

grapevine

Summer Edition 2026 | Issue 99

REUNITED
After 65 Years
A Remarkable
Story of Friendship

See how we are
*Investing in Our
Community*

*A Lifetime of
Police Service*
Thank You, Tony!

Culturally Inspired
Our Special Events

**CELEBRATING
AUSTRALIA**
Sports & Patriotism

**John's
90:**
*How He
Retired
at 50!*





A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

A Warm Summer of *Wholesome Stories and Community Spirit*

It's hard to believe how quickly the year is moving, with 2026 now well underway.

The past few months have been filled with meaningful moments across Mayflower, reflecting the warmth, resilience and sense of belonging within our community.

One particularly special highlight was the reunion of two lifelong friends after 65 years apart – a truly touching reminder of how powerful relationships can be.

We also shared in many memorable celebrations, including Christmas and New Year's Eve, our colourful Under the Sea party, Diwali at Mayflower Reservoir and Edith Bendall, and a reflective Remembrance Day service.

Each of these moments brought people together in different ways, creating opportunities for connection, laughter and reflection.

In this edition of Grapevine, you can also learn more about Mayflower's sustainability approach and discover who took home the much-anticipated Christmas raffle prizes across our three homes.

You will also find an important announcement from our Board Chair, Mary-Jane Stolp, outlining upcoming building works and future developments.

These projects represent an exciting step forward as we continue investing in environments that support comfort, wellbeing and quality of life for everyone in our community.

Paul Gregersen | Chief Executive Officer



Our *appeal*

As a registered not-for-profit charitable organisation, Mayflower relies on the generous financial support of donors.

Every contribution, big or small, directly helps enrich the lives of residents, through compassionate care, services such as Music Therapy, enhanced activities, and meaningful resources that empower connection and wellbeing.

Please help us continue this important work by donating today!

For more information on how you can make a real difference, please see the back cover.

Please note our new account details (also found on the back cover).



On the cover:

Darryl, of our Brighton Independent Living community, helps with the Australia Day BBQ!

Special *announcement*



Investing in our Community

A Message from our Board Chair

"On behalf of the Mayflower Board, I'm delighted to share an exciting update with our community about upcoming building works and future developments at Mayflower.

The Board has approved a significant refurbishment program, representing a **\$29 million** investment across Mayflower Brighton's Independent Living and Residential Aged Care environments, as well as shared and communal spaces at Mayflower Reservoir.

This investment will allow us to thoughtfully refresh and enhance these spaces, creating environments that are contemporary, welcoming and designed to support comfort, wellbeing and connection.

At Mayflower Brighton, this investment includes a staged and extensive renovation of all rooms and apartments, ensuring every resident and independent living apartment progressively benefits from these improvements over time.

Importantly, this work will be guided by consultation and partnership.

We are listening to residents, families, carers and team members and working together to help shape spaces that are not only fit for purpose and contemporary, but genuinely reflect how people live, work and connect at Mayflower.

These upgrades are about more than buildings.

They are about how spaces feel, how they are used, and how they support daily life - from shared moments with family and friends to quiet time, social connection and community gatherings.

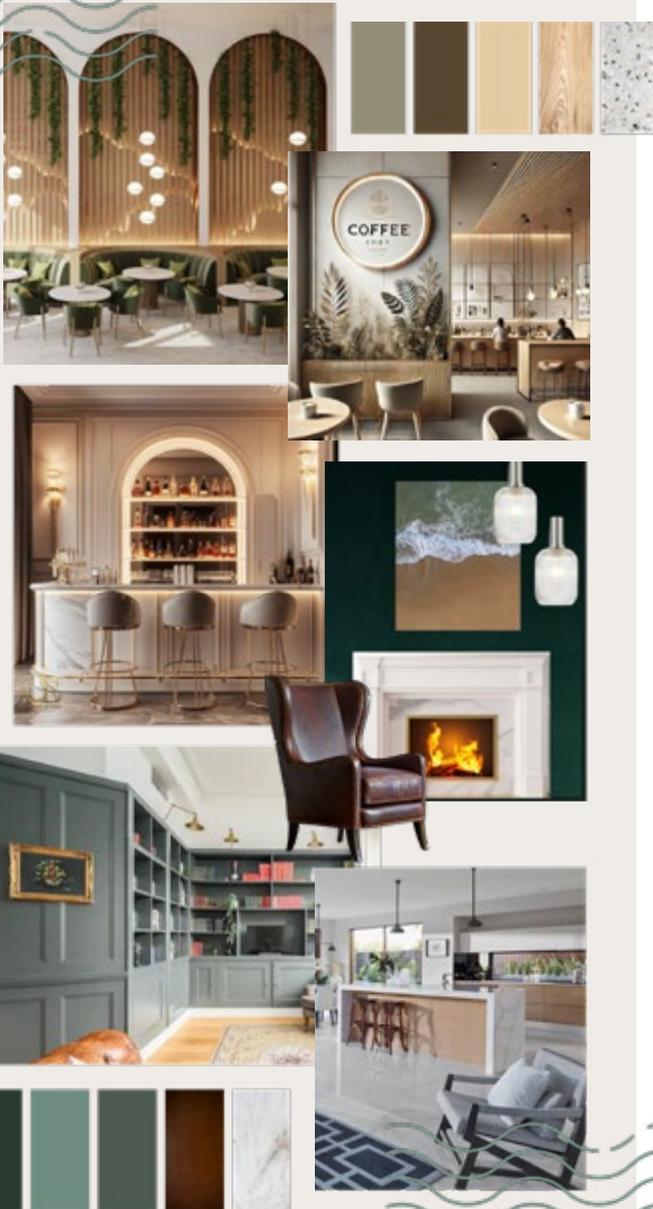
The works will help ensure our environments continue to reflect the quality of care, dignity and sense of belonging that are central to life at Mayflower.

