



Myrtle Cottage

COTTAGE COURIER

FEBRUARY 25 – MARCH 25

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LIVE SOCIAL LIVE HAPPY LIVE WELL

Myrtle Cottage
6 Bosci Road
Ingleburn, 2565

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Contact Us
02-9426-3100

**Visit Our Website for
More Information**
www.myrtlecottage.org.au



Scan here!



CEO

Hi all,

The Department of Health and Aged Care continues to work on supporting older people following the review into Aged Care. The Support at Home program will come into effect for some aged care services and programs from 1 July 2025, click the link for further information

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-12/support-at-home-program-booklet-for-older-people-families-and-carers.pdf>

From 1 July 2025 a rights-based new Aged Care Act comes into effect. This Act has been developed to put the rights of older people at the centre of our aged care system. For further information please click on the link, [A new Aged Care Act for the rights of older people – Easy Read fact sheet | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)

I came across this article – Leading with Love, which involves approaching our interactions with empathy, compassion and genuine care. I would like to encourage all staff, volunteers and members to follow these tips.

Practice Active Listening: Give your full attention to others, showing that you value their perspectives and feelings.

Show Appreciation: Acknowledge and celebrate the efforts and achievements of those around you, fostering a positive environment.

Offer Support: Be available to assist others in times of need, demonstrating empathy and understanding.

Encourage Open Communication: Create a safe space for open dialogue, where individuals feel heard and respected.

Model Self-Compassion: By treating yourself with kindness, you set an example for others to do the same.

Flu Vaccination, It is that time of the year! A reminder to book in with your doctor and get the jab. It is really important to take care of yourself and others so if you have any flu like symptoms please stay home and get well before returning to the Cottage.

Keep washing your hands, look after your selves and each other!

Live Active, Live Social, Live Well



Kylie Richardson

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Important Changes to the NDIS

I would like to share some important updates regarding the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) that may impact you and your loved ones.

The NDIS continues to evolve, ensuring that participants receive the support and services they need. Here are some key updates:

Increased Funding: Recent adjustments have been made to enhance funding for various support services. This means that many participants may have access to additional financial resources to help cover essential services, therapies, and assistive technologies.

Streamlined Plans: The NDIS is implementing a new approach to streamline the planning process. This aims to reduce wait times and make it easier for participants to access necessary supports promptly. The new assessments will commence in September this year and will take a few years to get around to all participants as some individuals have plans that are current for a few years. The new assessment will look at a person's functional ability and what support they require.

Community Engagement: The NDIS is placing a greater emphasis on community participation. They are promoting initiatives that encourage participants to engage with their local communities, fostering social connections and support networks. At present 40 – 50% of participants have social connection funding.

Feedback Mechanism: As part of their commitment to continuous improvement, the NDIS is enhancing channels for participant feedback. Your voice matters, and they want to hear your thoughts on the services you receive.

At Myrtle Cottage, we are dedicated to supporting our members as these changes take effect. We encourage everyone to stay informed and take advantage of the services available to you. If you have any questions or need assistance navigating these changes, please do not hesitate to reach out to our team.

Myrtle Cottage Celebrates the Positive Impact of Marketing Interns from UWS

At Myrtle Cottage, we continually strive to enhance our community's engagement and outreach efforts. This year, we have been fortunate to welcome Mara and Abby talented marketing interns who have made a significant impact on Myrtle Cottage. Since their arrival, the interns have brought fresh ideas, creativity, and enthusiasm to our marketing initiatives. Their contributions have not only enhanced our visibility but also strengthened our connection with the community we serve.



Penny W

AGEING & DISABILITY

Hello everyone!

I hope everyone is keeping well. I'm excited to share that we're renaming our Diversional Therapy program to the Social Connection Group! While the name is changing, the core goal remains the same: to enhance well-being through meaningful social interactions and a strong sense of community. The program will continue to focus on supporting individuals' personal and social well-being through engaging, fun, and inclusive activities.

Over the past two months, we've had the pleasure of celebrating a variety of special events. During Seniors Week, we kicked off with an exciting, fun-filled mystery outing on Monday, followed by live entertainment, singing, and dancing for the remainder of the week. Our BBQ lunch was a great success, and we were delighted with performances from the talented Camden Choir, Garry Wade, and Peter Paki at the Cottage.

Additionally, we had several guest speakers who shared valuable information on Diabetes Awareness and Falls Prevention. We also celebrated Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, International Mother Language Day, and Greek Independence Day. Each celebration included a range of activities such as baking, cooking, crafting, storytelling, and embracing diverse cultures and traditions.



