



princescourt  
COMMUNITY LIVING



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

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# WELCOME

Our people are supported to create a life that is truly theirs. Their abilities and differences are celebrated. They are encouraged to pursue their interests, stay active and connect with others in ways they feel comfortable.

Princes Court is a community-owned and not-for-profit organisation, managed by a Board of Management, supported by nearly 130 staff.

Princes Court Homes provides care for people who need residential, respite and specialised dementia care and Princes Court Village provides secure, independent living with many activities offered.

Princes Court Homes has been part of the Mildura rural community for more than 64 years, where generations from the same families are proud of their lengthy involvement and their contribution either as staff, volunteers, visiting family or as a resident. This personal connection is just one of the satisfying encounters staff mention at various meetings and to Board members, as they care for and interact with the 100 residents, many of whom are family, neighbours and well-known local residents.

**Princes Court is a vibrant community of residents, staff, volunteers and their families bonded by a belief that everyone deserves to feel happy, safe, valued and respected.**

We offer a full range of living and care options to suit residents and families. If needs change, we can continue to support residents by adjusting the level of care.

Surrounded by beautiful gardens and courtyards, the secure facility accommodates 98 permanent and two respite residents.

Our residents are kept active, both socially and physically through a schedule of daily activities, such as exercise, singing, International days and when able, bus excursions and activities with many young visitors.

Our hospitality team, provides a seasonal menu featuring fresh local produce and caters to all choices and dietary needs.

At Prince Court Village residents have the opportunity to do as many, or as little of these as they would like. Located in the heart of Mildura, the village is close to all types of services, shops and transport. It is fully landscaped and has been architecturally designed with retirement living in mind.

The organisation is managed by a board of nine members with a depth of extensive professional backgrounds in finance, business management, social work, education and nursing.

Each Board member participates in a number of sub committees and working parties to ensure their expertise is shared widely.

Specific committees include, clinical governance, finance, audit and risk, planning and building and remuneration and skills development.



# OUR VISION

Excellence in  
care and  
lifestyle

# OUR MISSION

We provide choice in high quality and secure aged and residential care and independent living, responding to changing community needs with innovative services and support

# OUR VALUES

Excellence in  
care and  
lifestyle

# CHAIR REPORT

## "LIFE ISN'T ABOUT WAITING FOR THE STORM TO PASS...IT'S ABOUT LEARNING TO DANCE IN THE RAIN. — VIVIAN GREENE

*Key message: Agility and flexibility adjusting to rapid and frequent changes – community of PC residents, families, staff and Directors working together*

COVID19 continues to be part of our lives. Since March 2020 we have learned so much about ways of working and keeping in touch in tough and restricted times to keep as all safe and well.

- Vaccinations now available.
- Deeper understanding and protocols on infection control.
- Managing visitors to Aged Care better

Here at Princes Court Ltd, we have learned to be agile, flexible and resilient. The rules have changed so often and yet we have managed yet another year free of the virus that is manipulating all of our lives even with cases popping up in the wider community.

The Board has successfully worked with our CEO Jenny Garonne and Director Care Services (DCS), Sianne Nicholds in the management and implementation of policies to support all these changes. To that end we thank Jenny and Sianne and their staff for their year of exceptional services and total commitment to Princes Court residents and their families.

I (first of all) want to express my very sincere appreciation and thanks to the residents, resident families, our volunteer and PCH community as a whole for the amazing patience, tolerance and assistance in keeping living at Princes Court safe, healthy, productive and fun.

Next, I would like to congratulate Jenny Garonne our CEO for her leadership through yet another year of challenges. Her positive attitude and steady can do attitude stands so well in such adverse times.

The Princes Court staff and community have achieved amazing lifestyle and activity with residents, staff and community.

Just check out our face book page. Week after week, filled with wonderful news and entertaining events and creativity.

Through Jenny's many networks, we have seen time and time again, high quality consultation on many issues provide excellent solutions.


I would also like to congratulate Sianne Nicholds (DCS) for the long hours and enduring work co-ordinating staff, residents and visitors through such a crazy year.

There has been an increasing demand and overlay of changing rules. We have seen a wave of change in delivering personalised resident centred care. Jenny and Sianne have managed through all this diversity to deliver a team of care workers that continue to meet the challenges of the day and ensure our resident health and safety. They have both delivered a professional approach implementing high standards, which has resulted in a quality of care that we can be proud of.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Board for their commitment and hard work in making sure our strategic plans are fulfilled and our business progresses with innovation and on a financially sustainable basis despite the challenges imposed from external forces there have been some significant achievements.

- We have met face to face or via zoom monthly during the reporting year.
- We have set up a new governance structure to better manage the growth and challenges going forward This year as the financial year clicked over, we became registered as a company limited by Guarantee. This new corporate entity ensures the future growth of Princes Court Ltd and supports the large business Princes Court has become.

- We have been successful in securing an authority to supply home care services to our community. We have engaged a Home Care Co-ordinator to get the business into compliance shape before we launch the Princes Court at Home Services. We look forward to launching this business later this year. Village residents are already taking the opportunity to participate in a trial program.
  - In addition to our continued refurbishment program, we are very pleased to have recently been granted \$4.5m capital grant by the Federal Government as a result of over two years of research and planning, engaging expert aged care consultants to inform and guide us in the process. This coming year will see the finalisation of plans for a new 50 to 60 bed, high care facility. The three-year project will provide Princes Court aged care, a new state of the art building that will enable us to provide an even higher level of care to your loved ones. I also wish to
  - thank "Mallee Living Histories" again for the work they have done, recording the memories of our residents both in the homes and the village. The success of their second book also resulted in Princes Court receiving recognition for the collaboration with the writer's group, accepting an award at the Australia Day Awards.
- We also received recognition in the
- Australian Training Awards as one of three finalists for a collaboration with SuniTAFE and three other aged care providers in delivering leadership training into aged care.



