Opal Monts

Welcome to Opal Aged Care

Opal Moments is our magazine that keeps you up to date on what's happening.

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specialist aged care



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We've worked hard to build a strong foundation at Opal Aged Care. With that in place, we're now focused on delivering a standard of customer service that will meet residents' and families' expectations.

Welcome to our fifth edition of Opal Moments

Welcome to the fifth edition of Opal Moments. This last year has been a busy one at Opal Aged Care, and we have another exciting year ahead of us. We've worked hard to build a strong foundation for Opal and with that in place, we're now focused on delivering a standard of customer service that will meet residents' and families' expectations all the time.

We know we could not deliver a high standard of care and services in our homes without our committed and compassionate staff. On page 3 you can read about how we are creating clear career pathways and opportunities for our staff. We've also profiled some team members who have kindly shared their career paths to date and their plans for the future.

At Opal we have ambitious plans for the future – our goal is to give our residents more choice and access to a wider variety of products and services. To make sure that the options we introduce are the right ones, we need to first understand what our residents value most. Read page 7 to find out how we're working with residents and families to provide the best experience for this important time in residents' lives.

On page 11, we share an update on our first year as the principal sponsor of Alzheimer's Australia's Memory Walk & Jog events in New South Wales and Victoria. We've had some great results, raising much-needed funds and awareness – and I'm delighted to announce that our sponsorship has now expanded to include Queensland. I encourage you to get involved in your home or local community to support this very important cause.

I'm excited to introduce our new feature, 'A resident's story' on page 25. Our interviewee, Pasquale, arrived in Australia at the age of 20. Find out why he has a deep connection to Australia, but will always call Italy home.

On page 27, meet a member of the leadership team; Sean Bilton. Head of Commercial, Sean tells us about his role in leading the expansion of our homes and supporting the evolution of Opal in delivering a new experience in residential aged care.

Finally, get up to date with what is happening across all of our homes, as we bring you the latest from residents and staff around the country.

Thanks again for your support over the past year, and I hope you enjoy this edition of Opal Moments.

Cay

Gary Barnier Managing Director





Having a strong culture within the organisation is a priority for Opal, and we're putting staff retention at the heart of everything we do.

Aged care – a career for the future

Opal is working to meet the increasing demand for quality aged care. As well as building homes, this means attracting and retaining quality staff. To ensure that we employ great people, we're focused on making Opal a great employer. One way we're doing this is by working on plans to provide the opportunity for career progression across all job roles.

According to Yolande Nealon, Opal's General Manager of Human Resources, "Whether our people want to increase their responsibility, gain new qualifications and experience,

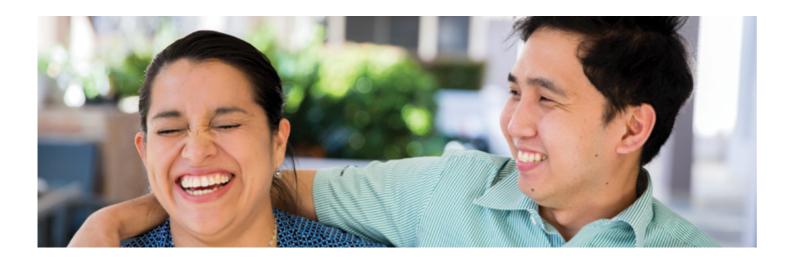
or make a move into a different part of the organisation – we want to support them to achieve those goals. We are developing a Career Pathways program for every role in the organisation from right across the board including clinical teams to catering and hospitality, lifestyle staff, management and administration.

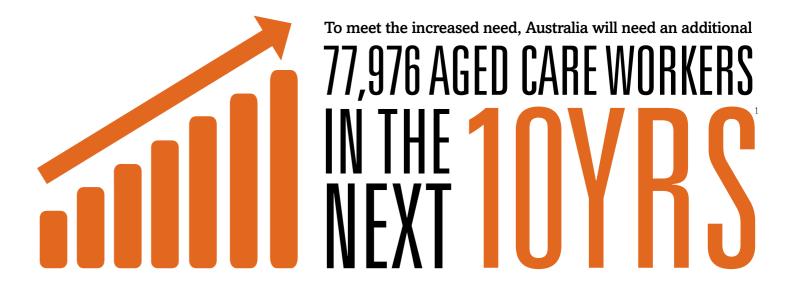
At Opal, we also recognise that the aged care industry typically has high staff turnover, due to the demanding nature of the roles. So, in addition to career planning for our staff, we conduct a bi-annual staff satisfaction survey.

This gives everyone in the organisation a voice and helps us to understand the areas of the business our people think are great, as well as the areas we need to work on.

Having a strong culture within the organisation is a priority for Opal, and we're putting staff retention at the heart of everything we do.

There are many different ways to progress a career within Opal. On the following pages read about some team members with very different career trajectories; but a shared passion for enriching the lives of our residents.

