

We would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

Greetings from the DON

Summer is here!

We are all looking forward to the festive season, celebrating Christmas and New Year with our loved ones.

I ask that you all take into consideration COVID and please ensure you increase your Rapid testing, always wear your mask when visiting, kindly observe our visitor number restrictions, and please do not visit Avalon House if you have any flu like symptoms or are feeling at all unwell.

Christmas is one of the happiest times of the year and we love that families buy beautiful gifts for their residents. Please remember all gifts of clothing items, including hats and socks, all need to go to reception for labelling.

Please also remember chocolates melt and leaving them on the windowsill in the residents' rooms is never a good idea!

Residents will be enjoying a magical Christmas party on Thursday 14th December and a traditional Christmas lunch on Christmas Day. Please advise reception in advance if you will be taking your resident out on Christmas Day. This can be quite a logistical challenge, so please do let us know your plans as soon as possible.

From all the staff at Avalon House we wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas, and a safe New Year!

Kind Regards,
Hayley
Director of Nursing



Some of our gorgeous residents and staff



Winifred Turns 100!

Celebrating Winifred!

Our lovely resident Winifred Maxlow celebrated her 100th birthday on 28th October. Winifred was visited by our local MP Rory Amon, who sat and chatted with Winifred and brought her a beautiful bunch of flowers. Winifred also received cards and well wishes from King Charles and Queen Camilla, the Governor General, MPs for McKellar and Pittwater and our Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

I sat down for a chat with Winifred to hear more about her fascinating life.

Winifred was born in Bromley in Kent in 1923, she had a twin sister, plus 2 other sisters. She can still remember seeing the horses ploughing in the local fields. Winifred was 15, almost 16 when the Second World War started, and she left school, so she didn't have to be evacuated. Winifred found work as a clerk but soon was promoted to typist.

Winifred met her husband Alfred Maxwell, whom she called Max and they loved to dance together, they were married in 1947 and had their daughter in 1951 and son in 1954.

Max studied to become a civil engineer and in 1973 they moved to South Africa, living in Port Elizabeth, East London and then moving to a small town called Umtata, where they had no running water, only a tank that was filled from a bowser every few weeks.

Winifred enjoyed her time in South Africa, and loved the wildlife experiences, once seeing a herd of 35 elephants.

Winifred and Max moved to Australia in 1997 where both of her children were living, and she now has 2 grandchildren and 6 Great Grandchildren.

Winifred has been an avid knitter her whole life and loved gardening and animals. Her philosophy in life is to go with the flow and take life as it comes, which sounds like great advice to us all!



Winifred (on the right) and her twin sister



Winifred with Rory Amon

Activity Highlights

Music at Avalon House

Music is an integral part of Avalon House and is something that is enjoyed by all residents, promoting improved cognition, social interaction, and wellbeing.

We have a live concert weekly, with a large range of musicians and genres coming to Avalon House and this forms a centre piece to the entertainment each week.

Once a month we have a drumming group, run by the lovely Carly who has everyone around joining in and actively participating with the rhythm and the beat.

Music is utilised in exercise class, whether its dancing to the birdy song with Kylie, enjoying some classical music with Cait or listening to ambient music with Helen as we go through some Seated Yoga poses. Each month we have The Ageless Moves team, lifting everyone's energy as we all move with pompoms and streamers. We have a piano bar every second month where we utilise our beautiful grand piano in the downstairs lounge and have someone play whilst the residents enjoy their happy hour drink, sitting in small groups and singing along as the music takes them.

The music plays through the coffee shop, perhaps with some gentle popular music or light classical in the morning and moving into party mode at Happy Hour where residents are happy to request songs they love, and impromptu singalongs happen. A bus trip and a trivia quiz can also be a time to burst into song together, as well as the much-loved sing along activities that are held regularly.

There is numerous research on the positive benefits of singing together, it is a joyful shared activity that releases endorphins and can ease depression. Music is remembered even in severe dementia residents; we see people closing their eyes and swaying to the music or remembering song lyrics from years ago. Music will continue to be an important part of everyday life in Avalon House.



Christmas Craft

We have been busy over the last few weeks making decorations for Christmas. This year the focus is on fabric, and we are using some beautiful materials to create rag wreaths and bunting. Residents have been engaged in cutting and tying fabric around metal wreaths to form beautiful statement pieces, as well as measuring, cutting, and gluing to create bunting.

A lot of the fabric comes from Spotlight, featuring Australian native flora and fauna in a Christmas setting, as well as utilising and reusing ribbons and wrappings from all the flowers that are donated to us over the year from Woollies. It's so great to see recycling in action as we get creative!

The craft will form part of our display in the coffee shop, and residents get such pleasure from seeing their work on show.