Looking ahead, we have an exciting line-up of programs to look forward to, from Easter and Mother's Day celebrations to the Biggest Morning Tea, along with plenty of raffle prizes to be won.

Lastly, but just as important, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the staff members, volunteers, and participants who contribute to the success of our program. We truly appreciate each and every one of you!

Stay safe and healthy! 😊



Cris and the SCG Team

BELL PROGRAM

Hi everyone,

I hope you all enjoying reading my January to March report.

I like to start with thanking all that were able to attend the Forget me not concert, we took over 45 members carers of the bell, outreach and flexible respite program. The entertainer was great, we all either enjoyed the dancing, singing along or just being part of the wonderful concert.



Some of you may have seen us at Campbelltown mall recently, we had a stall and spoke to lots of people about our programs. I will be booking the next one in May at Minto mall.

Our carers information day, we had two speakers from Seniors rights the topics were aged care advocacy and a legal information. The requests so far for the next speakers are (someone from a residential facility) It would be great to hear from anyone that has more suggested topics.

Bye for now



Christine Turner

DEMENTIA FACT SHEET

This information may help you understand dementia

- **Part 2**

- It is okay to ask a friend or someone you trust to read it to you. It was written by health experts for a website called Health Resource Directory.
- You can visit the website by going to www.healthresourcedirectory.org.au

- **How to live well with Dementia**

- Keep your body active
- Eat healthy foods
- Stay social with friends and family
- Join social groups
- Don't give up on your hobbies
- Sleep well
- Avoid drinking alcohol
- Manage your hearing loss and all medical conditions
- Keep a journal of your symptoms, medicines and anything else worth noting

- **Where to find extra support**

- **Dementia Australia**

- 1800 699 799

- **My Aged Care**

- 1800 200 422

- **NDIS**

- 1800 800 110

- This Easy read fact sheet is a part of a series of factsheets on Dementia for the full series including language translations please go to healthresourcedirectory.org.au PHN South western Sydney

More information can be found at Dementia Australia

<https://www.dementia.org.au/about-us/about-website/new-dementia-australia-website>

HAPPY FEET

Hi everyone,

Welcome to another edition of the newsletter report. I hope everyone is well.

I would like to thank Staff and Volunteers for their support in running Podiatry. Without your help, we wouldn't be able to have this service so thank you. Please if you wish to access this service don't hesitate to ask Sarah or myself for a Podiatry pack. Once you receive an information booklet, you need to go to your G.P to complete the care plan and ask them to provide a copy of your medical history. This is important as our Podiatrist Corinna may need to know if any medical history is affecting your health. Please note that if you can't get a care plan, you will need to pay \$56 directly to Corinna.



Now onto something a little bit different I have some trivia facts about Australia that I have found you may already know some of these but I think its never to late to expand your knowledge.

1. Australia is the only country that is also a continent
2. The Australian Alps receive more snow than Switzerland!
3. Australia has the longest Dingo fence it's 5,600 km and runs through three states
4. Hyams Beach in Jervis Bay has the whitest sand in the world
5. The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef system in the world it measures 2,300 km it's so large you can even see it from Space.

Take Care

Please take note of the following dates for Podiatry

- Thursday 17th April
- Thursday 29th May
- Thursday 24th July
- Thursday 7th August
- Thursday 11th September
- Thursday 16th October
- Thursday 20th November
- Thursday 18th December.



Rebecca
Admin Assistant

LINKLINE

Welcome to Autumn

Autumn brings in a season of change. This transitional period can bring both joys and challenges. Maintaining well-being is crucial to enjoy the beauty of the season. There are few tips for our members to thrive during this autumn:

Engage in Outdoor activities: gentle walk, birdwatching, light gardening, outdoor photography would help capturing the beauty of nature.

Stay Active Indoors: Chair yoga, indoor walking, light resistance training with small weight or resistance bands, balance exercise like standing on one foot while holding on to a chair would help to prevent falls and maintain independence while the outside weather is not so favourable.

Nourishment with Seasonal Foods:

Autumn offers a beautiful pallet of delicious fruit and vegetables, which are not only delicious but nutritious. Vegetables like pumpkin & squash are rich in vitamin A & C. Apples are high in fiber & antioxidants, carrot & sweet potatoes are good source of vitamin C and potassium, leafy green vegetables like kale & spinach are rich in vitamins A, C, E & K.

Prioritise mental health: shorter days and reduced sunlight can lead to sadness & isolation. Consider to maintain a consistent sleep schedule to regulate mood & energy. Engage in mood-boosting activities like reading, puzzles or crafts. Stay connected with friends & family through audio or video calls.