This is an exciting step forward and a strong demonstration of our long-term commitment to reinvesting in our communities.

We will continue to share more information as plans are finalised and are committed to keeping residents, families and team members informed throughout the process.

Thank you for your continued trust and support."

Mary-Jane Stolp | Board Chair





Pictured above: Mayflower Gift Shop volunteer and Independent Living resident, Alison, with resident Marjorie, perusing the lovely products available in store.



Meet Phillip

Mayflower Reservoir has welcomed a new Clinical Care Coordinator!

Meet Phillip, who is already making an impact with her warm, positive personality and genuine passion.

Originally a pharmacist in Sri Lanka, Phillip chose to pursue nursing after moving to Australia, studying at La Trobe University.

Caring for people has always been part of who she is, and she wanted to empower people to continue getting the most out of life through thoughtful, high quality care. She began her nursing career in 2011 as a graduate registered nurse with another aged care home, where early challenges helped shape the compassionate nurse she is today.

Working locally, Phillip says she heard many positive things about Mayflower, our value of respect, and our culture of support and growth.

"Mayflower is truly the place to be, offering excellent care in a modern, warm, and homely environment with friendly and caring staff," says Phillip.

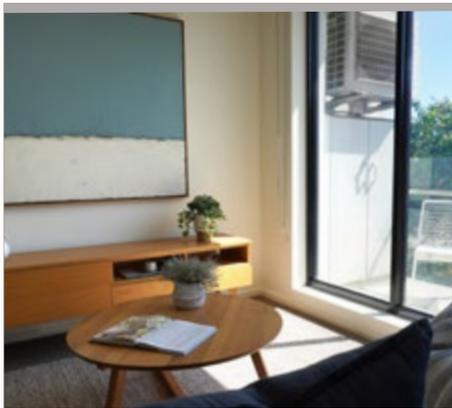
Born in Sri Lanka, Phillip's given name is Menurika, with Phillip being her father's name, which appears on her passport.

Outside of work, she enjoys travelling, meditation, classical music and spending time with her family - husband Anton, teenage daughter Meerium, her mum Teresa, and their playful dog, Chester.

Volunteers Needed

Your opportunity to join our friendly team of Volunteers is here! From running our gorgeous Gift Shop, pampering residents, to driving our minibuses, and running an activity - our volunteers across Mayflower help the world go round!

If you have a few hours a month you could share, we'd love you to join our team. Speak to reception at your local Mayflower home or email info@mayflower.org.au with your location preference and how you would like to help us.



Our contemporary one and two bedroom apartments offer a beautiful balance of cosiness and quality, with light-filled living spaces, modern finishes and thoughtful design throughout. Each apartment provides the privacy and independence of your own home, with the added reassurance of support close by if ever needed.

Retirement Living - at it's finest.

Retirement should be a time of comfort, choice and new experiences.

At Mayflower Brighton, retirement living is designed to support people to enjoy life at their own pace, in a welcoming and connected community.

Residents also enjoy access to shared spaces that encourage social connection, from inviting lounges and landscaped gardens to a café and regular lifestyle activities. It is a place where neighbours become friends, and where every day brings opportunities to relax, connect and truly live your life, your way.



Connect *with Us*

Social media is a great way to stay 'in the know' and to network with others in your community, and our socials are no exception!

We share inspiring stories, wonderful photographs of residents, news from Mayflower, and stories about our dedicated team. You'll also find helpful information and resources to better understand dementia, aged care, and ageing.

You can find, follow, 'like,' and share our pages on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn by searching for 'The Mayflower Group.'

Pictured left: Bob, during a 40-plus degree day, keeping cool, enjoying a cold treat while watching a movie with others in the lounge - at Mayflower Edith Bendall.



A LIFETIME OF SERVICE RECOGNISED - THANK YOU TONY



Tony joined the Northern Territory Police Force on 26 June 1956.

This June, he will celebrate 70 years since joining the force, sharing the milestone with one remaining classmate from his intake, Roger Textor.

Now aged 95, Tony's career took him across the Northern Territory, including Darwin, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Daly River and Adelaide River, before his promotion to sergeant in Alice Springs.

Tony served during a time when policing in remote Australia looked very different to today.

At remote postings, officers often carried out patrols on horseback and worked closely alongside Indigenous Australian trackers, relying on teamwork and local knowledge to navigate vast and

challenging landscapes. At Daly River alone, the station managed 21 horses to support patrol duties.

Tony is pictured saluting Her Majesty The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh during their 1963 visit to Darwin, as well as proudly holding his Remote Service Ribbon (left).

His photographs and stories continue to spark conversation and interest, offering a fascinating glimpse into an important chapter of Australian policing history.



Mayflower Edith Bendall resident Tony was recently recognised by the Northern Territory Police Museum and Historical Society as the eldest living retired Northern Territory Police Officer, acknowledging a lifetime of service.



Pictured above: Mayflower Reservoir resident Lisa receives her prize from Helen, our Care and Leisure Coordinator.

Christmas Raffle *Prize Winners Announced*

Our Christmas Raffle was a little different this year, with each home sporting the same selection of prizes.

A big thank you to everyone who took part in our fundraiser - raising funds to improve the lifestyle experience of residents in each home.