At Princes Court Village our residents continue to live independent lives in a village environment.

We continue with our refurbishment program during the year, ensuring internal upgrades are completed, where necessary.

We welcome several new residents during the year. Strong interest in Village living continues. Thank you to Cheryl Reberger of First National Real Estate, Collie and Tierney for her assistance in the promotion and securing contracts for Princes Court Village.

The village community garden has flourished. Activities in the community centre have escalated and village residents are very busy.

Finally, we say thank you to two retiring board members. First of all, on behalf of the Board I wish to thank Paula Gordon for her years of service on the Princes Court Board. Paula has a wealth of experience as chair and directors of many boards. During our transition to becoming a company limited by guarantee, Paula led the challenges in adopting a new constitution and policies that back that major change to our structure. Paula has agreed to continue that work for a while to come yet.

Secondly, on behalf of the Board, I would also like to say thank you to Fiona Weir for her time on the board. Fiona came to the Board with her wealth of knowledge in clinical care. Strengthening the clinical governance committee with her experience in nursing care and palliative care. During COVID19 Fiona's professional life has become overwhelmed with demand on her services and Fiona has had to reduce her time with us, to concentrate on her work.

We are very excited to welcome onto the Board, two new members, Steven Fumberger and Kevin O'Neill. Both Steven and Kevin bring to the board specialist skills, enhancing our collective board skills.



## LIFE GOVERNOR

The Board has elected to approve two new members on our Life Governor Honour roll. I have the great honour of announcing past board members, Doug Tonge and the Late Bill Nicholl as recipients of Life Governors for Princes Court Homes Inc (PCH Inc).

Doug and Bill collectively served more than 20 years on the PCH Inc board.

## THE LATE BILL NICHOL

Amongst many achievements on the Board, Bill headed up the Building and Projects Committee. Achieving the new kitchen, dining and activities precinct. His consideration for the community of PCH included his insistence that we add a coffee shop. Bill was visionary when it came to buildings. He introduced experts from our community ensuring we had local knowledge and employing local business. Bill was also a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. His building of governance in Princes COURT Board meetings consistently delivered ongoing improvement.

## DOUG TONGE

Doug held the position as Chair of the Board for several years. His many achievements whilst on the board, included establishing the Clinical Governance Committee. This Committee brought the clinical care team closer to board members and established numerous improvements in care. Doug was a great community person and his wide community connections stood well with our organisation delivering opportunities and building reputation enormously.

To the Board, to Jenny CEO and to Sianne DCS, to all the staff, to the residents, to the families and friends and to our community, Thank you.

You are all our Hero's..... In adversity you all shine.....

Chair

Lyn Heaysman

# CEO REPORT

## **“PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER IN A STRONG COMMUNITY WITH A SHARED GOAL AND A COMMON PURPOSE MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE” TOM VILSACK**

The last twelve months have rushed past, with many achievements occurring during the year and COVID 19 continuing to impose additional challenges in how we go about our daily living whether in the Home, the Village or in our own homes.

Winning the 2020 National Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) Excellence in Age Services Awards last November was a standout moment for the organisation and recognised the efforts of everyone in providing the quality care and everyday lifestyle in the Home and Village as well as the innovative projects and initiatives that were created. For our regional organisation to win against such strong competition from aged care providers right across Australia, was a wonderful achievement and I thank you all for your contribution to this success.

This event provided a much-needed boost in the year that was very challenging. Dealing with all the additional elements of a COVID 19 pandemic has stretched our resilience and tested us more than ever before in our family and working lives. We have managed with everyone's efforts and now vaccinated we can look forward to a way of living with COVID and doing a lot more very soon.

I would like to concentrate in this annual report on the importance of the people that have contributed to our Princes Court community, that have gone out of their way to provide that additional love and caring to help, reach out and find new ways and new ideas to improve everyone's lives and at the same time find some normality in every day.

Our residents are at the centre of everything that happens at Princes Court and we all work together to keep safe, at the same time live fulfilling lives at both the Homes and the Village. Everyone plays a part together in assisting and making this possible.

At the Village activities continued whenever they could and we now have a revitalised vegetable garden and a new rotunda. For much of the year, our Village Coordinator was constantly checking to see what COVID requirements applied, alerting Village residents and organising regular activities when they could be run. She would jump in and help residents to stay safe, ordering groceries on line and ordering the meals through the Home's kitchen whenever there was a need. Our Maintenance staff member also launched into a project to enhance the vegetable garden providing an increased supply of fresh vegetables for everyone and a new rotunda is awaiting an official opening.

At the Homes, given the COVID aged care visitor restrictions with many residents missing families, friends and outings residents turned to each other, going out of their way to help with tight bonds and new and stronger friendships developed.

A number of residents took the lead in keeping spirits high by telling jokes, playing music and encouraging new residents to join in with exercise groups and the many other activities on offer in-house. Groups are often seen just sitting outside together, enjoying each other's company.

The lifestyle team have played a significant role in organising activities every day and numerous diverse and interesting events to look forward to such as armchair travel to different parts of the world, mad hatter tea parties, 10,000 step challenges, Olympics and singalongs next to the firepit.

