

Splash!

March 2025



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WHATS MAKING A SPLASH!

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ABOUT US

Harbourside Port Stephens (formally Port Stephens Veterans & Citizens Aged Care) is a local, compassionate, not-for-profit community organisation with a proud history spanning over 40 years. We are dedicated to providing care and support to seniors in the Port Stephens region.

We offer

- **Retirement Living** – Villages located in Shoal Bay, Salamander Bay, and Fingal Bay
- **Home Care** – Supporting seniors to live independently at home
- **Residential Care** – Located in Shoal Bay

Established and trusted, Harbourside Port Stephens continues to evolve to ensure our communities and services remain accessible and relevant to today's seniors. Our comprehensive range of professional, dedicated services provides residents, clients, and their families with peace of mind, knowing that additional care is always available should their needs change.

Our Vision

The leading and trusted provider of aged care services to our community.

Our Mission

Partnering with our community to provide:

- Safe and respectful personalised care.
- Vibrant residential, home care and retirement living.
- Ongoing and innovative growth in service.

Making a Splash

Splash is more than just a newsletter—it's a celebration of the vibrancy, spirit, and joy of life at Harbourside Port Stephens. Here, we don't just go through the motions—we make a splash! Growing older doesn't mean slowing down; it's about embracing life with energy, passion, and enthusiasm. Whether it's trying something new, sharing laughter with friends, or making a difference in the community, every moment has the potential to be a Splash moment. Through inspiring stories, community highlights, wellness tips, and heartwarming connections, Splash is here to showcase the everyday magic that makes Harbourside so special. So dive in and enjoy!

OUR VALUES

CARE + Community

Compassion



Accountability



Respect



Excellence



+
Community



Message from the CEO

Welcome to Splash!

As we continue our journey as Harbourside Port Stephens, I'm excited to introduce Splash - our refreshed organisational newsletter, reflecting the energy and vibrancy of our recent rebrand.

The past few months have been a time of growth and transformation.

Our new name and look are now taking shape, and we're seeing positive momentum across the organisation. From updates to signage and uniforms to the introduction of our new website, every step is bringing us closer to a more modern and connected future. Throughout this transition, our focus remains on providing high-quality care and support to our residents and clients, ensuring they continue to feel safe, valued, and well-supported.

Right now, we're focused on growing our volunteer base and expanding the number of Home Care Package clients we can support. Volunteers play a crucial role in enriching the lives of our residents and clients, and as demand for home care continues to grow, we're committed to reaching more people who need our care. You can read more about both of these important areas in this issue of Splash.

Looking ahead, 2025 will bring significant changes to the aged care sector, including the introduction of the new Aged Care Act, Strengthened Quality Standards, and the Support at Home program. These reforms are designed to improve care and services for older Australians, and we are committed to keeping our community informed as more details become available from the Government.

It's shaping up to be an exciting year, with new projects on the horizon, events to bring us together, and opportunities to celebrate the incredible people who make Harbourside Port Stephens what it is today.

Thank you for being part of this journey. I look forward to sharing more with you in our next issue.

Warm regards, Paul



Harbourside Port Stephens

Rebrand Launch Party

We have kicked off 2025 with great momentum, starting with our Rebrand Launch Party on Monday, 20 January. At this event, we proudly introduced our new name and logo, Harbourside Port Stephens, a name that honours our legacy as Port Stephens Veterans & Citizens Aged Care while embracing care, compassion, support, and innovation for the future.

It was wonderful to see so many members of our community in attendance – a true reflection of the strong connections we share at Harbourside Port Stephens. The presence of special guests, including the Hon Meryl Swanson MP (Federal Member for Paterson), the Hon Kate Washington MP (Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services of New South Wales and State Member for Port Stephens), and Leah Anderson (Mayor of Port Stephens), highlighted the esteem in which we are held in the broader community. As the three remarked on the day, it's rare for all of them to attend the same event!

A highlight of the day was recognising Bob Martin as a Company Patron. He delivered a heartfelt speech reflecting on the company's history. The event also featured the ceremonial cake cutting by Frank Ward and the presentation of Life Membership to our former Chairman, Gerry Mohan.

