

our NEWS

August
2024

From our Chairman



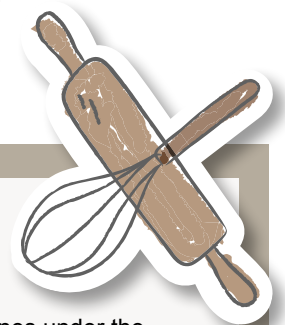
Social and community participation enriches our life experiences and fosters a sense of belonging. However, an Australian Productivity Commission report found relatively low levels of community participation and inclusion amongst people living with a disability.

Engaging in these activities empowers people with disabilities, as they are able to showcase their abilities and talents. Group activities also build self-esteem and confidence as individuals receive encouragement and recognition from their peers.

As Peter describes below, Seton Villa has embarked on a formal program for residents to learn commercial baking skills and possibly sell their wares at community markets. This will provide both individual and group activity and, if we participate at public markets, an opportunity for recognition beyond the groups at Seton Villa.

It will be interesting to see how this initiative evolves and how our residents benefit from their participation.

Marco Colli
Chairman, Seton Villa



From our CEO

New Bakery Inclusion Program Initiative

Building upon the enthusiasm displayed by residents of Rosalie's Place to learn to cook biscuits and scones under the direction of CSW Brenda Burger, who is also a qualified pastry chef, we are finalising a partnership with Ryde TAFE to provide access to their commercial kitchen facility and cookery educators to provide interested residents with an opportunity to develop new baking skills. If this weekly capacity-building activity is successful, residents may choose to sell their produce at the Ryde Wharf Community Market in 2025.



From our CEO continued

In addition, a number of interested residents have been identified by the Ryde TAFE Disability Co-ordinator as being suitable to undertake a Certificate II course in Cookery, alongside other community members with a disability, from the beginning of 2025. These initiatives will help fulfil resident goals toward increased skill development and community engagement.

Not to be outdone, other residents with a desire to enhance their knitting skills have formed a knitting group at Jenny's Place on a Sunday, supported by Accommodation Manager Andrea Watson. Perhaps the community market stall could be called "Seton Villa Beanies and Buns."

Andrew, a resident at Smalls Road who is a keen Cronulla Sharks NRL fan, was presented with a knitted beanie and scarf just prior to attending the game on Sunday 18 August 2024. He was very appreciative and even more pleased that the Sharks defeated the Newcastle Knights by just one point!



Government Response to the Disability Royal Commission

After 10 months of waiting, the Australian Government has finally responded to 172 of the 222 recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) that were their primary or shared responsibility with the states and territories. Only 13 of the recommendations were accepted in full, with a further 117 accepted in principle and 36 being given further consideration.

The Report is underwhelming and a real insult to the 10,000 people that shared their (often traumatic) experiences and a \$559.3m taxpayer investment.

The DRC's most controversial recommendations related to the phasing out of segregated or special schools, workplaces and homes. The Commissioners were split over these recommendations, with Commissioners Bennett, Galbally, and McEwin pushing to phase out segregation, whereas Chair Sackville and Commissioners Mason and Ryan wanted to reform and improve these settings.

The Australian and state and territory governments have made no commitment to phasing out special schools,

concluding that inclusive education is a state and territory responsibility. Likewise, for housing, the Australian and state and territory governments would not commit to phasing out group homes, labelling those recommendations 'subject to further consideration.' However, they accepted in principle the recommendations to improve access to alternative housing options, to separate Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) provision in homes, and to promote active support in group home settings.

The Department of Social Services has a website dedicated to the response to the Royal Commission, which includes the official response, summaries, fact sheets, joint responses and FAQs.

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/australian-government-response-to-the-disability-royal-commission>

We will be carefully monitoring further information to assess the likely impact on Seton Villa moving forward.

Olympic Dreams

In the lead up to the Paris 2024 Olympics, the RASAIID families assisted residents from Smalls Road to hold their own Olympic Games Day on Sunday 14 July 2024.

Each of the 13 residents chose a country to represent – which may have been a nod to their own or a staff member’s heritage (or because they liked the flag!). Two months of preparations included crafting their flags from cardboard and weekend practice days where staff encouraged them to try their hand at different “sports”.

Events included putt putt golf, soccer and basketball, fishing, shot put and ring toss among others. The most fun was during the swimming races using an inflatable kiddie pool and wind-up toys which only swam in circles!

There were so many learning opportunities within the program but most importantly the residents thoroughly enjoyed fellowship with their friends, and it was also wonderful for families to get together for a delicious lunch.



Vale Marlene Close

15 May 1945 – 1 June 2024

Marlene was one of the original resident group when the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul opened their Seton Villa accommodation centre for young women with intellectual disability in 1966. Marlene will always be remembered for her energetic approach to life, her kindness and adorable welcoming smile that lit up her beautiful blue eyes and made everyone feel special. Marlene loved a good party with singing and dancing and was never shy to get everyone involved.

In her last months at Seton Villa, Marlene became very frail and suffered numerous falls. Following admission to Ryde Hospital with pneumonia, Marlene was transferred to Neringah Hospice for palliative care, where she died peacefully with her family around her.

We will all miss Marlene dearly and may she rest in peace.