Mayflower Brighton

1st Prize – Moët Luxury Champagne Hamper - Leanne H

2nd Prize – European Picnic Gift Hamper - Beatrice C

3rd Prize – Maggie Beer Christmas Desserts Hamper - Margaret H

4th Prize – Phillippa's Gourmet Hamper - Rosemary F

5th Prize – Mayflower Salon Voucher - Doug M

6th Prize – Penguin Classics x T2 Tea Gift Set - Nikki H

Mayflower Reservoir

1st Prize – Moët Luxury Champagne Hamper - Irene W

2nd Prize – European Picnic Gift Hamper - Angela L

3rd Prize – Maggie Beer Christmas Desserts Hamper - Lisa G

4th Prize – Phillippa's Gourmet Hamper - Sonia M

5th Prize – Mayflower Salon Voucher - Deborah H

6th Prize – Penguin Classics x T2 Tea Gift Set - Sara G

Mayflower Edith Bendall

1st Prize – Moët Luxury Champagne Hamper - Bill L

2nd Prize – European Picnic Gift Hamper - Gayle K

3rd Prize – Maggie Beer Christmas Desserts Hamper - Bill L

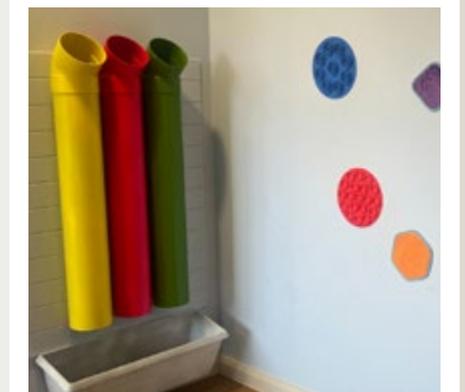
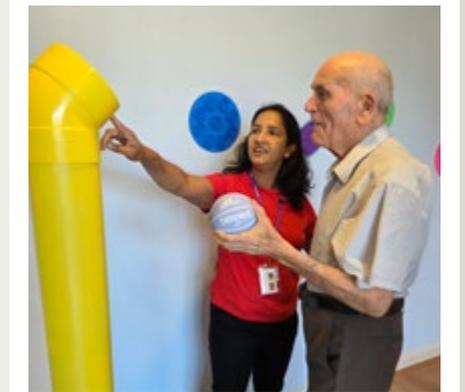
4th Prize – Phillippa's Gourmet Hamper - Alison A

5th Prize – Mayflower Salon Voucher - Peter U

6th Prize – Penguin Classics x T2 Tea Gift Set - Cheryl B



Special *feature*



 RESERVOIR

Sensory Spaces Now Complete

Murray House, the Memory Support House at Mayflower Reservoir, has recently introduced a series of thoughtfully designed sensory and engagement walls, creating familiar destinations that invite residents to pause, explore and connect with everyday moments.

These additions transform corridors into purposeful spaces, offering gentle prompts for movement, interaction and choice. Designed for people living with dementia, each wall draws on familiarity, routine and sensory stimulation to support wellbeing.

A flower-decorating wall invites creativity, allowing residents to design their own bouquets using colourful, tactile elements. The activity encourages self-expression, supports fine motor skills and provides a shared experience that can spark conversation.

Another popular feature is the post office wall, complete with a realistic red post box and a lifelike vinyl decal depicting the interior of a post office from a bygone era. The scene creates a strong sense of recognition and nostalgia, offering a familiar destination and a meaningful task, whether posting a letter or pausing to reminisce.

Developed with care by Care and Leisure Coordinator Helen, these spaces reflect Mayflower's commitment to dignity, engagement and independence.

Initiatives like these are made possible through the generosity of donors, whose support helps create environments that enrich daily life for residents.



Pictured above: Max (left) and Neville (right) spend some time together after their reunion over a leisurely lunch.

Reunited After 65 Years: Max and Neville's Remarkable Story of Friendship

When Neville Norman first heard the name 'Max Phillips' spoken aloud at Mayflower Brighton, he immediately felt a familiar spark of warm recognition, something long-stored yet instantly alive. "I've never forgotten the name," says Neville.

It had been 65 years since 2 boys from Box Hill last spent time together.

They were only 5 when they met at Box Hill Primary School, sharing footballs, birthday parties, and water fights on hot summer afternoons.

Life eventually carried them in different directions, but the memory of their friendship never faded.

Their story begins in the early 1950s, when 2 energetic and bright boys started school just 6 weeks apart in age.

Neville remembers that era with great fondness. "We were at primary school and secondary school together," he says. "We used to play at each other's homes. We kicked the football and we even had high jumping competitions in the backyard."

Max also recalls those early adventures, adding that Neville excelled at high jump. "I made a high jump frame out of timber because I was good with my hands. He had one too, but I think mine might have been a little sturdier," Max says with a smile.

The friendship deepened over small but meaningful moments.

Max has always carried with him one memory from their first year of high school.

He was in hospital, and his mother couldn't visit him, however Neville's mother kindly stepped in. "She came to see me to make sure I was OK," he says. "I'll never forget that."

Neville also remembers how proud Max's father was of his son's skill with tools, later using these skills in his career.

These warm threads of childhood stayed with them both, even as their lives began to diverge.

In their mid-teens, each followed a different path.

Neville found himself pursuing an academic career, soon becoming a respected economist and lecturer.

Max moved into the building industry and rose through the ranks at AVJennings Homes, carving out a leadership path through commitment and craftsmanship.

Like Ships in the Night

They both worked at AVJennings Homes at one point, almost crossing paths again, like ships passing through the night - so close, but never meeting.

Decades passed. They each got married, raised families, and built full, wholesome lives. Each assumed the other had travelled far down their own road, never expecting their stories to intersect again.