This was a positive and meaningful way to start the year, despite the challenges leading up to the event. The extensive storms and power outages that hit Port Stephens tested our resilience. We are incredibly proud of how quickly our staff responded. Generators were deployed at Harbourside Residential Care, and welfare checks were promptly conducted for our community members, including those on home care packages.

We are excited about what lies ahead for Harbourside Port Stephens and look forward to continuing our mission of providing care and support to the broader community throughout 2025.



Leah Anderson, Mayor of Port Stephens, Kate Washington MP, Frank Ward, Harbourside Resident, Meryl Swanson MP.



Raad Richards, Chairman Harbourside Port Stephens and Gerry Mohan, Life Member and former Chairman.



Margaret and Bob Martin, (Bob Martin Company Patron) and Meryl Swanson MP, Federal Member for Paterson.

Guest Cook Program



Kerry & Stephen in the Kitchen

FOOD MATTERS!!

A Story of Connection and Fulfillment:

At Harbourside Residential Care at Shoal Bay, we believe that **food is more than just sustenance**; it's a source of joy, connection, and well-being. In line with this philosophy, we've recently launched our **'Guest Cooks' program**, inviting residents to share their culinary talents and enrich our dining experiences.

Our inaugural session featured resident Stephen Alta, who delighted everyone with his renowned Chilli Jam. A heartfelt thank you to Stephen for setting such a high standard. Following this, resident Kerry Firkin graced our kitchen, preparing her cherished Spaghetti Bolognese recipe, a true testament to the comfort and warmth that home-cooked meals bring.

We are also proud to be affiliated with the **Maggie Beer Foundation**, a vibrant charity dedicated to improving the food experience and quality of life for older Australians. Their mission aligns with our commitment to enhancing dining experiences and promoting well-being among our residents.

In late November 2024, we had the privilege of hosting Rachel Knight, a Chef and Nutritionist from the Maggie Beer Foundation, for a week of collaboration. Together, we explored innovative ways to elevate our dining offerings, focusing on increasing protein content and providing nutritional information to empower residents in making informed choices.

This partnership underscores our dedication to not only meeting but exceeding the dining expectations of our residents, ensuring that every meal is a **delightful and nourishing experience**.

Volunteering

Deb's Volunteering Journey:

A Story of Connection and Fulfillment

When Deb and her husband moved from Sydney to Nelson Bay after retiring from full-time work, they left behind their family and friends—a transition that was both exciting and challenging. Moving away from a familiar support system can be daunting, but for Deb, a simple suggestion from her new neighbours, Joan and Dot, would change everything. These wonderful ladies, both members of the Seniors Hub, encouraged Deb to consider volunteering. That small nudge led her to a deeply fulfilling journey at the Harbourside Seniors Hub, where she has now been volunteering for three years.

Finding Purpose Through Volunteering

Initially, Deb began her volunteer work at Harbourside Residential Care before transitioning to the Harbourside Seniors Hub. She now dedicates 2-3 days a week to the Seniors Hub, but her commitment goes beyond the regular schedule. Whether it's a special outing or a bus trip outside of the usual Hub days, Deb is always ready to step in and help.

For Deb, the Seniors Hub has become more than just a place to volunteer—it has become a second home. Each day brings new, heartwarming moments. She loves listening to the incredible life stories shared by the seniors and cherishes the deep connections she has built with them.

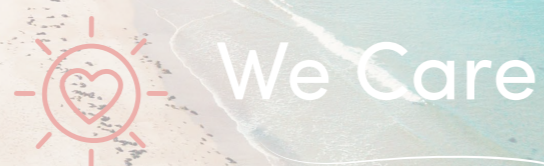
"Every day is a memorable moment with the group at the Seniors Hub," Deb shares. "They all have amazing stories, and they are the most wonderful ladies. I call them my 'Mumma Bears.'"



A Life Changed by Volunteering

Volunteering at the Seniors Hub has had a profound impact on Deb's life. In a time when she could have felt isolated in a new town, she instead found a family among the seniors and fellow volunteers. Their kindness, warmth, and shared experiences made her feel truly at home.

"If I didn't have volunteering, and the friendships I've made here, I would probably be wanting to move back to Sydney to be closer to my family," she admits. But thanks to Volunteering, she has built a meaningful life in her new community, filled with laughter, companionship, and purpose.