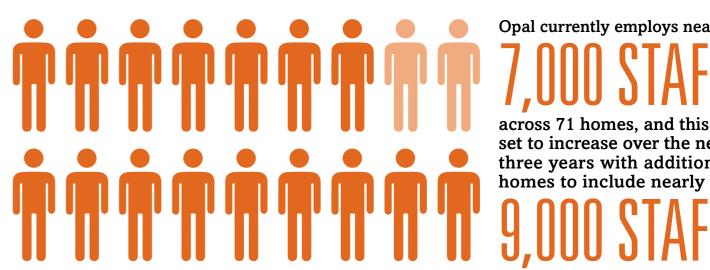




Over the next ten years, Australia needs to supply more than



In the next 30 years, the number of people in Australia will increase by



Opal currently employs nearly

across 71 homes, and this is set to increase over the next three years with additional

With an ageing population, Australia needs to invest in its aged care workforce.

McCrindle, 2014 ¹ ACFA, 2015 2

McCrindle, 2014³

Feature: Aged care – a career for the future

Opal Moments



Liz Maxwell (right) accepts the Home of the Year award with Clinical Manager Janet Collins.

Elizabeth (Liz) Maxwell, Facility Manager, Macquarie Place

Liz had a vision when she started her career as an Enrolled Nurse (EN). She dreamed of running an aged care facility where residents would have the highest standards of care, delivered in a home-like environment. She knew she'd achieved her goal, when Macquarie Place was recognised as Opal's Home of the Year in 2016.

It didn't happen overnight. After working as an EN in aged care, Liz obtained her masters degree, then worked in a hospital for a while. But she soon moved back into the sector as a Clinical Manager. From there, she progressed to a Deputy Director of Nursing and for the last ten years she's been a Facility Manager.

Liz has been at Opal Macquarie Place for almost three years. She says, "I'm passionate about high standards in aged care so I did my research before applying. I wanted to be sure that this would be the right place for me to succeed. "I saw that Opal had a vision and that the focus was all about people – the residents, the families and the staff. That was exactly what I was looking for. Three years on we've made huge progress at Opal Macquarie Place and it was the high point of my career when we were recognised with the Home of the Year award."

Liz goes on, "In aged care, you get to build relationships with residents that can last years; unlike in a hospital where you might look after a patient for just days. On top of that, Opal offers very flexible hours to suit people from all walks of life. Plus, there's great career progression in aged care, which you wouldn't necessarily get when working in a hospital environment."



Ralph Yabut, Registered Nurse

Ralph joined Opal as an Assistant in Nursing in 2012. Working at Opal he was able to get the flexibility he needed to study and obtain his Registered Nurse qualifications. Opal gave Ralph shifts when he needed them, together with the time off he needed for studying and taking exams.

Ralph says, "I come from the Philippines – our culture is about caring for and respecting your elders, so aged care was a natural choice for me. Opal allowed me to fit my shifts around my university commitments, so I could qualify as a Registered Nurse.

"I feel fortunate to be helping residents during this important time in their lives. Often, the people I look after have complex and difficult conditions; and they're scared they'll get forgotten. It's up to us to give them the proper care and attention they deserve. That's such an important and valuable thing to do, and I'm honoured to be the one to do it."

Jana Nettleship, Assistant in Nursing (AIN) and Physiotherapy Aide

Jana's role as an Assistant in Nursing (AIN) has allowed her to gain experience on the job, while studying at university to become a Registered Nurse. Her ultimate goal is to work in sub-acute care in a hospital.

Jana says, "Working at Opal has been a great start to my nursing career. I work alongside experienced clinical staff who support me in my development. I also get exposed to a broad range of conditions, which has helped to increase my skill set. I've been able to develop skills in everything from medication administration to wound management, and I care for residents who have complex conditions such as dementia.

"But what I really love the most about working at Opal is the opportunity to work intimately with residents, getting to know them and their families well. That's something I'll miss when I move on to working in hospitals."

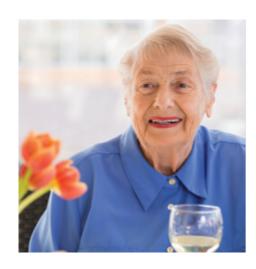


At Opal Aged Care we are reimagining the aged care experience, with a firm focus on working to deliver the highest standards of customer service and choice.

Reimagining aged care

People often enter aged care in an urgent situation following an accident or incident in the home. At such a challenging time, residents and their families want to have confidence in the aged care home they've chosen.

Unfortunately, there is still a negative perception of aged care in Australia, creating fear and anxiety for people who suddenly have to make this decision – whether for themselves or someone they love. At Opal, we want to change people's perception of aged care, reimagining the aged care experience by working hard to deliver the highest standards of customer service and choice possible.



Listening to our customers

In his previous role within the Commonwealth Government, Opal Chairman, Professor Peter Shergold AC, helped shape national policy around consumer choice in aged care.

"There's not a clear understanding of what consumer direction means in residential aged care. I think it's up to companies like Opal to think through the implications." He says, "We don't just want to roll out our ideas across all Opal homes. We want to talk to residents and their families about what they want."