The lifestyle staff must have rooms full of costumes at their houses, given the different outfits they constantly dress in which photos in the newsletters can attest to.

A whole new area of activity arose with increased use of IT, tablets and phones which made a world of difference to staying connected with families and to feel loved and appreciated.

Under the leadership of a new Executive Chef, the food services continue to increase in quality adding diversity and interest in the menu with the dining room staff making meals in the Home a dining experience. Meals were also made available on order for our Village.

Families, who were also restricted in their lives in the community, endured long time periods where "face to face" contact with their loved ones at Princes Court was not possible due to the changing COVID aged care requirements, have also contributed and made a difference. Thank you, families, for your consideration and adapting to the different conditions. The notes, photos, gifts, telephone/facetime calls and regulated visits were greatly appreciated, as were the supporting comments and encouraging well wishes passed on regularly to staff working under the ever-changing conditions in-house donning and doffing protective gear, especially in the heat of last summer.

Every day, in so many ways, the clinical and supporting staff provided genuine love and commitment to the residents, going that extra mile. Returning to work on days off to cut hair, finish shifts and take someone to a medical appointment, visiting residents when in hospital, going for walks and even surprising them with special treats from time to time. Staff also helped with props, to make events even bigger and better and spent time on days off to help with decorations.

There are many staff that have worked additional shifts, extended their shifts or worked additional days given number of staff in isolation or with last minute sick leave issues, just to make sure we have enough staff on hand to cater for everyone. Notably, the staff have been there to make sure the residents are loved, their family members are supported and their Princes Court colleagues are ok.

This year in particular, in addition to the overwhelming concerns for resident's health and safety and endless COVID requirements that continued changing at a moment's notice the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Service outcomes increased the administrative workload on our clinical staff considerably with new Serious Incident Response Scheme and Restrictive Practice requirements. While these requirements are important, no funding for additional administration resources were forthcoming which added to the already steep cost increases due to COVID such as PPE equipment, IT upgrades, additional staff requirements and costs.

Special thanks to Lyn Heaysman, Chair for her valuable support, for her leadership, vision and determination to see Princes Court succeed. To the Board who have been extremely supportive and even with the understanding that COVID was going to produce additional costs, have still made decisions to provide the needed upgrades in infrastructure and the environment for residents, staff and families to live, work and socialise into the future. This includes extending the continuum of care with homecare services set to commence later this year and a major building project taking shape thanks to the successful application for a building grant \$4.5 million that was announced by the Federal Government through the 2020 Aged Care Approval Round Funding.

It has been a year of continual change, working and living differently but also with some great achievements. Significant thanks need to go to all areas of our community, everyone has contributed more than ever this year, we have all pulled together, have been resilient and have achieved success. We have so much to look forward to in the coming years and with continued dedication and love for what we do with and on behalf of residents, our colleagues and our community we will be an organisation that is ready to embrace the future together.

**JENNY GARONNE**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
B. BUS, EMPA, FCPA, GAICD

# OUR BOARD



## **LYN HEAYSMAN** **CHAIR**

Current Board Chair, Member of the Clinical Governance Committee, Finance, Risk & Audit Committee, Planning and Building Committee, Village Agreements & Compliance Working Group.

Lyn is a Financial Adviser with over 25 years' experience and specialises in providing aged care advice. She has achieved her Masters in Applied Finance and completed the Directors course of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Lyn is a long-time member AICD and AFA. Lyn has held three other community board positions in the not-for-profit sector over a span of 30 years.



## **PETER HARTMAN** **BOARD MEMBER**

Deputy Chair, Chair of the Building and Planning and Remuneration and Board Skills Development Committee, Member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and Policy Working Group.

Peter is a partner in Southern Cross Business Advisors (SCBA), a local taxation and advisory service to small and medium size business.

Peter grew up in Mildura and after completing his university studies, worked for a chartered accounting firm in Melbourne. He returned to Mildura in 1995 and has been a Partner in SCBA since 2005.

Peter is an active community member as an AFL Regional Commissioner and Chairman of the Settlers Junior Cricket Club. He is a Life Member of the Bambill Football Club, the Millewa Football League and the Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council. Peter has been a Princes Court board member for four years.



## **TONY HICKEY** **BOARD MEMBER**

Board Treasurer, Chair Finance, Risk & Audit Committee, Member of the Planning and Building Committee and Village Agreements & Compliance Working Group

ony is a Partner in Findex/Crowe Horwath Mildura and has over 30 years' experience in the public practice and the agribusiness industry. He has a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Economics) and is a Member of the Institute of Management Consultants. Tony's passion is helping clients to achieve their business, financial and personal goals. Tony works with clients from a range of industries, particularly those relating to the horticultural, broad acre, cropping /livestock, aged care, solar, manufacturing, water and viticulture industries.

A proud Sunraysia resident with strong family, professional and sporting ties in the region provides Tony with an understanding of the key issues facing regional people and their businesses.



## **PAULA GORDAN**

### **BOARD MEMBER**

Member of the Remuneration and Board Skill Development Committee, Clinical Governance Committee and Chair of the Policy Working Group.

Teacher and sociologist, graduate of Ballarat Teachers College and Monash University. Paula's professional career included teaching, research, communications, health promotion and rural policy development including improved funding formulae for bush nursing hospitals. Paula has extensive experience in community development including the establishment of Sunraysia Cancer Resources.

Now retired, Paula continues to be involved in the community as a member of not-for-profit boards. She has had a long involvement with Princes Court with her grandmother being a resident and her mother enjoying respite for a period after having spent many years fund raising for the organisation.



