



CARING FRIENDS

S U M M E R 2 0 2 5 N E W S L E T T E R

Ryder-Cheshire Victorian
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GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As I write this, Christmas, New Year and summer holidays are just around the corner, and it seems like a good time to stop and reflect on the year that has nearly finished. Something that stands out in every year at the Homes is the spirit of kindness and generosity. It is lovely to see the support and kindness amongst our guests staying here. Our guests are often experiencing some of the most difficult times in their lives, and yet they still have time to support others. It is also very rewarding to see the kindness and care of our staff and volunteers as they work to try and make every day at the Homes like 'a home away from home' for our guests.

Every year we experience the kindness and generosity of those who support the Homes by donating their time through volunteering, those who donate money or make bequests, and those who make and send goods for sale at the Trading Table. Economic conditions have been getting more difficult for many of us, and so very sincerely and gratefully we thank each and every one of you who have supported the Homes during this year. We couldn't do it without you!

Fire Safety at the Homes

Recent renovations at the Homes included installation of state-of-the-art fire safety systems in all three buildings. These systems are similar to those operating in many large apartment buildings and hotels. When a smoke or heat detector is set off it automatically sends an alert through to Fire

Rescue Victoria (FRV), the alarm sounds in the building where the detector has been activated, and our guests are asked to evacuate that building until the FRV team have attended and advised that the building is safe to re-enter.

The detectors are very sensitive to cigarette smoke, burning toast, and to excessive steam and smoke from cooking. False alarms can also occur in very dusty or windy weather, or for no obvious reason. FRV are very helpful for not issuing fines for false alarms for unknown reasons, but for cases of preventable false alarms the fine can be in excess of \$1,000. We therefore ask our guests to never smoke in any part of the buildings and instead use the smoking area at the back of Building 10, and we ask guests to be very vigilant while cooking and making toast. There is a couple of minutes delay from when the alarm starts when we can indicate a false alarm to FRV, so if a guest accidentally sets off an alarm when cooking we ask that they open the doors and windows to the outside and use the exhaust fans to clear the air quickly. They should not open the door to the passageway where escaping smoke could set off other detectors.

False alarms can be really inconvenient and expensive, but it is very

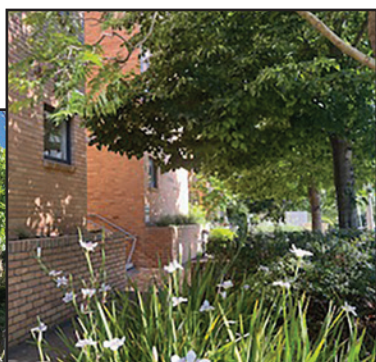
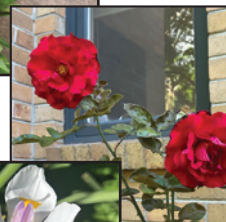
reassuring to know that our guests and staff are so well protected by these safety systems.

Vale Maria Dortmans

In the last edition of Caring Friends, we told you about Maria's life and her 100th birthday in August, and now sadly we report her passing on 2 October. She was one of our very early 'House Parents' and hers was truly a life well lived. We express our sincere condolences to Maria's extended family.



▲ Clivia under
peppercorn
tree
◀ Flowers in
bloom
▼ Ryder-
Cheshire
roses



▲ Front
entrance
garden



PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED

Committee News

There have been a number of recent changes in the membership of the Committee of Management. Earlier this year Robyn Treyvaud resigned from the committee and we thank her for five years of dedicated service to the Homes. In September it was a great pleasure to welcome Elena Cazacu who has a strong background in architecture, building and business administration. Barrie Williams stepped down from nine years in the role of Secretary but will stay on the committee. Thank you to Barrie for his truly significant contributions to the governance and work of the Homes, and congratulations to Anthony Brookes who was elected as the new Secretary.

My very sincere thanks to all committee members for another year of dedicated service to the Homes and to the mission for the relief of suffering.

In Conclusion

Again, thank you to all our staff, volunteers, supporters and friends.

I wish you all a very happy and safe festive season, and a peaceful and happy 2026.

Kathy Oswin
President

▼ Kaye

MANAGER'S REPORT

Looking back on a busy year at the Homes, I want to thank our staff, volunteers, and committee members for providing a safe, comfortable, and welcoming environment for patients and their carers.

We have the unique opportunity to meet a diverse range of wonderful people at the Homes, and we consider it a privilege to hear their personal stories. Time and again, we are inspired by the strength and determination displayed by those facing incredibly challenging circumstances.

Many families stay with us for a considerable period, and it is always a pleasure to get to know them better, building stronger connections throughout their stay. While we are fortunate that the majority of our guests are able to return home fully recovered, we acknowledge that there are also those who, sadly, do not. Our thoughts are especially with those families this year who have experienced such loss and are missing their loved ones. We are thinking of you and hold you in our hearts during this difficult time.