Then, something remarkable happened.

Neville had recently moved to Mayflower Brighton, enjoying the support and social connection of his new home.

One afternoon, he sat down with former team member Rebecca, who was interviewing residents as part of her work and happened to choose Neville out of 150 people that day.

As they chatted, she noticed he had grown up in Box Hill. A quiet thought formed. Her father, Max, had also grown up there.

"I remember calling Dad and asking, does the name Neville Norman mean anything to you?" Rebecca says, "and he said, "Yes! Why, does it mean something to you?"

Rebecca had just spent an hour talking with Neville without realising she was speaking to her father's childhood best friend!

Something had aligned in the most unexpected way.

When Rebecca showed Neville a photograph of Max, he recognised him instantly. "It was definitely Max," he says.

"Even without the moustache he has now. It was his smile." He felt a wave of emotion. After all this time, a connection he had valued so deeply was suddenly within reach again.

Just a couple of weeks later, Max walked through the doors of Mayflower Brighton.

As soon as the two men saw each other, 65 years dissolved. Neville describes the moment as "one of the warmest days I can remember in my retirement". Max echoes the sentiment.

"It's been absolutely brilliant," says Max.

"Tears and all. I never thought we'd meet again!"

Their reunion unfolded over a catered lunch in the private dining room, thanks to Mayflower's chef manager, Yaz.

The conversation flowed effortlessly, stretching into the afternoon as they moved into the library. Surrounded by shelves of books, it felt fitting for two men who had always loved learning, reading and sharing stories.

"We won't be in each other's pockets," Neville says with a smile, "but every few weeks it will be lovely to catch up."

Life with Meaning at Mayflower Brighton

For Neville, life at Mayflower Brighton has become a place of comfort, connection, and belonging. "The care is excellent," he says. "If anything happens, the response is second to none."

Neville speaks warmly of the lifestyle program, praising the intellectual activities, the Music Therapy program and choir practice he enjoys greatly. "I even get to sing," he adds with pride.

He also credits the team for creating the environment that allowed this extraordinary reunion to unfold. "It's another hallmark of Mayflower," he says.

"They helped bring together a reunion I never dreamt would happen." says Neville.

Max agrees. "I never thought we'd meet again, ever. But here we are!" says Max.

Two gentlemen, once young boys from Box Hill, side by side again in their later years, sharing memories, laughter, and a renewed friendship that has transcended time.

Sometimes the most treasured connections find their way back when we least expect it, guided by care, community, and the kindness of others.



Meet Sarah

Sarah joined Mayflower in July '24 as a Learning and Development Specialist, and has recently stepped into a new role as Palliative Care Clinical Lead.

According to her parents, Sarah was always destined to become a nurse, with no back-up plan ever in mind. Sarah completed her nursing degree in 2004 and loves the variety and opportunities nursing offers, particularly the connections formed with patients and their families.

Sarah's journey into palliative care began at just 16, when she volunteered at her local Hospice in New Zealand, making 'cuppas' and helping with activities.

After working in London, she returned to New Zealand and stepped straight into a Registered Nurse role at the same Hospice, where she stayed for 15 years as a team leader and nurse specialist before moving to Melbourne and joining Mayflower.

Sarah shares that providing palliative care is a privilege, allowing her to support people with dignity and help make each day the best it can be.

Born near Wellington, Sarah describes herself as a 'proud Kiwi.' Outside of work, she enjoys theatre and exploring Melbourne with her husband and 2 daughters, aged 11 and 14.

Spring Racing Carnival

All Dressed Up for a Day at the Races

The Spring Racing season brought along with it a flurry of colour, laughter and celebration across Mayflower, with each home enjoying a sumptuous afternoon (or two!) of festivities.

High teas and cheese platters were served alongside glasses of bubbles, setting the tone for a day that felt both elegant and light-hearted.

Live music filled the rooms as residents and team members took part in fashion parades, proudly showcasing their finest race-day outfits, while the much-anticipated hobby horse races added a playful twist to the program. Cheers and friendly rivalry followed each race, with prizes awarded for best dressed and winning jockeys.

Thank You to Our Volunteers

Behind the scenes, volunteers played a vital role in bringing the day together, helping with set-ups, serving treats and encouraging everyone to join in the fun. A special thank you goes to community member Leonie, who generously donated a collection of beautifully handcrafted fascinators, as well as hobby horses that became the stars of the races.

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations like these go a long way in supporting lifestyle experiences for residents, helping create moments of joy, creativity and celebration that truly enrich everyday life at Mayflower.







Special *feature*

Across Mayflower, sustainability is woven into everyday operations.

Recycling programs are in place for batteries, cardboard, furniture, medication blister packs, plastic, glass and newspapers, helping to significantly reduce landfill.

Plants are also re-planted across sites, supporting greener spaces while avoiding unnecessary waste.

Clean Laundry + Clean Power

In addition, both Mayflower Brighton and Reservoir laundries are supported by advanced ozone systems, which reduce the use of gas, electricity and chemicals.

These systems exceed Australian regulatory requirements and operate at European standards, reflecting Mayflower's commitment to innovation and environmental responsibility.

"This also includes sourcing gas and electricity through a broker with green inclusions, selecting sustainable commercial kitchen equipment, and maximising recycling to reduce our landfill footprint," says Christina.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate how caring for the environment is a shared effort – one that empowers communities, supports responsible use of resources and reflects Mayflower's commitment to care, stewardship and long-term sustainability.

Environment *Matters*

Building a More Sustainable Community, Together.

At Mayflower, sustainability is about more than systems and processes – it is about making thoughtful choices that benefit people today while protecting the world for generations to come.