## **PAULA BRUCE**

### **BOARD MEMBER**

Member of the Clinical Governance Committee, Funding / Philanthropy Working Group, Policy Working Group and Community Liaison Working Group.

Paula has had a long and varied career in the fields of health, mental health and education. Paula holds a Bachelor of Arts, University of Adelaide: Bachelor Social Work, La Trobe University and Master of Social Work, La Trobe University.

Previously working for the Mildura Base Hospital, the Mildura Homes for the Aged (now Princes Court), as well as her own private practice, Paula's community development work has been extensive and varied over many years.

Prior to retirement she was the Head of the School of Social Work and Social Policy at La Trobe University, Mildura Campus. As well as her Board duties, Paula is an active Rotarian.



## **CHRIS FORBES**

### **BOARD MEMBER**

Chair of the Clinical Governance Committee

Chris Forbes holds a Bachelor and Masters in Social Work and has been working within the Non-Government / Government sector for over 30 years including direct practice, community development, management, clinical supervision, research and training. Chris is currently the General Manager at the Education, Training and Research Unit of Mallee Family Care and has been a lecturer for Latrobe University Mildura in Social Work for the past 10 years





## **MARIA CARRAZZA** **BOARD MEMBER**

Member, Planning and Building Committee. Member of the Funding / Philanthropy Working Group and the Community Liaison & Volunteers Working Group.

Maria is a business owner with over 25 years' experience, who understands the operations of a competitive, dynamic and highly regulated business, including finance and compliance with state government regulations for gaming and liquor licences.

In 2017 Maria became a Board Member of Mildura Regional Development, recently becoming Deputy Chair. Maria serves on the MRCC Audit Committee and School Advisory Council for St Joseph's College Mildura, as well as working and volunteering in community organisations.

Over the last seven years, Fiona has been an integral member of the Dareton Specialist Palliative Care team, providing palliative care to the residents of far west New South Wales.

## **STEVEN MORRIS** **BOARD MEMBER**



Member of the Planning and Building Committee. Member of the Village Agreements and Compliance Working Group.

Steven has three years' experience as a Lawyer at Holcroft Lawyers with a Bachelor of Laws and Legal Practice and a Bachelor of Commerce (Finance). Steven undertakes work in estate planning and commercial law matters.

Prior to transitioning to law Steven worked as a qualified chef and restaurateur throughout Australia for over 15 years.

## **FIONA WEIR** **BOARD MEMBER**



Member of the Clinical Governance Committee. Member of the Policy Working Group.

Fiona has been nursing for 34 years, commencing her general nurse training at the old Mildura Base Hospital, and followed by approximately ten years in metro Melbourne hospitals.

Fiona has been working in community nursing for NSW Health for the past 18 years. During this time, she was contracted by the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine as a Forensic Nurse Examiner, this role provided service to the Mallee Sexual Assault Unit.



# PRINCESS COURT VILLAGE

At Princes Court Village our residents continue to live independent lives in a village environment.

This year, despite the many lockdowns and restrictions, we have welcomed several new residents to their new home at Princes Court Village.

Covid-19 has continued to permeate the past 12 months with restrictions and lockdowns, but village community life has shown its advantages. It has seen us become adept at living life to the






fullest when the opportunities present themselves and taking every moment we can to catch up with friends and neighbours and enjoy the simplest things like catching up for coffee and a chat, eating a meal together or gardening.

Paul Renouf, Maintenance/Groundsman and the Garden Committee have continued to plant new life into the communal garden areas of the Village. The front reception area is looking full of spring colour and vibrancy and the new native garden area at the Village entrance, complete with bird bath, has been a huge hit.

The big Village project this year has been the revamping of the Village Community Vegie Patch.

This has seen new and improved raised garden beds, grand archways to all three entrances and a 5-star pergola with seating and tables. Residents are enjoying helping themselves to the abundant offerings from the communal vegie patches and it is fast becoming a place to gather.





As always, whenever restrictions allowed, the residents came together for a catered meal. This year, fun was had with some themed nights. A Hawaiian theme, saw grass skirts, leis, fruit punch and palm trees brighten the dining room. A Nautical themed night saw a fabulous window dressing display of fish, sharks and a whale with a sea of blue and white decorations through the dining room and Christmas in July saw a snowman in amidst the Christmas decorations followed up by a traditional Christmas dinner complete with Christmas pudding.

The Mallee Living Histories series of books, a Princes Court initiative, A third book is currently underway in collaboration with other local aged care facilities. Village writers and editors are to be congratulated in their efforts as readers delight and learn of different life experiences.

After many cancellations due to restrictions, we were able to put the bus to some use this year with monthly shopping trips to Mildura Central Plaza and Woodsies Gem Shop, where lunch and browsing through the gift shop was enjoyed. The residents look forward to being able to utilise the bus more in the future.

Exercise, Tai Chi and dance classes have been well attended over the past 12 months and are always the first things back on the schedule when restrictions allow to remain fit and active.

The spacious Village grounds and communal garden areas have helped residents to feel safe and secure, without being isolated and lonely during the uncertain times of lockdown or restrictive movement. It remains a place that 'feels like home'.

# SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE FINALISTS AND AWARDS

Following from the success on winning the National Leading Aged Services Australia Excellence in Aged Care last October 2020, the organisation continued to achieve in collaborative awards.