Program Update

I will be updating the members' profile and personal details. Please Feel free to make a list of things you would like me to update.

The Linkline program has been a little slow this year. Due to different challenges, not many members have been participating in the daily activities. As you know that these activities help to boost our mood and cognition as well, I would like to encourage you all to resume the daily activities.

You may consider attending the Cottage at least one day a week to prioritise your mental health.

A Social Support Group code will be needed for that. If you need help with My Aged Care to obtain the code please let me know. We are happy to refer you to My Aged Care.

Please keep Linkline program next to your phone so we can all do the activities.

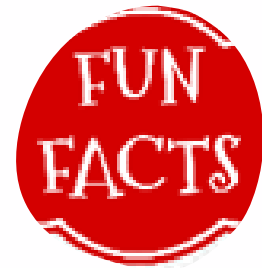
Keep smiling 😊



Nasima A

RECREATIONAL & WANDERERS

The Recreation Program operates Friday & every second Saturday for people aged 18 and over with a disability. It's been a whirlwind journey—like, truly ALL over the map! North to south. The weather from freezing having to get your jacket out of storage to extreme heat wanting to wear your costumes all day. we've been socializing, eating, drinking, and generally living our best lives! 🎉 We've been busy continuing the New Year's celebrations like it's the first week of January—because, honestly, who says the fun has to stop? 🍷🌟 Whether it's finding a new favourite spot to hang out, discovering hidden gems, or meeting some wildly interesting people, enjoying good food the connections we've made have been priceless. We've laughed, we've learned, and we've made memories we'll probably forget by next weekend—but that's the beauty of it all! So, here's to more adventures, new places, and new faces in the months to come. 🍷 Come join us make memories not to forget.



Warragamba Dam fun fact The dam created capacity for a reservoir of 2,027 gigalitres (4.46×10^{11} imp gal; 5.35×10^{11} US gal) and is fed by a catchment area of 9,051 square kilometres (3,495 sq mi). The surface area of the lake covers 75 square kilometres (29 sq mi) of the now flooded Burrangorang Valley.

Mount Annan gardens fun fact The seed vault, formerly the site of the New South Wales Seed Bank, has in its collection 10,000 species of plants.

Cataract Dam fun fact Cataract Dam is one of the oldest and most picturesque dams in Sydney. The castle-like sandstone building on top of the wall and fanciful outlet tower evoke a sense of importance. At the time of its construction from 1902 to 1907, Cataract Dam was the biggest engineering project in Australia and the fourth biggest in the world.



Funny Joke Of The Day

A group of friends goes out for the day and has a great time. One friend says, 'That was fantastic! We should do this more often!' Another friend replies, 'Definitely! But maybe next time we should just wander around with no plan at all!' The third friend says, 'As long as we end up somewhere with great food, I'm in!'



Leanne Marks

THE KITCHEN

Greetings from the kitchen,

Wow, we sure have had plenty of catering activities to keep us busy over the last couple of months! SCG Group have been enjoying cooking classes each week and we have prepared for our regular picnics, BBQ events and outings. We also catered for the Bell Carer's Information day, and I would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thankyou to all kitchen volunteers for their extremely hard work and assistance each and every day. I could not do it without you!

We have had some students from pathways (pictured) come and work with us over the last few weeks, which has not only been an excellent learning experience, but has also been an exceptionally rewarding time for all involved.

We look forward to a few exciting events on the calendar such as Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, Easter and Volunteers Week.



Jo M

JOKE OF THE MONTH

- How is the moon like dentures? Both come out at night.
- I called the incontinence hotline recently. They asked if I could hold.
- An old woman is sitting at a bar when an older gentleman sits down beside her. "So," he says, "do I come here often?"
- Why do retirees smile so much? Because they can't hear a word you're saying.
- If I ever decide to buy a horse ranch in my old age, I'm going to name it "Pasture Prime."

TRANSPORT DESK

Transport has been very busy the last few months with plenty of outings, shopping trips and special events.

A VERY BIG THANK YOU to ALL Drivers and Bus Assistants who come in each and every day to support our members. Our drivers and bus assistants attend each day rain, hail or shine to ensure our members have a safe journey to and from the Cottage. We know that we are low on numbers of drivers and bus assistants so we thank you all for all the work that you do each and every day.

If you know anyone that would be interested in driving or bus assisting please speak to Nasima.

Safety tip for the month

One of the big things to look out for when driving is driver fatigue. It is one of the leading causes of car accidents on our roads. Below are some tips on symptoms of fatigue and how to prevent it.