With this in mind, Opal conducted its first national customer satisfaction survey this year. With nearly 3,000 responses in total from across our 71 homes, we gathered a clear picture of where we are

With this in mind, Opal conducted our first national customer satisfaction survey this year. With nearly 3,000 responses in total from across our 71 homes. meeting residents' expectations, and where there is room for improvement.

Improving customer service

The survey provided clear feedback from our residents and their families. For example, residents told us they're happy with the cleanliness of our facilities and our friendly nurses, but that we need to improve the speed of answering call bells, providing additional lifestyle activities that are rewarding and meaningful and improving teamwork among staff in some of our homes.

We're now working to address this feedback at all Opal homes, with each home following an action plan to implement changes and keep track of progress. Although the survey is a key opportunity to gather feedback from our customers, Opal is committed to continually gathering feedback from residents and their families to look at ways we can improve the care and services we deliver.



Feature: Reimagining aged care

Providing more choice

Great customer service is core to a good resident experience. But we also want to know what people would like to see in aged care that isn't currently available.

We worked with a market research firm to survey more than 1,100 people in the community about new services they'd like to see in aged care in the future and we asked residents, families and managers in a number of our homes. As a result we developed a suite of new products and services which have been rolled out across the majority of our homes.

We have upgraded and improved several of our hospitality and accommodation services to provide packages of products that add a little extra every day luxury for our residents to enjoy. This has included premium bath and body products, fluffy Egyptian cotton towels, and premium bedding and doonas. It also includes additional food choices at meal times, a 24 hour snack menu and special events such as canapé parties. We've improved our entertainment options, offering access to Foxtel, and are in the

process of upgrading our technology to help our residents and their families keep in touch via phones and the internet.

Since rolling out the new services and products we've conducted focus group sessions in a number of our homes to gather feedback on the new services and to date, this has been very positive, with residents enjoying the additional food choices, and upgrades to services such as Foxtel.

During the research and feedback stage, we were able to gather ideas for new services, including beauty and shopping experiences, entertainment and transport options, companion services, and more. We're now trialling these ideas in homes, with the ultimate goal to provide residents and their families tailored, bespoke experiences to suit their individual needs.

An eye to the future

Opal Aged Care has grown rapidly over the last few years, to meet the growing need for aged care services. We're investing in our staff and service standards to ensure a quality experience for residents across all our homes. We're looking to shape the future of the aged care sector so that accessing aged care services is the very best experience it can be for both residents and their families.

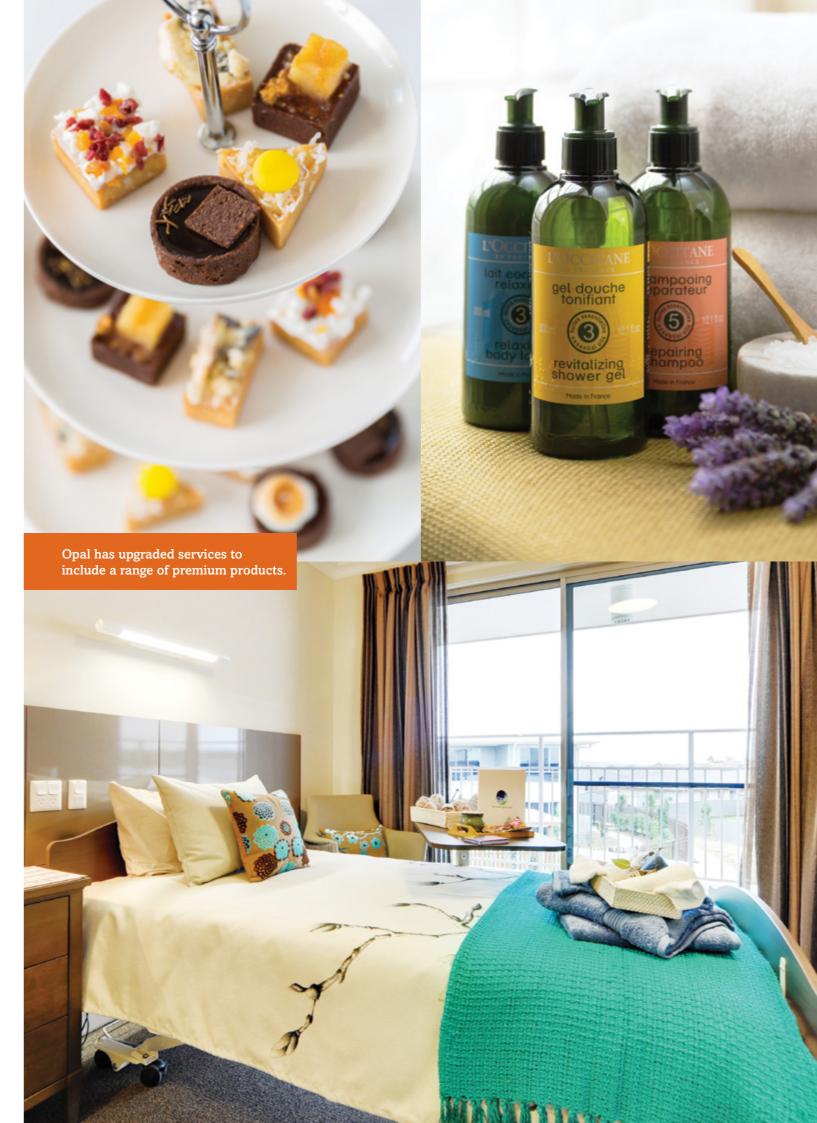
According to Opal's Managing
Director, Gary Barnier, the number
one thing Opal learned in its market
research, is that Australians don't
expect to see aged care as a
"one-way ticket."