## **WINNER MILDURA AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD FOR EVENT/PROJECT - MALLEE LIVING HISTORIES**

Princes Court and Mallee's Living Histories Committee won the Mildura Australia Day Award for Event/Project. This was an acknowledgement of the contribution from so many including the wonderful storytellers, the volunteer writers, Monash University and the Committee that makes things happen.

Book Three is underway with additional storytellers from Jacaranda Village, Chaffey Aged Care and Murray House.

<https://www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Latest-News/Australia-Day-Awards-celebrate-outstanding-achievements>

## **FINALIST IN NATIONAL TRAINING AWARDS FOR INDUSTRY COLLABORATION AWARD**

A great honour to be only one of three finalists in the Australian Training Awards for the Industry Collaboration Award with the Aged Care Leadership Development Collaboration involving SuniTAFE, Chaffey Aged Care, Jacaranda Village and Murray House. The collaborative was chosen from the national winners of the different state awards. The program was extremely successful with 30 staff members across the region completed the course.

<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/sunitafe-aged-care-leadership-development-collaboration>

## **FINALIST IN THE VICTORIAN COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS FOR EMPLOYER EXCELLENCE IN AGED CARE**

Princes Court was one of four finalists in the Employer Excellence in Aged Care. Being acknowledge as a finalist in the Victorian Regional Awards illustrated the quality of care and services that we provide at Princes Court and the contribution to excellence in our sector.

# SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHERS

## MALLEE LIVING HISTORIES

IN CONJUNCTION WITH MILDURA WRITERS' GROUP, WITH SUPPORT FROM MONASH UNIVERSITY AND A NUMBER OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Despite major challenges with residents being unable to communicate face-to-face through the constant visitor regulations, Mallee Living Histories second book of resident stories was launched on 12 November 2020. This celebrated the lives of the 14 resident storytellers (eight from the Village and six from the Homes) as shared with community writers.

This project has been very successful providing an opportunity for residents to tell their story and create a tangible way to link with the community enhancing the lives of both story tellers and writers. Vernon Knight's initiation and commitment to leading this project has been extremely strong and the third book is nearing completion with a launch to be announced soon. The first two books captured 29 stories and a further 15 are now nearing completion with a plan to publish Book 3 at the end of 2021.

The community partnerships and support that have been forged are continuing to grow through this small project. Contributors to the project for Books 1, 2 and 3 include Mildura Health Private Hospital, Mildura RSL, Bendigo Community Bank, Monash University, Chaffey Age Care, Collie and Tierney, TASC Petroleum, Mildura Rural City, Rotary Club of Mildura, private individuals and one anonymous (but substantial) supporter.

The project has attracted keen interest ...

- There have been numerous articles published in local papers
- Some stories have featured on ABC Mildura-Swan Hill
- The project was featured on ABC's Weekend Breakfast
- Presentations have been made to a number of organisations including OPAN and LASA
- Monash Health undertook a review of the project
- The Monash Review actually changed the training of young doctors in relation to the care of older folk
- The project was named Mildura's Community Project of the Year on Australia Day, 2021.
- Parliamentary Secretary for Volunteers and Carers made a visit to Princes Court to meet with writers and storytellers and convey his support. Over fifty community members (writers and storytellers and interested residents) attended when he announced the Victorian Government's plan to commence a similar project and he thanked 'Mallee Living Histories' for "leading the way".



The project was also included in the LASA online National Conference as an E presentation. A video production assisted to explain the program and the importance of this for residents to tell their story with support and companionship while the writers share their skill and the enjoyment.

The first two books, legacies of valued senior community members and captured histories are available through Princes Court Village, online through our bookstore and Collins Bookshop in Langtree Avenue.

We now have a complement of 20 writers and Book 3 will incorporate the stories of residents at Jacaranda Village, Chaffey Age Care, Murray House and an elderly lady living alone in her own home given her husband is in Chaffey. We hope to extend the project to include more seniors living alone as COVID continues to be an isolating factor. COVID has obviously been an enormous challenge and the ability to maintain the project is testament to the dedication of the writers. Thanks to the financial support we receive from the community, the project is totally self-funding. It even managed to purchase three laptops for Princes Court to facilitate 'conversations' with storytellers, in the absence of face-to-face contact.

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## **AGED CARE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

COLLABORATION WITH SUNITAFE, CHAFFEY AGED CARE, JACARANDA VILLAGE AND MURRAY HOUSE

Collaboration with three other aged care facilities to offer 30 staff across the region an opportunity to complete Certificate IV in Leadership and Management with SuniTAFE with funding through Department of Education. The course was delivered on-site across the aged care facilities and new ideas were taken back to share and implement.

## **OTHER CONNECTIONS**

Princes Court continued to connect with many organisations across the region to advance community connections, care service delivery and enhance the lives of the residents. These include several education and research providers, Mildura Base Public Hospitals, Generations Music Together, allied health providers, other aged care facilities, Murray PHN, Victorian Police, Mildura Rural City Council, LASA, Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), Mildura Writers' Group, RSL, Legacy, Mildura Private Hospital and many other organisations.

## **IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND SAFETY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY**

The organisation continues to embrace and upgrade digital technology, with My Emergency Doctor, Medsig on tablets, resident telephones through digital phone system (reducing costs), and residents using tablets to connect with families. Several staff moved off site during lockdowns and the technology was secured to create a flexible environment to do this.

Over the last twelve months staff undertook a major undertaking to establish a new finance and human resources software program that will provide the organisation with the data capacity to expand the business, with homecare services commencing soon. At the same time create new efficiencies and improved information collection for enhanced management and board decision making.