As a not-for-profit charitable organisation, Mayflower is committed to operating responsibly and finding practical ways to reduce waste, conserve resources and support a healthier environment across all of our communities.

Finding a New Home

One recent initiative has seen unused equipment given a second life in a new home, rather than ending up in landfill.

By selling our used items such as adjustable beds, furniture, mobility aids and washing machines, Mayflower has raised, thus far, \$1,565 while ensuring these valuable resources could continue to be used within the

wider community.

It is a simple but powerful example of how small actions can create meaningful environmental impact.

Greener Gardens

At Mayflower Reservoir, the gardens have also received a generous boost through the donation from Baxter's Tree Solutions – The Home of Treeman & Stumpboy of 14 square metres of mulch, delivering an estimated cost saving of \$2,300.

Beyond the financial benefit, mulch plays an important role in improving soil health, retaining moisture, reducing erosion and supporting healthier plant growth – all while minimising waste.

"Wherever possible, we look for greener alternatives in both our day-to-day operations and our larger projects," says Christina Devine, General Manager of Property & Procurement.





Pictured above: Our team members embraced the theme, making a delightful afternoon for residents.

An Afternoon *Under the Sea*

Residents at Mayflower Brighton were delighted by a joyful Under the Sea themed party that transformed the Harry Williams room into a colourful underwater world.

Three stunning backdrops set the scene, including an animated projection featuring swimming sea turtles, whales and vibrant coral reefs. Gentle sounds of bubbles, sea shanties and whale calls filled the room,

creating a warm and immersive atmosphere.

The celebration featured an Under the Sea themed bingo session with a modern twist.

Each sea creature called was displayed on the big screen, making 2 lively rounds easy to follow and full of fun.

Bingo was followed by an engaging ocean themed quiz with 12 lucky participants winning sweet treats.

Costumes and Creativity

The Care and Leisure team fully embraced the theme,

creating a warm and immersive atmosphere. The celebration featured an Under the Sea themed bingo session with a modern twist. Each sea creature called was displayed on the big screen, making 2 lively rounds easy to follow and full of fun. Bingo was followed by an engaging ocean themed quiz with 12 lucky participants winning sweet treats.

A relaxed finish

The afternoon concluded with a relaxed afternoon tea of fish bites and lemon slice, enjoyed alongside a favourite brew and good company.







HAPPY DIWALI



A Celebration of Light, Colour and Culture at Mayflower Reservoir and Edith Bendall.

The sounds of Bollywood music, the shimmer of colourful saris, and the aroma of fragrant spices filled the air as residents and our teams at each home came together to celebrate Diwali – the Festival of Lights. Each events room was transformed with glowing lights, lanterns, and vibrant colour, creating a joyful and welcoming space.

Residents and team members shared delicious Indian sweets and savouries, enjoyed dancing and music, and celebrated Diwali together. At Mayflower Reservoir, residents were once again dazzled with a performance by bally dancer, Kayla.

Diwali is celebrated by millions of people around the world and represents light, hope, and togetherness.

At Mayflower, events like these are an important way of recognising and respecting cultural diversity, while empowering residents to share and experience other cultural events right in the comfort of their home.





 BRIGHTON

Partners in Music and Community

At Mayflower, family members and volunteers play a vital role in supporting residents to live their lives, their way – and the weekly singalong group at Brighton is a beautiful example of this in action.

The group first began as a relaxed Knit and Chat, with resident Peter and his son, Alan, sharing their love of music by playing together for other residents to enjoy.

The sessions are also supported by Independent Living resident and long-time volunteer Sandy, who helps guide the knitting side of things should residents choose to knit as they sing along - keeping the original spirit of the group alive and ensuring everyone feels included and supported.

Building Community Through Music

Peter, often accompanied by his wife Lynda, is an accomplished jazz musician, known for playing the clarinet and saxophone.

Alan accompanies Peter on the ukulele, bringing a warm and upbeat rhythm to each session. Together, they create an atmosphere that feels more like a family gathering than a formal activity.

Alan says he takes part to support his father's musical passions, but the impact reaches far wider. Residents look forward to the singalong each Tuesday, enjoying the chance to connect, reminisce and share in the joy of music and creativity.

It's a wonderful reminder that when families, volunteers and our team work together, we create meaningful experiences that truly empower residents.



Pictured above: Peter plays the clarinet, with his son, Alan, proudly supporting him, and bottom image, the group fills the lounge room with song and creativity.

Independent Living *Christmas*

Bringing elegance, choice and community together

The Christmas season brought Independent Living community at Mayflower Brighton together for a memorable celebration centred on generosity, connection and togetherness.

The season began with the arrival of a new, generously sized Christmas tree. Residents gathered to decorate it together, supported by the marketing team, with carols playing softly in the background.