Volunteer support is integral to the effective running of the Homes, with individuals contributing across a broad range of ages and years of service. It has been fascinating to look at numerous photographs spanning more than forty years, and we have realised how crucial it is to gain a greater insight into those depicted and their relationship with the Homes. Terry's longstanding commitment as a volunteer is significant and his account provides a valuable insight into what it means to him to be a volunteer at the Homes.

Axel, a student volunteer who joined earlier this year, shared insights from his first-year Masters of Speech Pathology placements. Axel is skilled at creating incredibly decadent cheesecakes, and we've had the pleasure of enjoying several in recent months to celebrate birthdays!

We truly appreciate our student volunteers at the Homes, who help Leila and me in the office on weekends and evenings.



▲ Mark and Leila with cheesecake

Sunday afternoon teas and garden working bees have continued into 2025. We sincerely appreciate the volunteers who host these gatherings each Sunday, offering a welcoming presence for conversation and refreshments. The Friends of Eaglemont have supported the ongoing maintenance of our gardens, including the addition of a second planter box of rosemary. Morning tea was kindly provided by Anna from the CWA.

Joy has been a valued member of the cleaning team for more than 20 years and will be on leave during the Christmas and New Year period. She will be travelling to the Philippines to visit her family and friends, and we extend our best wishes for a safe and restful journey.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and best wishes for 2026 to you and your families.

Warmest regards Sandra, Leila and Iwan.

PRESERVING OUR HISTORY

At the Homes we cherish our history, tracing it back to the inspirational lives and work of Sue Ryder and Leonard Cheshire, and the work of the early committee members and volunteers who started the Homes from nothing. Along the way, we have accumulated written records, letters, photographs, newspaper cuttings, artworks and so on, and we realized that we needed to take some very positive steps to preserve this history, including both the real objects and their digital images. Some time ago Sandra, our Manager, was talking to Kaye, a new volunteer, and found out that she had training and experience as an archivist. What a happy coincidence! Since then, Kaye has made enormous progress in sorting and cataloguing our archives, and making them accessible and easy to use.

It is also important to make sure that all items are stored in appropriate ways that will protect and preserve them for the future. Kaye arranged for Angela, who runs an archival storage supplies company, to meet us at the Homes to view our collection and to make recommendations for safe storage. Angela's advice was very informative and helpful, and it was a lovely surprise when a few days later Angela sent an email to say that she and her business partner at Archival Survival were donating the archival storage materials to the Homes. Our sincere thanks to both Kaye and Angela, our history is safe in your care.

Kathy Oswin



TERRY LAWLOR - VOLUNTEERING AT RYDER- CHESHIRE IVANHOE HOMES



I first became aware of the Ryder-Cheshire Homes in 2006. I live just two streets away from Donaldson Street but did not know of its existence. I visited the Homes for the first time when two of my cousins from the country were staying there while their brother was recuperating in nearby Ford Street.

I grew up on a farm in the Southern Riverina and immediately was impressed by the wonderful support offered to patients and carers, who are away from familiar surroundings and coping with major health issues. Sister Jane Gorey, the Manager at the time, welcomed me into the Ryder-Cheshire community and so began an association, which has so far lasted nearly two decades.

Working in the Office has been a very special experience as I have met residents from so many places in Australia and beyond, who have been accessing the excellent medical facilities, available in Melbourne, especially at the Austin Hospital and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre. What I have found heartwarming is the way in which the Homes provide a welcoming, comfortable

and quiet place to be, as our guests cope with challenging health issues. I love living in Melbourne, Ivanhoe in particular, but I am also aware that many of our guests feel much more at home back home in familiar surroundings.

As a charitable organisation, Ryder-Cheshire Homes is very dependent on the wonderful support offered by volunteers to Management. I have been fortunate to build friendships with some of those very generous volunteers. Sister Jane, during her time, initiated a valuable programme. Students, mostly from overseas countries, were offered accommodation in return for working in the Office and being available to assist guests in non-office hours, which is particularly important in an organisation like Ryder-Cheshire. This initiative has been crucial in the smooth running of the Homes.

In 2020, I was invited by Committee President, Peter Overton, and Manager, Nicky Robinson, to assume the role of Student



▲ Terry at work

Mentor. So, I have had the pleasure of offering support to our student residents.

That has involved showing interest in and support for their studies. Moreover, we have very pleasant social activities, which might involve celebration of birthdays or dinner at one of our many local restaurants. A very pleasant way to bond!