Gary envisages a future where residential aged care could include services promoting health and wellbeing to the elderly in their communities in addition to traditional residential aged care. He says, "We think residential aged care can integrate with people's communities, it can integrate with the acute health system, and it can rehabilitate people to help them to stay in their own homes longer. That's a complete reimagining of residential aged care.

It's a really exciting time for us.

We need to start looking to the future to develop aged care services we know Australians will want."







Dementia is now the second leading cause of death among Australians¹, with more than 353,800 people living with the disease. At Opal, we recognise our responsibility to lead the way in caring for people living with dementia.

Tackling dementia together

At Opal, we recognise our responsibility to lead the way in caring for people living with dementia.

Dementia is now the second leading cause of death among Australians¹, with more than 353,800 people living with the disease. Without a medical breakthrough this will rise to almost 900,000 by 2050². The increase is the result of an ageing population, as well as a better understanding and diagnosis of dementia.



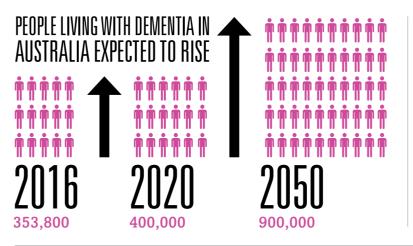
Dementia is not just one disease. In fact, it is a term for a collection of symptoms caused by disorders affecting the brain. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia, but there are more than 100 different types.

For those living with dementia, besides the obvious distress and difficulty caused by cognitive changes, there can be devastating impacts on lifestyle, due to the stigma and often the social isolation that occurs. Alzheimer's Australia conducted the first nationwide survey of people living with dementia back in 2014 and results showed that nearly 60 per cent of participants felt people avoided spending time with them because of their diagnosis. Organisations such as Alzheimer's Australia are working to raise awareness of dementia and

> Organisations such as Alzheimer's Australia are working to raise awareness of dementia and to make our communities more dementia-friendly.

to make our communities more dementia-friendly. Their goal is to help people remain an active part of their communities for longer.

It is a cause that needs continued support to raise awareness and funds to find treatments and care that will give people the best quality of life possible, while living with the disease. At Opal, we are working to adapt and develop our homes to help support people living with dementia. Our education partnership with Alzheimer's Australia is developing as we roll out a peer learning program to ensure all knowledge and training is passed onto new staff, and as we build homes, many now have memory support wings to provide even further specialised care.



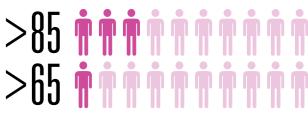


Dementia is the second leading cause of death in Australia and there is no cure

1.2MILLION

PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA ARE INVOLVED IN THE CARE OF SOMEONE WITH DEMENTIA





Three in ten people over the age of 85 and almost one in ten people over the age of 65 have dementia

EACH WEEK, THERE ARE 1,800 NEW CASES OF DEMENTIA IN AUSTRALIA

The statistics for dementia (top).

Source – Alzheimer's Australia



 $^{^{\}mbox{\tiny 1}}$ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

² Dementia Institute



Memory Walk and Jog

Opal Aged Care completed its first year as the principal sponsor and supporter of Alzheimer's Australia's New South Wales and Victoria Memory Walk & Jog events. Ten events were hosted across the states, inviting the general public to take part in a walk, jog or run – with distances from 1.5km to 10km.

How our sponsorship has helped

Our first year as sponsors saw an increase in participants from previous years, as we focused on raising awareness of the events within our homes and local communities. With this, the number of people taking part in the New South Wales and Victorian events almost doubled. Together, the events in both states raised more than \$900,000. This is a great result, and Opal as the principal sponsor is very proud to be part of such an important event.

This year, we will sponsor events in Queensland as well, where we hope to once again to double the number of participants and the funds raised.

How can you get involved?

The Memory Walk & Jog is a great opportunity to get your friends and family together to show support for Alzheimer's Australia, and people living with dementia. Last year we had a fantastic turn out of staff at our events, taking part in walks and runs across New South Wales and Victoria. Thank you to all our people who came from afar, or who braved rainy weather for such a fantastic cause.