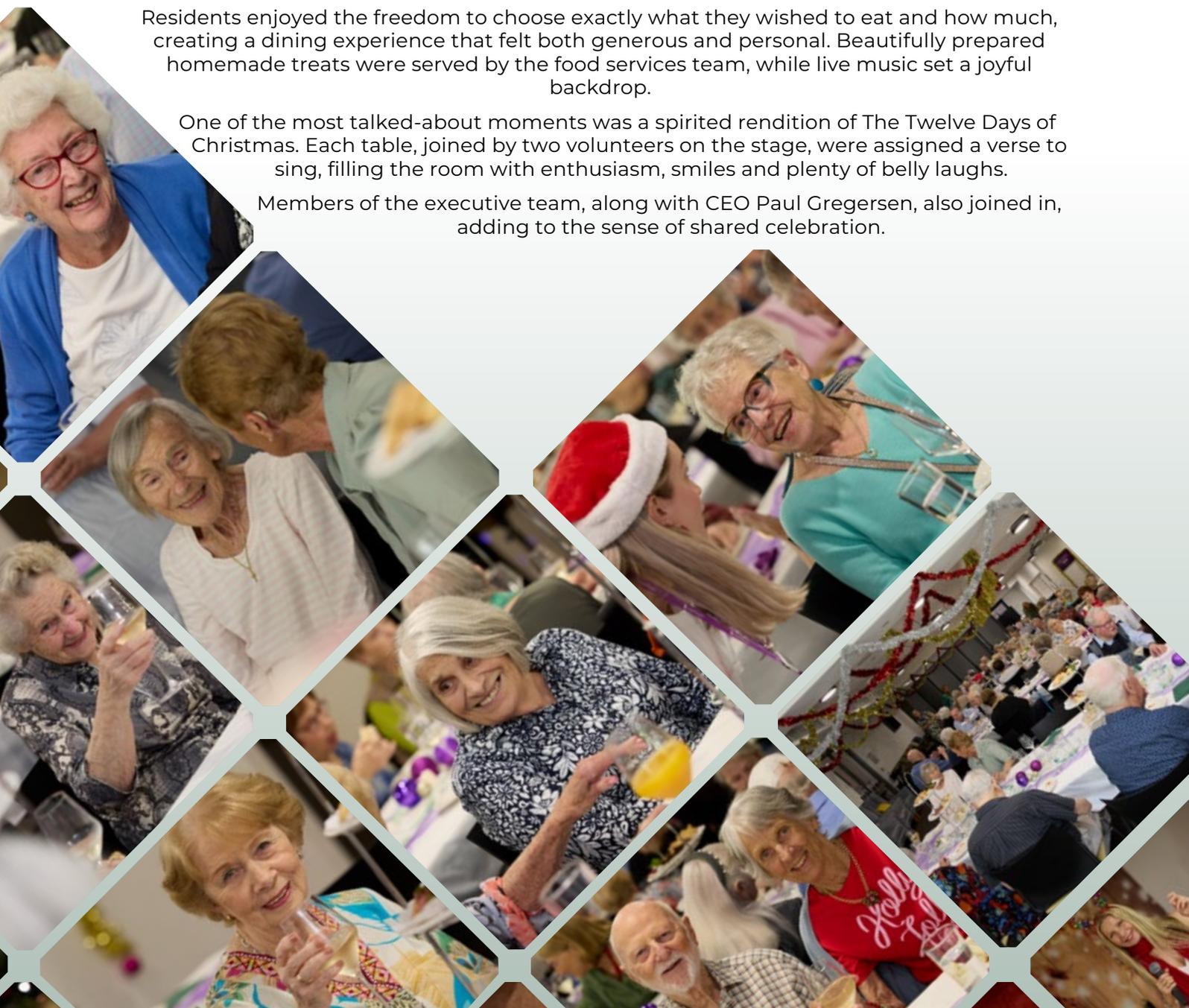
Over a hot cuppa from Café VIBE and fruit mince pies, conversations flowed, laughter was shared and new friendships were formed. Finished in purple, champagne and gold, the tree became a beautiful festive centrepiece, created with care.

The celebrations continued with a Christmas high tea luncheon, a favourite for its relaxed sophistication.

Residents enjoyed the freedom to choose exactly what they wished to eat and how much, creating a dining experience that felt both generous and personal. Beautifully prepared homemade treats were served by the food services team, while live music set a joyful backdrop.

One of the most talked-about moments was a spirited rendition of The Twelve Days of Christmas. Each table, joined by two volunteers on the stage, were assigned a verse to sing, filling the room with enthusiasm, smiles and plenty of belly laughs.

Members of the executive team, along with CEO Paul Gregersen, also joined in, adding to the sense of shared celebration.



An Afternoon with *Lindsay Cuming AM*



Independent Living residents, along with friends and family members, enjoyed a wonderful afternoon as Lindsay Cuming AM, at age 95, presented his latest book, *VALDA – The Eclectic Artist*.

The event saw a marvellous turnout, with attendees gathering in the Harry Williams Room to celebrate the life and artistic legacy of Lindsay's beloved late wife, Valda.

The presentation held everyone's attention, with Lindsay sharing reflections on Valda's extraordinary life and creative journey as both a sculptor and painter. Afternoon tea was served, providing a relaxed setting for conversation and connection, while a curated selection of Valda's artworks was on display for all to enjoy.

Valda, who passed away in 2020 at the age of 90, was recognised as one of Australia's leading contemporary artists and received an OAM in 2019 for her contribution to the visual arts. In 2025 the Melbourne Society of Women Painters and Sculptors, one of the longest running original art groups in Australia, held a Photographic Exhibition of the works of 3 women whom they considered the greatest ever Australian female sculptors. Valda Cuming was one of them.

Valda's work continues to inspire through this beautifully produced book. Proceeds from book and artwork sales support the Epworth Medical Foundation, a cause close to Lindsay's heart.

Copies of *VALDA – The Eclectic Artist* are still available for purchase, and some of Valda's paintings and sculptures are also available.

To purchase the book or artworks, please contact:

Linda Fincke, Epworth Medical Foundation linda.fincke@epworth.org.au or call her on 9426 6354.
Price: \$128 per book plus \$26 postage

Mayflower Christmas Moments

Christmas was celebrated with warmth and togetherness across Mayflower's three homes, bringing residents, loved ones and the wider community together to mark the festive season.