Azree M

Driver fatigue:

Fatigue is a general term commonly used to describe the experience of feeling sleepy, tired or exhausted. Fatigue is both a physiological and psychological experience. Fatigue can severely impair judgement and can affect anyone. It is particularly dangerous because one of the symptoms is a decreased ability to judge our own level of tiredness. Symptoms vary, but may include:

- Yawning
- Poor concentration
- Tired or sore eyes
- Restlessness
- Drowsiness
- Slow reactions
- Boredom
- Feeling irritable
- Missing road signs
- Making fewer and larger steering corrections
- Difficulty in staying in the lane
- Micro-sleeps

How do we beat driver fatigue?

- Get plenty of rest before starting your journey
- Avoid driving at times when you would normally be asleep
- Avoid long drives after work
- Take a break every 2 hours and share the driving if possible
- Pull over and stop if you feel drowsiness or loss of concentration
- Reassess your medication-maybe your medication has side effects that makes you drowsy
- Do not drink alcohol or take drugs before driving a vehicle

VOLUNTEER VOICE

Hello Volunteers

Welcome to this edition of the newsletter. I would like to start with congratulating all the volunteers for going through all the trainings and checks recently.

We will be posting all the optional available training opportunities so you may find something interests and benefits you all.

Apart from community newsletter we have created a volunteer newsletter to keep our volunteers updated with all the aspects of the Cottage. It has been few months and we would like to find out your feedback on that so we can improve. Please find out a feedback form next to volunteer sign in sheet. Please return it to the office with your feedback.



New Volunteers

Warm welcome to our new volunteers: Asma A, Janette C, Kim S.

Volunteers Needed

We are looking for bus drivers, bus assistants and kitchen assistants. Please contact the Cottage via phone or email if you are keen to help others.

Volunteer in Spotlight: Debbie S

Debbie is a Dementia program bus assistant and program assistant for more than five years with the Cottage.

She has always been very flexible, person centered, keen to support others. Assists in all the programs run by the Cottage. Anywhere any day of the week we need some extra support Debbie will say YES if she is available.

THANK YOU Debbie!

Volunteer of the Year Award

The yearly award program run by The Centre of Volunteering to recognise the hard work, dedication, and contribution made by all the volunteers throughout the year. Please feel free to nominate yourself and/or others by putting in a suggestion for in.

Volunteer Induction

Tuesday 8 April & 13 May at 10.30am at the Cottage. Please register yourself if you are willing to attend the induction.

Take care, stay happy and stay with us



Nasima A

WELCOME

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all of the new members of Myrtle Cottage. We hope you have a wonderful time and make many new friends.

BIRTHDAYS

Wishing all of our members, staff and volunteers who celebrated their birthdays - Happy Birthday!

February 25

- **Members,** Tereapii A, Peter L, Maria Dos S, Carmen E, Marie G, Janet G, Karen W, Merle S, Hiam Abu, Keith M, Eric G, Melita V, Reavi Von T, Andrew M, Christine S, Ralph D, Eileen J
- **staff,** Kylie R, Rebecca T, Sarah C, Sharny J
- **Volunteers,** Carmen M, Colin S, Janette C, Kim F, Sharon M, Vivian S
- **March 25**
- **Members,** Theo S, Wayne M, Beryl B, Diane N, Margaret W, Heng S, Annamaria C, Gordon McL, Patrick C
- **Staff,** Anna P, Azree M
- **Volunteers,** Christine W, Karen H, Mary C, Michelle M, Phillip W, Robyn C, Sarah W

Trading Table

The Trading Table has raised \$287.50 since the last newsletter.

Donations

Thank you so much to members making use of the donation box for loose change. Donation total \$18.30 Every little bit counts!

03.02.25	Sushila Singh \$20
25.02.25	Edi Ift \$32.05
03.03.25	Sushila Singh \$20.00
05.03.25	Recyled Cans \$49.60
10.03.25	Pushpa Ramsay \$20.00
28.03.25	Wayne Stokeld \$50

Total \$191.65

The donation box is located near the entrance to the activity room. It is the slot in the wall.



CLIENT ADVISORY

Myrtle Cottage is thrilled to announce the recent expansion of our Advisory Committee, welcoming several new members who bring a wealth of experience and diverse perspectives. This development is a significant milestone as we continue to enhance our strategic planning efforts and strive for excellence in the services we provide.

Our Advisory Committee plays a crucial role in guiding the direction of Myrtle Cottage. With the inclusion of our new members, we are excited to harness their insights and expertise, ensuring our strategies align with the needs of our community and the individuals we serve.