This year, we're encouraging everyone in our homes and communities to get involved, and spread the word to as many people as possible.

You can take part in a number of ways:

- Walk, jog or run the distance at one of the planned events: family, friends, and all abilities welcome!
- DIY events: if you don't live near a planned event, you can host your own DIY Memory Walk & Jog event using the simple kit provided by the Alzheimer's Australia team, and invite your friends along.
- My Memory Walk & Jog: create your own personal challenge by pledging to complete a certain number of kilometres, and ask your family and friends to sponsor you.

Find out more at: www.memorywalk.com.au



Feature: Tackling dementia together



Raising awareness and funds

The Opal team is deeply committed to supporting residents living with dementia, often getting involved in raising awareness and funds. None more so than Melanie Rosenzweig, the Clinical Care Manager at Opal Seahaven in Victoria. Last year, Melanie (Mel) joined a group of 17 fundraisers climbing Mount Kilimanjaro to raise money for Alzheimer's Australia. Together, they raised

a phenomenal \$60,000 in funds, while also raising the profile of dementia as a disease.

Mel explained, "Every day I see the impact of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia on our residents and their families. It's so important that as carers we understand the disease and support them with specialist care. We can only continue to do this through ongoing research and

understanding how best to care for people. Alzheimer's Australia does vital work in providing support services, education and information.

Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro was one of the most challenging things I've ever done, both physically and mentally. But it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for a cause that's very close to my heart".

Thinko! - It's Game on for Dementia!

Alzheimer's Australia recently launched Thinko! a set of games, trivia, and brainteasers to mentally challenge your brain and help boost brain health. As an added bonus, you can raise funds for Alzheimer's

Australia. You can do this by hosting a Thinko! trivia night, and turn this into a charity event with your friends and family.

The Opal team attended the gala launch of Thinkol, with over 1,000

people attending. A huge Thinko! quiz was carried out, and an auction, which raised a total of \$230,000.

For more information on how you can get involved visit: www.thinko.org.au

For any help or support you can contact: National Dementia Helpline – 1800 100 500



See if you can crack the wordsearch!



S	Н	S	K	С	0	R	D	N	Α	P	X	E
R	Т	Α	Y	E	D	R	E	Т	S	U	L	С
Α	R	T	X	W	В	G	Н	E	Α	V	E	N
M	Α	U	Α	Y	M	О	N	0	R	T	S	Α
E	E	R	L	S	Α	R	R	Α	S	Н	R	T
T	F	N	Α	M	T	W	E	P	В	0	E	S
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Y	I	О	Α	В	N	T	Α	K	I	С	I	D
S	T	R	L	E	E	L	E	L	L	P	N	В
I	С	Α	В	N	I	T	N	0	L	I	U	G
S	С	U	Α	E	Y	R	U	С	R	E	M	J
K	L	L	N	T	D	D	G	I	Α	N	T	S
Α	P	S	Α	R	S	N	0	I	Т	Α	Т	S

OUTER SPACE

ALIENS	HEAVEN
ASTRAL	JUPITER
ASTRONOMY	MARS
BIG BANG	MERCURY
BLACK	METEOR
CLOUDS	MILKY WAY
CLUSTER	NEBULA
CRAFT	PLANET
DEBRIS	PROBE
DISTANCE	ROCKET
DWARFS	ROCKS
EARTH	SATURN
EXPAND	STATION
GALAXY	STELLAR
GAS	SYSTEM
GIANTS	UNIVERSE



At Opal Aged Care, we understand the importance of food in our resident's day. We hosted a two day masterclass to hone our chef's culinary skills.

The importance of good food

Opal's food evolution

Food brings people together, connects us to our culture and heritage, and brings back memories of happy times shared with family and friends. At Opal, we understand the role good nutrition plays in good health – and we also recognise the importance of food to overall well-being and happiness.



Our food philosophy

Opal serves more than 30,000 meals each day – representing thousands of opportunities to surprise and delight our residents with every meal. Our philosophy involves preparing fresh meals every day, with quality ingredients and a focus on home-style, nutritious comfort food. Our goal is to enhance residents' well-being by serving delicious food that they recognise and enjoy.

Our food journey

For the last two years, Opal has been working hard to transform the dining experience for our residents. We began with the basics – ensuring that no food is processed, and everything is cooked fresh on-site each day. Next, our hospitality team spent the year testing, refining and improving more than 180 recipes as well as changing

Our philosophy involves preparing fresh meals every day, with quality ingredients and a focus on home-style, nutritious comfort food.

the dining experience for our residents. Enjoying a meal is about the ambience and presentation as much as the food on the plate. With that in mind, they created new service standards in our dining rooms. If you walk into any Opal home, you will see all tables are set with linen and glassware. This year, the hospitality team talked to our residents, discovered their absolute favourite dishes and refined them further to deliver our 75 hero dishes. This includes Australian classics such as a beef and chicken casserole, Sunday roasts or fish on a Friday, as well a broader range of dishes to suit our resident's cultures.