Each home hosted joyful gatherings filled with live music, shared meals and plenty of singing, with carols led by local churches and community organisations adding a familiar and comforting festive soundtrack.

Christmas raffles were held across all homes, creating excitement and laughter as prizes were drawn and shared moments enjoyed. See page 5 for the winners.

At Mayflower Brighton, aged care residents and Independent Living residents came together for a Christmas Spectacular, welcoming family and friends into a room filled with music, conversation and celebration. The Mayflower Choir, led by Music Therapist Zita was the highlight of the event that saw 110-120 people attend.

Mayflower Edith Bendall's festivities featured lively entertainment, colourful drinks and a special visit from Santa, while Mayflower Reservoir's celebrations reflected the heart of the season – friendship, dancing, joy and meaningful connection.

Across all 3 homes, Christmas was less about the calendar date and more about people coming together, sharing stories, and celebrating community in a way that felt genuine and uplifting.







Christmas
Across our Homes

A Neighbourly BBQ Lunch

Sharing food, sunshine & community on Australia Day.

A highlight of summer at Mayflower Brighton is the chance for neighbours to come together and enjoy simple moments over a BBQ lunch.

Independent living residents gathered to share a relaxed meal, easy conversation and plenty of laughter, with the choice of alfresco dining under the verandah or indoors.

The BBQ offered a welcoming way for neighbours to get to know each other socially - no formalities, just good food and friendly company.

The lunch was generously cooked by residents themselves, adding a lovely sense of pride and involvement, and generously hosted by Client Liaison and Services Coordinator Heather, who brought everyone together.

The scent of the BBQ drifted through the garden as plates were passed around and new friendships quietly began to form.

Advance Australia Fair

The afternoon also included a singalong of the Australian National Anthem, creating a meaningful shared moment that many enjoyed together.

Conversation flowed easily, with the hot topic of the day being the anticipated refurbishment of facilities, hallways and shared spaces. See page 3 for more information.

Not ready for the day to end, John shared, "I had a fabulous time, I was one of the last to leave!"

The success of events like these reflect the belonging and community of independent living at Mayflower Brighton, where people feel supported to connect, share stories and enjoy everyday experiences, right outside their own front doors.





Celebrating Australia!

With a full week of Australian themed activities and events

Everyone at Mayflower Edith Bendall enjoyed a lively week of activities celebrating all things Australian, bringing people together through food, games, music and plenty of shared laughter.

The week reflected the many ways people connect with Australian culture - from sporting traditions to classic comfort food, and simple moments spent enjoying each other's company.

One of the highlights was an Australian Open themed tennis day, where the lounge room was transformed into a lively Tennis arena.

Residents took part in friendly matches while others cheered from the sidelines.

The day's champions were Gayle and Carol, who played brilliantly and earned plenty of applause. Our team members also dressed in their 'Aussie gear,' joining in the fun.

Plenty of Fun and Games

The celebrations included light-hearted games such as beach ball toss and a thong throwing competition, encouraging movement and laughter.

Pictured left James proudly held a tray of freshly made damper rolls, prepared during a group activity guided by Care and Leisure Coordinator Natalie - a meaningful nod to Australian food traditions.

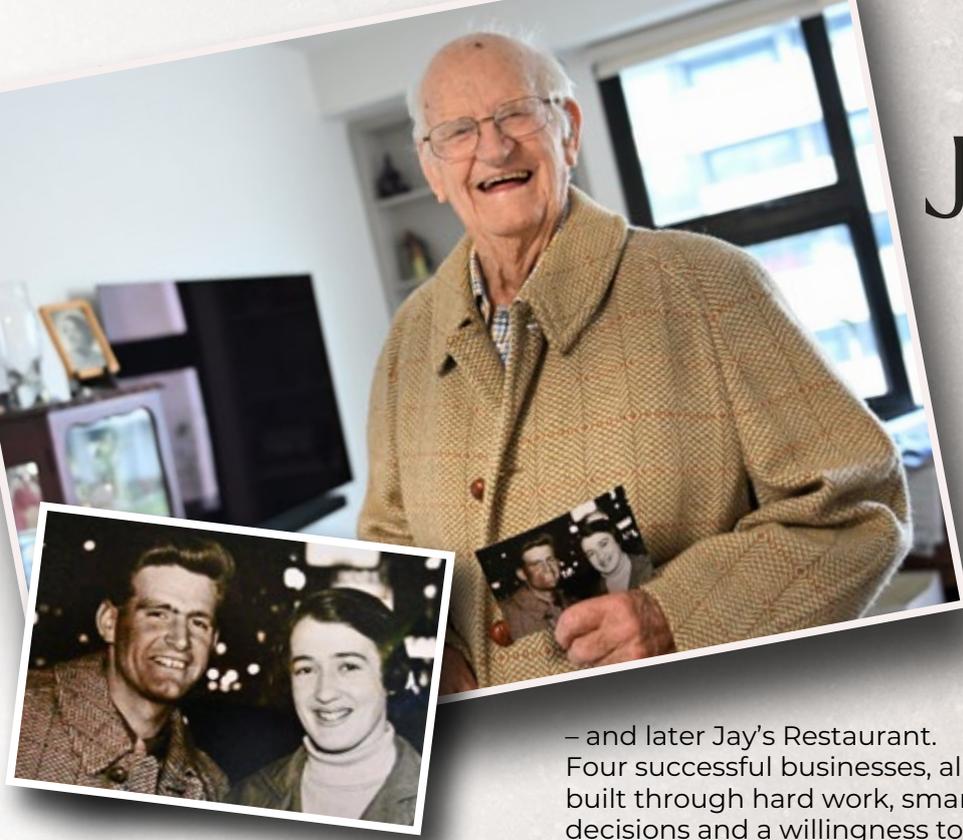
The week concluded with a classic Aussie barbecue for Australia Day, cooked outdoors and enjoyed together in the comfort of air-conditioning indoors.