A Call to Future Volunteers

Deb wholeheartedly encourages others to consider volunteering at Harbourside Port Stephens. When asked why she would recommend it, she sums it up in one powerful word: fulfillment.

"Volunteering is something you don't know you're missing until you try it," she says. The joy, the friendships, and the sense of purpose it brings are irreplaceable.

Deb's advice to anyone thinking about volunteering? ***"Just give it a try. It is truly a wonderful experience. All my friends here at the Seniors Hub are wonderful people."***

With tears in her eyes, Deb speaks about how much this experience has meant to her. Her story is a testament to the incredible impact that volunteering can have—not just for the seniors who benefit from her time and kindness, but for Deb herself.

If you're looking for a way to give back, make lasting friendships, and be part of a welcoming community, Harbourside Port Stephens is waiting for you. Take that first step—like Deb did—and discover a fulfilling new chapter in your life.

Call or email Lucinda Fetch, Marketing & Engagement Coordinator
 **4984 1811 or lfetch@harboursideps.com.au**

MAKING A Splash



AUSTRALIA DAY

Australia Day at Carter and Richardson House was filled with laughter, music, and great company! The festivities kicked off with delicious Lamingtons, followed by a classic Thong Throwing Competition and a mouth-watering BBQ feast. An energetic Elvis concert had residents singing and dancing before we wrapped up with happy hour.



GARDENING & GAMES

Our games brought out plenty of friendly competition and laughter, while the garden continues to thrive with the care and creativity of our amazing Seniors Hub Community. There's nothing better than spending time together, staying active, and making memories. We're so grateful for the wonderful energy everyone brings each week!



VALENTINE'S DAY

What a beautiful celebration of love and friendship! From the roses to the waltz, it's wonderful to see such joy and connection at Harbourside Residential CARE. A truly memorable Splash moment!



NEWCASTLE SHOW

A was a special day for John from our Harbourside Seniors Hub as he celebrated his 84th birthday in style at the Newcastle Show! The fun started the moment he hopped on the bus with his Seniors Hub friends, Mavis, Veronica and Bev, setting the tone for an unforgettable day out. [READ MORE ABOUT JOHN ON THE BACK COVER PAGE.](#)



VOLUNTEERS CHRISTMAS MORNING TEA

We had the absolute pleasure of celebrating the incredible dedication and hard work of our volunteers with a festive Christmas Morning Tea. It was a heartwarming morning filled with great company, delicious sweet and savory treats, and, of course, a comforting hot cuppa!



COLOUR & KINDNESS

Stephen has poured his heart and soul into creating stunning booklets filled with his amazing colouring-in projects for our residents to enjoy. His passion for spreading colour and caring messages has truly brightened our community. A huge thank you to Stephen your art and thoughtfulness are inspiring and bring so much joy to everyone around you.



FIGHTER WORLD

Our Harbourside Seniors Hub group enjoyed a delightful outing under glorious sunshine. Morning tea at Fighter World, followed by a scenic walk along the ANZAC Walk, taking in stunning coastal views and a chance to reflect.



RESIDENT BBQ COOK OFF

Our residents took charge of the grill to cook up a feast for their friends! John stepped up as BBQ master with a helping hand from Andrew on the Harbourside lifestyle team, making sure the snags and burgers were cooked to perfection. Meanwhile, Marie kept things rolling by plating up the bread, and Elise added the perfect touch with fresh salad.

Living your best life!

HARBOURSIDE FINGAL BAY CROQUET CLUB:

Building Community, One Swing at a Time

When Bev and her husband Ian moved into Harbourside Fingal Bay in July, they were eager to immerse themselves in a thriving community. One of Bev's longtime aspirations was to play croquet, and while the village had the facilities, the activity was not played on a regular basis. Rather than waiting for someone else to revive it, Bev took matters into her own hands. Despite having never played croquet before, she was determined to bring the game back to life and create an opportunity for residents to come together, stay active, and have fun.

With Ian's unwavering support—keeping the lawn perfectly mowed and ready—Bev set out to spread the word. She delivered flyers to every letterbox in the village at Fingal Bay and even personally visited residents at nearby Harbourside Crystal Close to ensure everyone had a chance to join in. Before long, a group of seven to eight players began gathering every Wednesday, enjoying friendly matches and the camaraderie that came with it.