The committee met in March and assisted us with feedback on our services and what they see as priorities for the future. The input from our Advisory Committee is invaluable, as it allows us to consider innovative ideas and different viewpoints. We believe that collaboration is key to our success, and the diverse perspectives of our committee will enable us to make informed decisions that reflect the needs of our members moving into the new landscape of aged care.



IMPROVEMENT BOX

Thank you to everyone who left their feedback in the Improvement Box. We love hearing your feedback good or bad that's how we make your experience at the Cottage enjoyable.

We have received feedback from members in relation to our lunches. We have discussed the concerns with Ingleburn RSL kitchen and they are working on improving the type and variety of the meals. You should already be seeing the different meals on your days.

Great feedback on our candle making and cooking classes.

Members Participation and Social Inclusion Policy & Procedure

Policy

Myrtle Cottage is committed to empowering and supporting members to participate fully in the community and in this organisation.

The organisation will:

- Continue to provide staff with training and development opportunities and create a space for discussion during staff meetings to continued shared learnings
- Support members to participate in communities and activities of choice respecting their choices and plans regarding employment, education, leisure and their social lives
- Enable members to be involved in decisions that affect them and the services they receive
- Encourage and support members to be involved in service development, evaluation, planning and organisational management
- Seek members input regarding participation strategies, assistance and support, service involvement and development
- Develop links with other groups to promote greater opportunities for connections and meaningful participation in the community

Procedure

Myrtle Cottage staff to explain at first point of contact and throughout participants time in program that we promote and support individual choice when engaging with our service and their care plan. That we respect the rights of all individuals at the Cottage, this includes but is not limited to; staff, participants, volunteers and carers. As an organisation that we continue to provide staff with training and development opportunities around; social inclusion, respect and individual choice and create a space for discussion during staff meetings to continued shared learnings.

Information strategies

Information about participation opportunities provided to members by:

- Information Booklet
- Members Handbook (SCG members only)
- Charter of rights
- Client Advisory Committee
- Forms and brochures in foyer

These documents provided at assessment, information provided in newsletters and brochure stand renewed regularly.

Policy & Procedure

In addition, information provided to members about participation opportunities at each stage of service from:

- Referral
- Assessment
- Individual service review
- Client Advisory Committee
- Bi monthly newsletter
- Annual General Meeting

Assistance and support

Strategies to support and assist member participation reviewed annually with members and updated as necessary. Members actively supported to participate by:

- Regularly update member profile as required to ensure individualised service provision
- Review members goals annually or earlier if required
- Encourage participation and/or feedback to Client Advisory Committee representative
- Evaluate the program, service provided and participation with independent students
- Provide program and service updated through daily announcements, bi monthly newsletter and Annual General Meeting

The strategies might also include:

- Training, workshops and local forum for members – developing self-confidence, skills building and local knowledge
- Developing a toolkit and support for staff and volunteers – on how to support member participation, choice and feedback
- Providing guest speakers and liaising with other services
- Providing the bi monthly newsletter on CD as well as printed
- Allocation of a volunteer 1:1 or small interest groups

Self-reliance and social inclusion

During referral and assessment information collected about the member's needs, likes and dislikes is used to develop a group program. The strategies include:

- Using a Montessori approach includes collecting background information over time to build a picture of the member. This information directs the individual care goals e.g. born in UK reminisce activity about UK, played golf Nintendo golf competition activity.
- Provide training for staff and volunteers – to understand, respect and support members in their skill development or to maintain skills.
- Providing opportunities for members to take part in social and educational activities.
- Encouraging members with special interests to link up with a group in the local community

Service development and organisational management

Members are encouraged and supported to become involved in service development and organisational management, if they choose to do so. These opportunities might include:

- taking part in program surveys
- representation on the Client Advisory Committee
- active membership of Myrtle Cottage



Fall Word Search

s r a k e h z k m f a h u t g h s j
c o j c d c o r n q e k k i k x j y
a w h a l l o w e e n d i x c a a h
r b t n q g z k i o m w j h x t p f
f u u d h z i j y n u t s p n h p y
v j k y s c n k b p u m p k i n l s
a e v y z w a r v g w b c m w g e w
a u t u m n z l e a v e s n j f f e
e e y h h t s x s l s w e a t e r q
b r d w a g w w s c a r e c r o w h
a f a l l c i d e r l t v l k j u w
a w y d c h a r v e s t g v y i b a



apple
autumn
candy
cider
corn

fall
halloween
harvest
leaves
nuts

pumpkin
rake
scarecrow
scarf
sweater