From sport to food, it was a wonderful reflection of Australian traditions and community at Mayflower Edith Bendall.



John's Story

Life Well Lived: Celebrating John Clarke at 90



At the end of February, Mayflower Brighton Independent Living resident John will celebrate a remarkable milestone – his 90th birthday.

And if there is one thing that becomes clear when you sit down with John, it is that his life has been full of curiosity, courage and a quiet determination to make the most of every opportunity.

John's story as an entrepreneur began early.

At just 20 years old, he opened his first business – a milk bar in Burnie, Tasmania, aptly named John's. Even then, his entrepreneurial instincts were clear.

Alongside the traditional milk bar favourites, John introduced freshly prepared steaks and hamburgers to the menu – a move that was well ahead of its time and quickly proved popular with locals.

By 25, he and his wife, Sue, were running the Federal Hotel in Wynyard, followed by Burnie Wine and Spirits – a store regarded by locals as the precursor to Dan Murphy's. "The store was huge!" says John,

– and later Jay's Restaurant. Four successful businesses, all built through hard work, smart decisions and a willingness to take a few risks along the way.

"I wanted a business," John says simply. "So I just got on with it."

That drive paid off. John was able to retire at the age of 50 – a rare achievement even 40 years ago – and spent the next decades enjoying a life rich in travel, family and simple pleasures, including 30 years escaping the Tasmanian winters for Noosa.

A Lifetime of Love with Sue

At the heart of John's life was his wife Sue, whom he met at just 16 years old. It was love at first sight. They married in 1958, and went on to raise four children – David, Angela, Sally and Jason – all of whom have built successful lives of their own. Sue worked alongside John in their hotel years, managing the kitchen and rooms while John ran the bar.

John speaks of Sue with deep affection. She passed away peacefully in 2021, 18 months after the couple had moved together into a Mayflower independent living apartment. They made the move from Burnie so their daughters could be closer and more involved in their care.

Since then, Mayflower has become very much home for John. He is an active member of the community, regularly

attending men's group, playing bridge, joining bus trips and taking part in social events. Asked what he loves most about living at Mayflower, John laughs and says, "It's got two great assets – the swimming pool and Heather." Heather is Mayflower Brighton's Client Liaison and Services Coordinator, and a familiar, friendly face to many in the retirement community.

Swimming, in fact, is one of John's lifelong passions. He has swum every single day for over 40 years – whether in the ocean, a pool, or back in his beloved Noosa, where he and Sue spent winters overlooking the bay.

When asked about the secret to a long life, John doesn't hesitate.

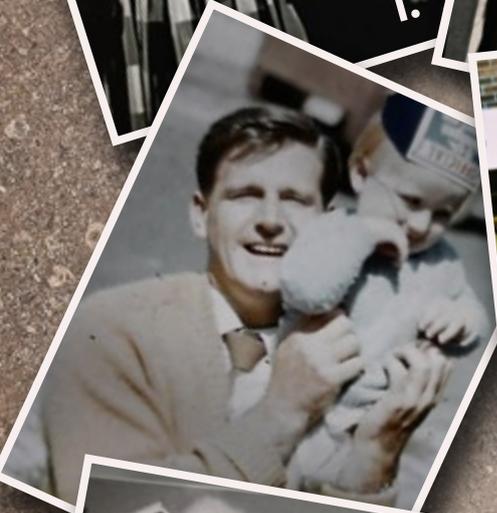
"Be kind," he says. "Work hard, take a few risks – but not too many!"

As John turns 90, his story is a beautiful reminder that a fulfilling life is built on relationships, purpose, movement, and a good sense of humour.

At Mayflower, John continues to live his life his way – connected, active, and very much part of the community.

Pictured top left: John wears his (very heavy!) woollen coat he has owned since he was just 22.

Pictured right, the highlights:
1: John and Sue around the age they first met and fell in love.
2: John and Sue on their wedding
3: John's Milkbar in Burnie
4: Sue and John in Noosa enjoying the sunset and warmer weather.
5: The Federal Hotel, located in Wynyard, Tasmania.
6: John and Sue attending the races in Melbourne.
7: John and Sues incredible home in Burnie, overlooking the beach.



Social Media *roundup*

Social Moments Worth Sharing

Step into our collection of special moments captured from across Mayflower.

These images, shared on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, highlight life in our 3 Aged Care homes, and Independent Living community - celebrating living life, your way.



Maggie and Angela on NYE at Mayflower Reservoir.



Australia Day BBQ lunch was enjoyed at Mayflower Reservoir

From smiling faces to lively events, our social media pages offer a window into life across Mayflower.

Join us as we celebrate the stories, events and connections that make our community so special.



Suzy Singer delights Independent Living residents



Olivia Newton-John Impersonator at Independent Living concert



Elton John Impersonator at Independent Living concert



Wreaths gifted from St Leonard's Primary School Kids



June and Frankie during Art Therapy at Mayflower Brighton



Dr Daly places his raffle ticket



Robert on Remembrance Day

A Lifestyle of Fun, Meaning & Connection



Ladies enjoy afternoon tea in the courtyard at Reservoir



Carol enjoys the lush gardens in Pascoe Vale



All smiles! The new Independent Living tree decorating committee



The tree was a beautiful sight!



Melinda's glorious Angel collection on display at Brighton



Kathleen at a local Cafe



Guardian Kinder visits Brighton