The croquet club didn't just fulfill Bev's personal dream; it also helped her build new friendships within the Harbourside Fingal Bay community. From the moment they received their keys, Bev and Ian felt warmly welcomed by their neighbours, Chris and Ros, who introduced them to happy hour, exercise classes, and community celebrations such as Christmas in July. Harbourside Fingal Bay has proven to be a truly special place, where residents look out for one another and foster new friendships with kindness.

As a former nurse with experience in risk assessment and fall prevention, Bev understands the importance of staying active. She firmly believes that movement



is key to maintaining good health, both physically and mentally. Croquet offers the perfect combination of gentle activity, fresh air, and social engagement, helping residents stay mobile and connected.

What truly touches Bev's heart is seeing residents feel included, even if they are simply watching from the sidelines and joining in at morning tea. It confirms to her that the croquet club is an inclusive group that gives residents a reason to step outside, share a laugh, and support one another. Bev's goal was simple: to bring people together and enhance their wellbeing.

While Bev and Ian's dedication has been invaluable, the true success of the croquet club comes from those who participate. It is the residents who come along, share in the fun, and enjoy each other's company that make the club thrive. Their enthusiasm and willingness to engage are what have turned croquet into such a beloved activity. After all, a game is only as enjoyable as the people who play it, and at Harbourside Fingal Bay, the spirit of fun and togetherness is what keeps the club going strong.

Thanks to Bev's passion, Ian's behind-the-scenes efforts, and the residents who bring the game to life, the croquet club at Harbourside Fingal Bay has become a cherished part of village life—proving that one person's initiative, combined with community spirit, can make a world of difference.





John enjoying a day at Harbourside Seniors Hub with friends

BRINGING COMFORT AND CONNECTION: John's Home Care Journey

When John Briscoe lost his wife seven years ago, his daughters quickly realised just how much she had done for him. Suddenly, simple daily tasks like cooking and managing household chores became overwhelming. As John, now in his 80s and living with dementia, adjusted to life without his wife, his family faced a difficult decision – how to ensure he received the care he needed while still maintaining his independence.

With three of his four daughters living in Sydney and one in Port Stephens, the family explored their options. While one daughter initially suggested residential care, the family ultimately chose a Home Care Package so John could stay in his home in Salamander Bay for as long as possible. With guidance from Harbourside's caring team, they navigated the My Aged Care system, starting with CHSP funding before progressing to a Level 2 package. A year ago, as John's needs increased, he was approved for a Level 4 package.

The difference has been life changing. Though John can no longer drive and has few social connections in Salamander Bay, his care package has helped him stay engaged and independent. He now visits the Harbourside Seniors Hub at Fingal Bay twice a week, where he enjoys socialising – something he was once reluctant to do, as his wife had mostly been the instigator of social opportunities. "At first, he was shy and didn't want to go and was even reluctant to receive a home care package," says his daughter Carole Fedczyna. "But now he absolutely loves it."

Daily support from home care staff ensures John starts his day with a nutritious breakfast and assistance getting dressed. In the evenings, they check in again. Wednesdays are for grocery shopping with his support worker, and a cleaner visits fortnightly to help with household tasks. Even John's beloved dog benefits – care staff help manage the pet's medication.

For his daughters, knowing their dad is cared for brings peace of mind. "It means we can spend quality time with him when we visit rather than just doing chores," Carole shares. The family also appreciates the personal touch from Harbourside staff— one of John's carers, Jason, regularly sends photos and even troubleshoots phone issues if needed.

A recent highlight for John was a special trip to the Newcastle Show with other Home Care clients to celebrate his birthday – an experience that left him beaming. "He was chuffed," Carole says.

For families considering home care, Carole has one piece of advice: "Do it. It's peace of mind. The staff are wonderful, and they keep you informed. It's especially reassuring for families who don't live nearby." John's story is a testament to the power of home care – helping him maintain his *independence, stay socially connected, and continue living a life filled with small but meaningful moments of joy.*



To Learn more about
HARBOURSIDE PORT STEPHENS
call our friendly team on **02 4984 1811** or
visit our website **harboursideportstephens.com.au**