Where to from here?

At Opal, we are building a team that will change the perception of cooking and food in aged care. We're focused on preparing food with love, care and a passion for quality. We know that considering aged care is a big decision, and we want people to feel confident that they, or their loved one, will be able to enjoy the food they've always loved when they come to live at Opal.



Feature: The importance of good food
Opal Moments

The Opal Food Masterclass

To launch the updated Opal recipe book, the hospitality team led a two-day Opal food masterclass, where every chef got to hone their culinary skills and compete in a series of cooking challenges.

Just as on the hit show,
MasterChef Australia, Opal chefs
were tasked with a Mystery Box
Challenge which involved cooking
a whole barramundi from scratch.
This was followed by the Pasta
Challenge and the Best Baked
Dessert Challenge.

The participants had to impress a tough panel of judges made up of the Opal hospitality team and executive team. Head of Hospitality Justin Wilshaw said, "The masterclass gave us a chance

to thank our chefs for the work they do, as well as demonstrating the passion and creativity of the chefs in our business, and their desire to deliver great homecooked food to the residents in our homes. We also gathered insights into areas for further development and training."

With over 100 meals cooked at the masterclasses, there's only so much the judges could eat! We therefore donated all meals from the day to OzHarvest, Australia's leading food rescue charity, who collect quality, surplus food, and distribute it to people in need. Food from the masterclass was distributed to a number of homeless charities in Sydney.











Sagar Sankaria

Sagar took first prize at the Opal Food Masterclass for his Indian twist on a traditional lasagne, showing the importance of creativity. We asked Sagar why he became a chef, and he told us, "You can win hearts by cooking great food."



Blessing Warmate

Blessing was the overall winner on day two of the Opal Food Masterclass.

She has a long-standing love for cooking, saying "For me, working in aged care is about compassion and I like to show that through the food we serve for residents."



John Rabone

John enjoyed meeting all the chefs from across the business at the masterclass.

When asked which meal he enjoys cooking for residents he said, "My favourite meal to cook in the homes is a lamb shoulder. We cook it for 13 hours – the taste is phenomenal and our residents love it."



Opal's strong growth plan is firmly under way to make sure we can meet the need to supply another 70,000 beds for ageing Australians. Read on to hear how our homes are evolving as we continue to build.

Building the future – innovation in aged care design

Providing better care for our ageing population is one of the great challenges of our times. Over the next ten years, Australia will need to supply an additional 70,000 aged care beds to meet increasing demand.

At Opal, we are at the forefront of meeting this need. We firmly believe that when people get older, everyone should have the opportunity to spend these years in comfort, with the care they need and deserve.

We have a strong growth plan in place. We're focused on building homes in the regions that are most in need, including Western Sydney, Perth and the Gold Coast.

We recognise our responsibility to help meet the demand of contributing to the extra beds needed for ageing Australians. The homes we are now building are larger to accommodate this demand. For example, some are five storeys high and have more

than 150 beds. When designing these bigger buildings there is a focus on how we can make them welcoming homes for our residents.