The new entrance gate will be in place in the next couple of months that will allow residents to be transported to/from the comfort of the reception area and also provide additional security. The visitor assistance technology SINE has been implemented that helps to reduce the time it takes for entrance permission clearances allowing for many screening questions to be completed prior to entering the facility, improve the time that residents and staff expend in the attestation, reduce visitor assistant's time, print out visitor badges and improve the documentation on who is at the site at any time.

# INFRA STRUCTURE

Even though the organisation experienced high costs due to COVID, the Board continued to commit strategically to ongoing improvements at both the Homes and the Village. This included routine upgrade of individual units both at the Homes and the Village (12 units at Homes and four major renovations when residents moved in at the Village. Seven unit's carpets were replaced and new window dressings were hung in four other units at the Village.

In addition to the ongoing bedroom and bathroom renovations at the Homes, Waratah Unit received new floor coverings in both the kitchen and lounge room areas.

While new window dressings were provided in over thirty bedrooms in the high care units at the Homes.

As part of the ongoing upgrade program our special care units, A K Harvey and Rotary, a fresh new look and upgrade, painting occurred, upgrade to curtains and 14 new aged care specific designed armchairs were purchased and the residents are very happy and find the armchairs very comfortable.

Outside amenities have also been improved with additional landscaping and new seating area completed in preparation for an opening of the Fountain Café at some stage in the future. New fencing has also been erected and new barbeque equipment will be acquired soon for family barbeques to occur outside the dining area.

The Board have been diligently working on the plans for new buildings that will provide welcoming efficient facilities to replace the over thirty-year-old facilities, looking ahead for the next thirty years.

The first priority building site included the potential acquisition of a small parcel of S.C. Mills Reserve and a potential partnership with Mildura Rural City Council. A submission and a presentation were provided as background information to the Council to gain access to the land. Although this strategy did not come to fruition, the Board are considering two alternative locations and with the announcement of a \$4.5 million grant from the Federal Government, a 50-bed facility (Stage One) will now become a reality.



# QUALITY OF CARE

Princes Court is proud of the quality of care and the lifestyle that is afforded the residents. This year has been very challenging in keeping residents safe and being prepared for any COVID 19 outbreaks. Compliance with COVID 19 audits, updating of plans and constant changes with the requirements from governments and other authorities was ongoing.

Being prepared for COVID 19 meant increased communication with many authorities as Princes Court manoeuvred between the different requirements. Contact with the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit, the Loddon Mallee infection control co-ordinator for Aged Care, the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre, Victorian Department of Health, Mallee PHN, Barratt and Smith Pathology, VICNISS healthcare associated infection surveillance coordinating centre, Leading Aged Services Australia, Mildura Base Public Hospital and WorkSafe were important to understand the situation as it unfolded. The five not for profit aged care facilities have collaborated in sharing of information and with intent to support each other as needed.

Princes Court staff are all vaccinated against COVID 19 as are the majority of our residents. Importantly vaccination and prevention measures have kept the organisation free from COVID even though this has stretched the organisation workforce considerably during the times when positive cases have been prevalent in the Mildura Rural City Council region. The appointment of an experienced Infection Control Officer for one day a week has also provided additional knowledge and advice to improve processes.

Keeping abreast of the changing world of COVID and adapting our processes has included GP virtual clinics, telehealth, the participation in the My Emergency Doctor program and engaging with the Palliative Care Advice Service. Education and ongoing professional development have remained a priority with many online and virtual education opportunities attended.

In addition to COVID 19 preparedness, in February 2021, the final report of the Aged Care Royal Commission was submitted to the Governor-General. The recommendations from the report include the introduction of the Serious Incident Response Scheme and legislation to minimise aged care restrictive practices. Princes Court Homes has worked within these guidelines, strengthening our processes and reporting requirements.

Princes Court was involved in some innovative processes and initiatives to improve service delivery and care for the residents and most involve collaborative activities with other organisations. This includes:

## **PILOT ELECTRONIC MEDICATION PROCESS**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH DR MEHDI, CHEMIST WAREHOUSE, WEBSTER CARE AND CLINICAL CARE STAFF

Princes Court is participating in a pilot electronic medication chart and script program. The general practitioner (GP) orders the medication electronically and is instantly recorded on drug charts at the pharmacy and Princes Court and authorises a script. This is significantly improving efficiencies in communication and time required between all parties and reduces the margin for medication error. This electronic system allows for changes to be made anywhere at any time via the web. Once the system pilot is successful, other GPs will be invited to be involved and the pilot will be extended to other aged care facilities.

## **MR EMERGENCY DOCTOR TRIAL PROGRAM**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH MALLEE PHN

The My Emergency Doctor program allows access to emergency physicians. This has proven to provide high level and timely virtual medical support to our residents during non-social hours. This includes resident reviews and the ordering of medication, pathology and xrays with timely follow up written communication to both Princes Court Homes and the resident's General Practitioner (GP).

## **NATIONAL ANTIMICROBIAL PRESCRIBING SURVEY**

This year Princes Court elected for the first time to participate in the National Prescribing Survey for Aged Care. The results have provided us with benchmark against our peers for use of antimicrobials. Princes Court is moving to strengthen our medication processes through the introduction of Medication Advisory Committee collaborative with Chaffey Aged Care in addition to the Primary Health Network Medication Advisory Committee.

## **FALLS COMMITTEE**

Being proactive in the prevention of falls in our high-risk residents is critical in reducing the incidence of falls. We have established a multi-disciplinary team including care, allied health and work health safety representatives to review residents at risk, collaboratively working to improve outcomes. Furthermore, all falls that result in a fracture are now voluntarily reported to Worksafe, initiating a review and external input into safety.