We commenced our Christmas celebrations by putting up the tree, this year in the atrium in the centre of the home. We started with a song, and then decorated the tree with lots of help and suggestions as the lights, tinsel and baubles went on. As the decorations grew we reminisced about Christmas traditions and listened to Christmas music, pausing for afternoon tea of mince pies and cream, and concluded with a couple more songs. It was a wonderful afternoon that got us all in the Christmas spirit.



Art with Marley

Beautiful Marley (Hayley's daughter) organised a special afternoon of art for our residents with Lucy (Cait's daughter) and Vida (Laura's daughter) assisting her to create many canvases with a beautiful rose. Marley took the residents through a lesson to create this amazing work of art themselves! Residents sat together on a long table chatting and helping each other create their masterpieces, it was a beautiful sight! Mak Bhide from our head office came to Avalon House to join in the event.

Steph Stewart an artist volunteered her time to paint resident's portraits and they were thrilled with them. Steph usually hand paints custom artworks of your furry family members. You can find her paintings on Instagram @steph.stewart.art or www.stephstewartportraits.com

A scrumptious afternoon tea was served whilst Nataliya played piano.



What's new?

Welcome to all new residents and staff.

On behalf of the RAO staff and the home we would like to warmly welcome our new residents, their families and staff who have joined Avalon House in the last 3 months.

We look forward to getting to know you and collaborating together.



Food and Wine Celebration

To celebrate the Food and Wine event run across all Thompson facilities we enlisted the help of Andrew Caillard, the son of one of our residents. Andrew is a Master of Wine, and he expertly shared the history of wine making in Australia, a subject he is so knowledgeable and passionate about. Whilst listening to his talk the residents got to taste a beautiful Chardonnay and a red wine from Andrew's own vineyard. We paired the wine with delicious cheese and fruit platters. We all thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and came away feeling more knowledgeable about the fascinating wine in Australia.



Remembrance Day

On the 11th of November we commemorated Remembrance Day at Avalon House. The home was decorated in a beautiful array of red gerberas and our residents wore knitted red poppies to show their respect for those who lost their lives in past conflicts. Our residents watched the 11am service on the ABC. During the week we read poetry, reminisced, and shared stories of family and friends who were involved in past military service.

Lest We forget.



Guest Speakers

We have been fortunate to have had 2 guest speakers recently David Lyall who spoke about the “The Return of the Malibu Surfboard” and his involvement in the Malibu shortboard revival that was held at Avalon Beach on 18th November 1956! Our residents found this a very engaging topic and asked many questions, and some had even been there in 1956!

We were also fortunate to have Bethany Clark and her son Lachlan who was the General Manager @ Coca Cola South Pacific - FIFA Women’s World Cup 2023 ANZ

Bethany spoke to the residents about the rise of Women’s football and at the time we had all just recently witnessed “The Matildas” our Australian competitive football team rise during the Women’s World Cup in Australia where they finished fourth overall. It was the first time that a senior national soccer team representing Australia, or another Oceanic country has made it to a world cup Semi – finals. Bethany brought in memorabilia from the World Cup such as footballs that were used in the games and one of the coins that was used to commence a game.

All of our speakers to date have kindly volunteered their time to share their stories with our residents. Every time the room is full and the residents thoroughly enjoy the informative discussions had with our Guest Speakers.

If you have an interesting topic, passion or career you would like to share please reach out to the RAOs via email rao_avalonhouse@thc.net.au as we would love to hear from you.



Birthplace of Australian Malibu Surfing Plaque at Avalon Beach



Ongoing

Dates for your diary

Happy Hour **Everyday 3:45- 4:45pm**

Hairdressers **Every Tuesday** in the hair salon

Resident/DON Meeting - **1st Monday of every month**

Library Delivery service – **17/1, 14/2**

Bus Trips - Every **Wednesday and Friday**

Church services

Run by local parishes.

Christian Non-Denominational

Every 3rd Friday of the month

Catholic Service

Every 4th Wednesday of the month.

Monthly

Dates for your diary

December

Maria Regina School Visit 8/12

Christmas Church Service 11/12

Nataylia Piano Bar 13/12

Resident Christmas Party and Hugh Moran Concert
14/12

Ageless Moves 15/12

Elvis Concert 21/12

Drumming Circle with Carly 22/12

Christmas Day 25/12

Boxing Day 26/12

Keff Concert 28/12

End of Month Birthday Celebration 28/12

New Years Eve 31/12

January

New Years Day 1/1

Murray Fergusson Concert 1/1

Ross Hamilton Concert 11/1

Juliet Piano Bar 17/1

Charlotte 18/1

Ageless Moves 19/1

Australia Day and Keff Concert 26/1

February

Kristy Lee Concert 1/2

Paul Leventhal 8/2

Shrove Tuesday 13/2

Valentines Day and Leyla Concert 14/2

Ageless Moves 16/2

Hugh Moran 22/2

Drumming Circle with Carly 23/2

Ross Hamilton 27/2



From all the RAOs at Avalon House

Helen, Kylie, Cait, and Sarada

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