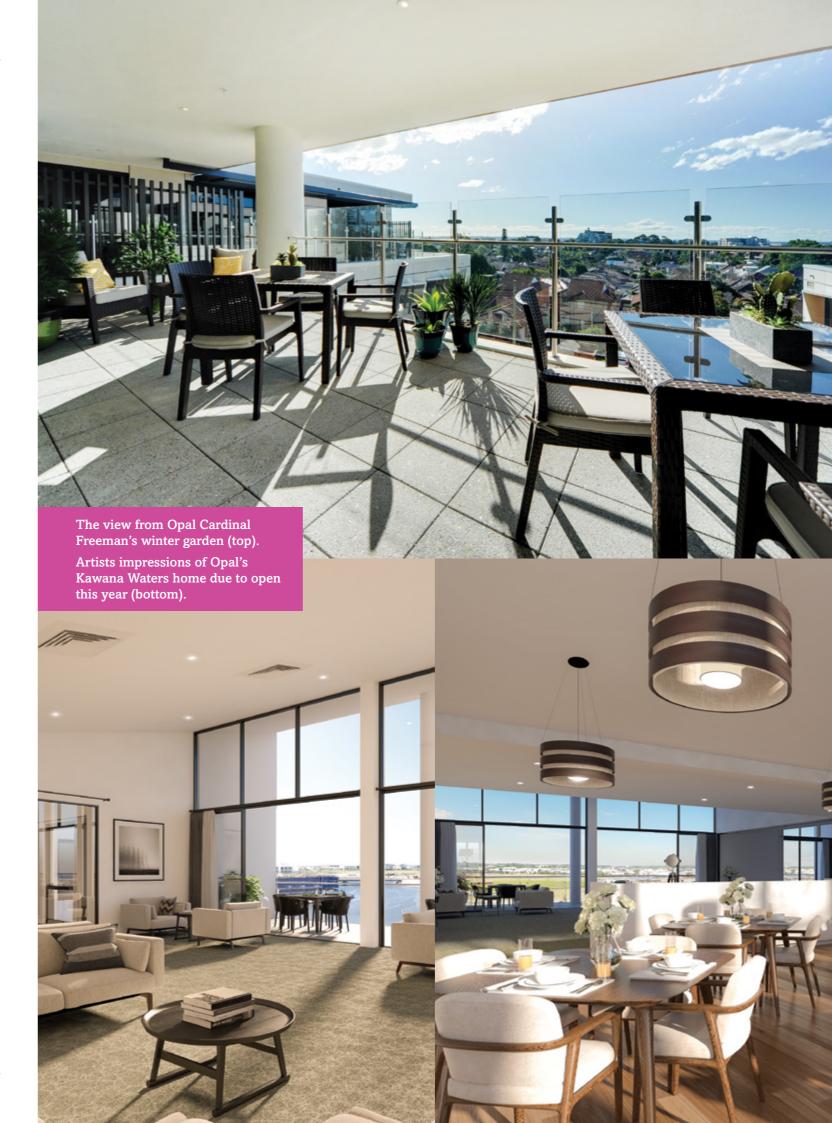
Home is where the heart is

First and foremost, our homes are all about people. We understand that our residents need to be surrounded by their own belongings, and people they feel comfortable with. A warm and friendly, supportive atmosphere is vital. Our passionate and caring staff are the backbone of our homes. But there's also much that can be done in the design of our homes to make them great environments for all that are living there.

We see every new home as an opportunity to learn through innovative design. Following the launch of a home, we spend six months evaluating what's working well and what could be improved.

Evolving the design of aged care

We see every new home as an opportunity to learn through innovative design. Following the launch of a home, we spend six months evaluating what's working well and what could be improved, with the help of feedback from residents and family members. Sean Bilton, Head of Commercial, explains, "The feedback process is critical in developing our homes. It enables us to review homes we've launched, and integrate ideas and learnings into our next build. For example, we've changed bedrooms to offer improved lighting and storage, and we've changed room configurations to improve comfort. It's a process of continual learning and evolution."



Changing hospitals into homes

In the past, aged care facilities have often looked more like hospitals than homes. They had long corridors and enclosed nurses stations. You'd also see a lot of clinical and aged care equipment such as wheel chairs and lifters in the hallways and common areas.

Today, Opal homes are designed to look more like real homes, keeping the 'back-end' of a working aged care home behind the scenes. Specialist architects design clever spaces, where equipment can be placed for easy access, without affecting the aesthetics of the home.

Discrete, smaller living areas are very different from the old-style large common room, where only one form of entertainment could be enjoyed. Landscaped outdoor areas create pleasant spaces for residents and families to relax and connect with nature.

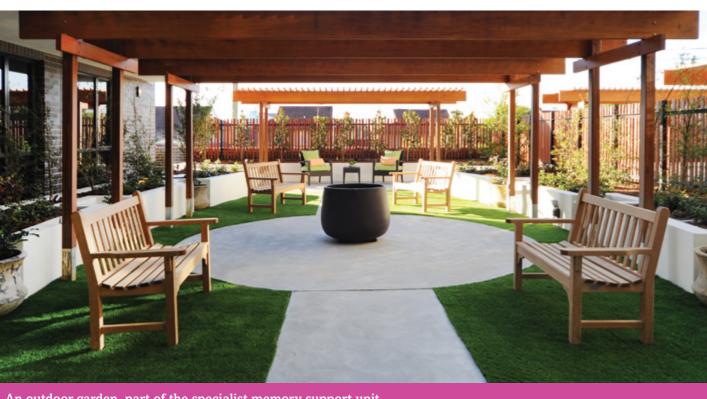
Thoughtful yet practical interiors

Beautiful interior design is equally important to residents' enjoyment of their home. Every new Opal home has an interior designer, who creates thoughtful touches, such as working with local Historical Societies to obtain photographs that will resonate with residents and their families. Soft furnishings and furniture can be luxurious but practical at the same time – for example, comfy armchairs with high-end fabric upholstery on arms and backs, combined with practical vinyl coverings.

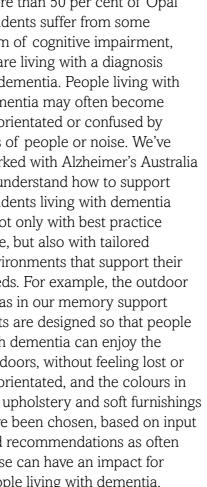
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Special support for dementia

More than 50 per cent of Opal residents suffer from some form of cognitive impairment, or are living with a diagnosis of dementia. People living with dementia may often become disorientated or confused by lots of people or noise. We've worked with Alzheimer's Australia to understand how to support residents living with dementia – not only with best practice care, but also with tailored environments that support their needs. For example, the outdoor areas in our memory support units are designed so that people with dementia can enjoy the outdoors, without feeling lost or disorientated, and the colours in the upholstery and soft furnishings have been chosen, based on input and recommendations as often these can have an impact for people living with dementia.









