of soldiers. If you have been there, I say well done. If you have not, it is worth seeing to be truly humbled and awed and to know the echo of sacrifice.

Back in the Illawarra, half a world away, just imagine Corrimal and Bellambi 100 years ago, when the news of the end of the war arrived. The Princes Highway and side streets were made of compacted dirt. The main methods of transport were steam trains and horse-drawn wagons. My grandmother, may she rest in peace, was 13yrs old.

In 1918, in France and Belgium, there were several important battles. Their names may be familiar: Villers-Bretonneux, Hamel, Amiens, Mont St. Quentin, Peronne, and Breaching the Hindenburg Line. All these battles had their centenaries in 2018. It has been a momentous year.

Australian soldiers – the Diggers, were known for their skill and spirit on the battlefields. They did not fight for the King, or the Prime Minister, or for Field Marshal Haig. They fought for the person standing beside them in the trench. And they were volunteers. Today, we honour their spirit.

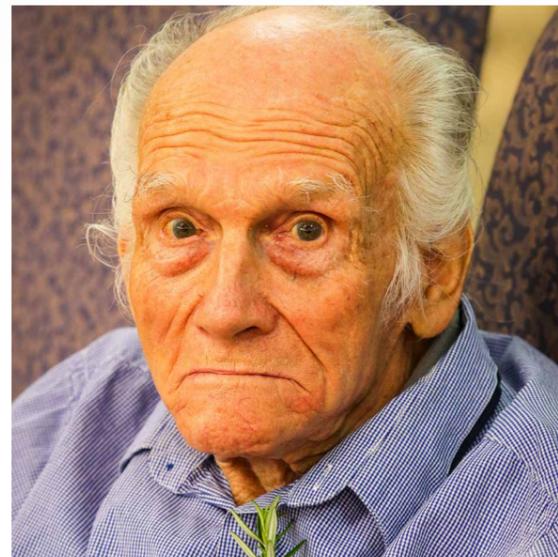
The German soldiers feared and respected the Australian soldiers. They thought we were quick and cunning. Here is one of the things that John Monash said about Australian soldiers when he was a Major General. "And finally the War Office itself, are beginning to realize that the Australians are some of the best troops in the whole Empire." An example of this is Private George Cartwright VC for his actions near Peronne in France on 31 August 1918. His citation reads:

"When two companies were held up by machine-gun fire from the south-western end of the wood, without hesitation, Private Cartwright moved against the gun in a most deliberate manner under intense fire. He shot three of the team, and having bombed the post, captured the gun and nine enemy. His gallant deed had a most inspiring effect on the whole line, which immediately rushed forward. Throughout the operation Private Cartwright displayed wonderful dash, grim determination, and courage of the highest order."

He survived the war, got promoted, and stayed in the Army. In WWII he was a Captain, who was involved in training infantry soldiers who deployed overseas as reinforcements, so he was influential on hundreds of soldiers and officers with his leadership, knowledge, good example, and battle cunning. There are words in his citation which resonate. They are good words: without hesitation, deliberate, gallant, inspiring, determination. I guess, if you melt these words together, the great word could be courage.

At ANZAC Grove in Railway Street, there are the names of 48 citizen soldiers who fought in WWI and never came home. Today we reflect on and honour them because they belong to us and will never be forgotten.

The inscription reads; "They loved honour more than they feared death". Our world has changed so much over 100 years and in 100 years time, I hope our society will still remember and reflect on Remembrance Day and that the Army's values of: Courage, Initiative, Teamwork, and Respect, are part of the everyday lives of all Australians.



Remembrance Day COMMEMORATING THE CENTENARY OF ARMISTICE 2018