## **KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU**

Lifestyle staff have assisted residents to formulate a sunflower that provides quick prompts about what is important to the resident, improving communication and orientation pathways at a more personal level.



# CREATIVE LIFESTYLE ACTIVITIES, EVENTS

The Lifestyle team continue to offer residents a diverse range of activities and events for creativity, fitness, entertainment and forging friendships.

Keeping residents and families in contact was a very important aspect of lifestyle this year with the constant restrictions on visitors to aged care homes and the staff played a major part in setting up the facetimes, laptops connections and sending photos to families throughout the year to enable residents to speak to their families and friends and keep in contact with the outside world.

Photos of each activity during this period were showcased to families on the Princes Court Facebook site and appreciative feedback was received.

The arm-chair travel continued to transport the residents around the globe and feast on multicultural delights providing fun and adventure. Countries 'visited' included Egypt, South Africa and Canada.

Fire pits continued to occur with singing provided by staff and the occasional residents including the very entertaining Keith Hill and Doug Fox.

Lawn bowls has been a very popular activity with the staff needing to hold the competition over a whole day to allow everyone who wanted to participate the opportunity to do so. If they aren't bowling, the residents are barracking for their fellow team members.

A special thanks to Keith and Trish Hill for the generous donation of a pool table. It has already brought so many people together and we look forward to the fun, laughs and memories that will be made.

Highlights of the year included the Queen's Birthday, Generation Music Together with young children, Mad Hatters Day, Olympic Games week, footy tipping, Tai Chi, Biggest Morning Tea, Fathers and Mother's Day, Easter, Australia Day, Italian Day, Making chocolates day, Loud shirt day, Grandparents Day and 10,000 Step Challenge. There were many opportunities for dress ups and this year the staff did not let anyone down with staff and residents getting involved as much as possible.



# QUALITY, NUTRITIOUS FOOD WITH A DINING EXPERIENCE

At Princes Court, this is an area that we strive to provide residents with the dining experience they deserve, with quality of food and the nutrition that is needed. At the same time allowing for the food to meet the resident's needs and providing diversity in taste and choice.

This year we welcomed Russell Gilbert as Executive Chef who has been the sole director and owner of the Wirraway Bistro @ Mildura RSL Club for over twenty-five years, where his duties included all aspects of hospitality management operating seven days a week, year-round and overseeing the employment of sixteen staff members. Russell's experience and knowledge has been central to enhancing quality through a policy of fresh is best and as many meals as possible are produced from fresh ingredients. With his direction, the two other chefs and now an apprentice are delivering exceptional diverse and tasty meals, not only for the residents at the Homes, but also for the residents at the Village.

The resident's input into the meals and their preferences commences when they enter the facility and the first discussion from food likes and dislikes, special dietary requirements and food allergies and the need for texture modified meals are communicated to the kitchen.

We have a monthly Food Tasting Committee meeting with Princes Court Homes residents, the Lifestyle department and Executive Chef. Residents are asked to evaluate the meal service, service times and quality of meals at each meeting. Regular discussion is held to appraise the menu by way of meal choices, likes and dislikes, portion and texture. A comments book is situated in the dining room for residents to make comment at any time be it positive or negative in relation to their dining experiences.

Our dietician provides input into our menu which is provided each season, she monitors changes in resident's weight and recommends different strategies and change in dietary intake where necessary.

Continuous improvement is always our objective for the benefit of living services for our residents. Improved staffing levels and staff training are all ways we regularly strive to improve our product. Leadership team meetings are regularly held for any items of discussion to be raised.

Ways we are looking to improve is a more expansive menu inclusive of a wider variety of choice, using local produce more regularly, having more cultural days inclusive of cultural foods and fluids, improved availability of diabetic foodstuffs and fluids, reimplementation of morning teas in individual units attended by the CEO, DCS and care staff, fetes and our Fountain Café to reopen.

The catering department at Princes Court Homes are looking to install more equipment in the kitchen. The idea to improve the quality of product is always on our minds. A new Blast Chiller is soon to be installed. Recent acquisitions include OH&S aids to assist staff to better perform their tasks. When possible, a team from the catering department will be visiting two other Nursing Home facilities that are considered to be using best practice and will provide a bench mark to measure performance against moving forward. Planned visits to the Food and Catering Trade Fair in 2022 are booked to keep up to date with new ideas, equipment, regulations and to participate in the Aged Care Summit being held at this event.



# OUR SKILLED AND COMMITTED STAFF

**“THE GREATNESS OF A COMMUNITY IS MOST ACCURATELY MEASURED BY THE COMPASSIONATE ACTIONS OF ITS MEMBERS”  
CORETTA SCOTT YOUNG**

This statement typified the community, that is Princes Court, one of the foundation reasons that the organisation has succeeded and is valued by those involved is the actions of the staff that have made caring for residents at Princes Court their lifelong passion. Every day this is obvious with the actions that are shown. It would be fitting to acknowledge every member of staff for their commitment, especially given the last two years, however this is just not possible in this report. There are some special individuals that are receiving recognition awards for terms of service in this report that capture that special compassion, at the same time genuine human spirit in enriching other people’s lives. An “old world” trait that is hoped will continue into the future.