For me, personally, especially since my retirement from teaching at Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar in 2017, Ryder-Cheshire has provided me with a rewarding social world. It has been a privilege and pleasure being a part of Ryder-Cheshire Homes. Hopefully, I can continue my involvement for some years to come!

AXEL STUDENT VOLUNTEER - MY PLACEMENTS

My first year at Ryder-Cheshire has really flown by! It's hard to believe how much content we've covered in classes within one year. Some major highlights have included the chance to try out different speech generating devices and the opportunity to attend a symposium about alternative and augmentative communication.

This semester I also attended my first two placements, in two really different environments. The first was in residential aged care, while this was only two days, it was a really interesting opportunity to see the important role that speech pathologists

can have with older people. I was able to meet some wonderful residents who very kindly gave us their time and let us sit with them to observe their lunchtime meal. We were also able to do some speech, language and swallowing assessments. Our clinical educator was an amazing source of knowledge, as she was not only an experienced speech pathologist holding a doctorate but also an opera singer.

My second placement was at the Communication Clinic on campus, which works primarily with preschool children. Our client ended up being much more complex than anticipated, which was a challenging, yet an amazing learning experience. Having several sessions not go to plan in the beginning, it made it so much more meaningful to see some progress towards the end of the therapy sessions. I loved

◀ Axel with birthday cake



▼ Axel felt image



the opportunity to problem solve and to find ways to integrate theory and evidence into activities that were fun and still aligned with our clients' needs and interests. This involved many hours printing, laminating, hot gluing and sewing, as well as several trips to the craft shop and Bunnings! I finally created a magnetic fishing game with lots of felt resources. It was hard to believe how much time and thought could go into sessions for just one client (and how sometimes all that planning could go completely out the window!). I'm excited to move forward into next year and gain more experience with different practice areas and populations.

AROUND & ABOUT FINLEY, NSW Continuing our series of visiting guests' hometowns.

Located on the Newell Highway, Finley is the second largest town in Berrigan Shire. Only 20 kilometres from the Murray River, it is a prime irrigation area, famous for being a significant part of the Riverina Food Bowl and a busy centre. Finley too is a great place to take a break whilst travelling.

Originally inhabited by the Wiradjuri people the area was settled by Europeans in the early 1840s. First named Murray Hut it was later named after FG Finley who surveyed the area in the 1870s.

For the visitor today there are plenty of things to see and do from historical, leisure and sporting perspectives. Notable is the Finley Railway Station established in 1898 being the first of the "Pioneer" system where tracks were laid without stone ballast or fences and platforms constructed near ground level. In bygone days newlyweds were farewelled on their honeymoon from the station. The station precinct now houses the railway museum, while the nearby Railway Park

- School of Arts
- ▼ Country Club Hotel

has been created as a space to stop and relax. Another museum well worth a visit is the Finley Foundry Museum dedicated to the original founder and owner JT Close.

Around the town are displayed several large colourful murals, some painted by the silo artist Heesco who featured in our Yarram, Victoria edition.

Finley Lake near the centre of town is very picturesque. Here is another place to relax, have a picnic, engage in fishing or water sports such as canoeing or boating.



▲ Horse and cart mural
◀ Boomerang Motors



There is also a 1.8km walking and cycling track around the lake to enjoy the wildlife.

Community sporting facilities abound, including a golf course, bowling greens, netball and cricket clubs. Every reason to take time and enjoy a short stay in Finley.



◀ Main street
▼ Finley junction Newell Highway



▲ Railway goods vehicle siding
◀ Pioneer Railway
► Finley Lake



CARING FRIENDS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

Instead of receiving a hard copy, we can send it to you via email. Simply call our office and provide your email address, or go to www.rydercheshire.org.au and follow the links. Thank you.

REGULAR SOCIAL EVENTS

Sunday afternoon teas occur twice a month, we advertise the dates around the Homes. On the last Wednesday of the month we have a working bee with Friends of Eaglemont, and anyone is free to come along. CWA provide a delicious morning tea.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

If you have a few spare hours a week to assist at the Homes we'd love to hear from you. Should you have skills in general maintenance, odd jobs etc these would also be more than welcome. For all enquiries please call (03) 9254 2400

DONATIONS

Donations of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible

Donate by PayPal - Visit www.rydercheshirehomes.org.au



Donate by bank deposit -

Name: Ryder Cheshire Vic Homes Foundation

BSB: 013 338 Acc No: 411 224 906

Please state deposit is a Donation and reference with your name.

Donate via EFTPOS - by calling the office.

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please fill in the form and send it to the address below

RCVHF Inc. 10-14 Donaldson Street IVANHOE VIC 3079

Amount \$ _____

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Ryder-Cheshire Ivanhoe Homes (ABN 94 074 894 677) receives no government funding and is financed entirely through its own efforts and the generous support of Caring Friends.