## **STAFF SERVICE AWARDS**

**10 Years**

Tessa Press

**15 Years**

Lindy Lee

**20 Years**

Norelle Stainer

Hellyn Parker

Thank you and congratulations to these dedicated staff for their service. Acknowledgment of staff that retired during the year Margaret Cameron 21 year’s service and Heather Pinyon 10 years service and Shirley Tiedeman 14 years service.



# VOLUNTEERS

The volunteers at Princes Court are engaged in a diverse range of activities and we are extremely appreciative of the contribute to the organisation. The benefit from Princes Court being a benevolent organisation is the opportunity to invite others to be involved and the resident's lives are enhanced through the connection to individuals from the community. The roles include volunteers that help with lifestyle activities and perform a variety of tasks and interact closely with the residents on a weekly basis.

The newest cohort of volunteers are the writers that work with the storytellers to illuminate the life of residents, both at the Homes and the Village. There are 15 writers involved in Book three that will be launched very soon.

At the Village there are many volunteers that contribute to the overall wellbeing of the community and this is anything from assisting with the social activities, providing additional gardening support that has enhanced the environment considerably and a group is rostered to decorate and provide additional activities at the monthly dinner when possible.

The Princes Court Board contribute considerable time and effort when they attend not only the monthly board meetings, but committees and special working parties. There are many occasions where they attend events and training to ensure their knowledge and capabilities for the role at hand. This is particularly important with the changes in the aged care sector and the additional requirements.



# CONTINUING EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Staff knowledge and practices are fundamental to Princes Court providing a safe, quality care and pleasing environment for people to live. Princes Court recognises and supports staff, especially in the clinical area to gain the knowledge they need to undertake the work they do and to advance in their profession according to their personal goals.

Given the changing nature of aged care and the increasing new requirements and regulation, Princes Court engaged Altura Learning to provide online training in a number of areas. This allows staff to complete education modules in a flexible manner at a convenient time for them.

A regular internal training program is also provided on changing legislation, refresher course and improved practices to keep everyone up to date.

Additional training initiatives that were provided over the last twelve months to maintain high standards include:

- Monash University Rural Health provided personal protective equipment (PPE) face to face training session to demonstrate and reinforce the importance of wearing PPE appropriately. (DHHS funded project for aged care facilities).
- Princes Court was pleased to have two staff members Sianne Nicholds and Stella Moser completed post graduate Infection Control programs (gaining High Distinctions) as a requirement of the Vic Health Department. This ensured that senior staff had the detailed knowledge to guide the organisation in the prevention of infection and in particular COVID 19.
- Sheryl Tyack, Village Coordinator has completed the Northern Mallee Leaders Course. A community project is completed as part of the program and Sheryl's team developed some excellent ideas on accessing and retaining professionals in the Mildura region. This is an ongoing challenge for rural regions which has become more so with COVID.
- Two staff were sponsored to complete a pedicure and manicure course, which is important for all resident's health and wellbeing.
- Princes Court and other Aged Care Facilities in the region are collaborating with "Resident in Reach" under development through Mildura Base Public Hospital to provide education to clinical staff via online forums and in person. All Registered Nurses and Endorsed Enrolled Nurses were given the opportunity to provide input into the selection of the education topics. Finer details of this program are yet to be released; however, the staff will benefit considerably from this partnership.
- The management and board directors continued to build their knowledge throughout the year mainly through online forums. COVID has opened this medium and has provided opportunities to attend forums that were not offered previously other than travelling to metropolitan areas. Access to platforms such as Governance Evaluator has provided a range of services to the board, including benchmark report comparing Princes Court Ltd's Board with other boards, councils, directors and councillors from all sectors over the last three years.

# EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

**THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, PRINCES COURT RECOGNISES AND ACKNOWLEDGES STAFF MEMBERS WHO GO ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY IN PERFORMING THEIR TASKS. WE ARE VERY PROUD TO LIST THE 2020/2021 RECIPIENTS:**

**NOMINATIONS FOR OUR AWARDS COME FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES INCLUDING MANAGEMENT, STAFF, RESIDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS.**

October 2020 – Kayla Axon

November 2020 – Erlinda Pestrivas

We nominate Erlinda for her great care and support to staff and residents. She is a quiet achiever. She works professionally and respects everyone. She was generous with her own time and on her days off helping out and trimming resident's hair especially during the COVID lockdown and her work was greatly appreciated. Residents were very happy.

January 2021 – Sandy Baratta

Sandy is an excellent carer, dedicated to her role, dependable, very caring and loving towards our dear residents. Sandy goes extra miles especially trying to cover shifts and working hard when the care needs are high on the floor. Nominated by Amali Raju RN

February 2021 – Tracey Wisneske

March 2021 – Jakob Bird

April 2021 – Sonja Freeman-Mitchell

“Today I observed her bringing smiles to the faces of all the Waratah residents. She was rock-N-roll dancing for and with the residents and they seemed to really enjoy the impromptu performance. Taking the time to bring joy to the residents and not just attending to their hygiene tasks was great to see.”

May 2021 – Raelene Mayes

June 2021 – Shanai Appleby

“Yesterday the 6th of June, Tayla Pahl, Shanai Appleby and Kamana Karki were incredible. Tayla, Kamana and Shanai were incredible team players ensuring a palliative resident and their families' every need was met promptly and to a high standard. We were an incredible team and they ensured the shift went seamlessly. All three staff members are a credit to PCH and we are better off for having them.”

July 2021 – Gladys Chelangat & Karen Pay

August 2021 – Amy Darrington & Paul Reouf

September 2021 – Emily Stewart



*princescourt*  
COMMUNITY LIVING