Ita Buttrose AO OBE and resident Joyce cut the ribbon to officially open Opal Cardinal Freeman.

Great design in practice

In July 2016, our state-of-the-art Cardinal Freeman home opened in Ashfield, in Sydney's inner west. The home takes a fresh approach to aged care, with greater choice in care, services and lifestyle activities, supported by a dedicated concierge service. The home even provides a state-of-the-art virtual reality program specific to aged care, among other innovative new services aimed at helping residents to enjoy life.

The 133-bed home was opened by Ita Buttrose, AO OBE, National Ambassador for Alzheimer's Australia, who said, "We all know the positive impact that good quality care can have on people's lives, and unfortunately,

to date, there have been too many examples of residential aged care not meeting the needs of ageing Australians. With the opening of Cardinal Freeman, I can see the progress being made and I look forward to Opal delivering what they promise in raising the standards of residential aged care."

Connecting with communities

Above all, Opal's new homes are being built with the local community in mind. For many of our residents, their Opal home is in the community they've lived in for many years. Our aim is to connect the home with the community, and change perceptions of aged care homes.

As a result, Opal homes are being built with hair salons, cafés and

activities rooms for residents and their families to enjoy, with opportunities for the local community to be involved in the daily life of the home.

The future is bright

According to Gary Barnier, Managing Director of Opal, "As one of Australia's largest aged care providers, we need to take on the challenge of raising the standard of aged care in this country. We want people to see aged care as part of their communities' health care system. We will continue to work hard to come up with better experiences for our residents and innovative new offerings that will give them the quality of life they expect and deserve."

Feature: A resident's story: Pasquale
Opal Moments

Welcome to our first feature of 'A resident's story'. Hear from our resident Pasquale on how he met his wife, and his journey to make Australia home.

A resident's story: Pasquale

Q. Pasquale, tell us about where you're originally from.

A. I am originally from Italy. I immigrated to Australia in 1952, on a boat called the 'Florentia'. The boat was built in 1914 and could carry 3,000 people. When I travelled there were 3,000 souls onboard, and I shared sleeping quarters with 300 others.

Q. What brought you to Australia?

A. I came to Australia looking for work and adventure. I spent my 20th birthday on board the Florentia, travelling to Australia.

Q. What happened when you arrived in Australia?

A. Even though the war was over, I was settled initially in Victoria, in a migrant camp. There were 11,000 people living in the camp, mainly single men from Italy, Germany and Holland.

I had to serve a two-year contract for the Australian government as part of my immigration agreement. Once that was complete, I found a job in the gold fields in WA as I had been regularly writing to family friends who lived there.

My application was granted and I was sent by train to the Leonora Mines in Gwalia. When I arrived, I met up with our family friend, Aunt Concietta and settled down in Gwalia.

Q. Tell us about how you met your wife.

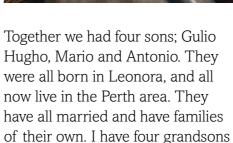
A. I met my wife Theresa Cicerone in Australia; she was Aunt Concietta's niece. I initially spotted her photograph on the wall and asked for her address so I could write to her. Theresa was living in South America at the time.

I wrote my first letter to Theresa, and she took a couple of months to answer. It wasn't the done thing to write to a relatively unknown man, so she used the excuse of enquiring after her Aunt Concietta! In fact, we continued writing letters for five years before we finally met in person. I had

attempted to get a visa to visit Theresa in Chile, South America before that, but national unrest made it impossible.

During those years, my work on the mines dried up and I was forced to move to Queensland to cut sugar cane. The work was hard and I earned one pound per tonne of sugar cane. During my time there the situation in Chile worsened, so I suggested that Theresa came to Australia. I applied to Australian immigration for her to come and meet me as I was going back to WA. I paid for Theresa to travel from Chile to Italy, where she spent time living with my mother in Navelli. In 1957 Theresa travelled by boat from Navelli to Fremantle.

By this time I was living in Fremantle and working in the steel industry I arranged the paperwork so we could be married. On the 16th Feb 1957, in Fremantle at St Patrick's Church, at last I married beautiful Theresa. After we were married we went back to Leonora so I could work in the mines again.



Q. How does life in Australia compare with life in Italy?

and one granddaughter!

A. I will always call Italy home – I love the lifestyle and culture. But I have created great memories

"I will always call Italy home – I love the lifestyle and culture. But I have created great memories over here – after all, it's where I met my wife." over here – after all, it's where I met my wife. In Australia I have always worked hard. I bought a home for my family in Victoria Park, Perth; where my wife stayed alone for nine months of the year with our four boys while I was away working. There was no such thing as fly in, fly out in those days.

Q. Which hobbies do you enjoy?

A. I thoroughly enjoy bike racing and had a push bike for many years — I did not race competitively as I was always working. I used to ride my bike to work from Welshpool to Fremantle, which is quite a distance!



A. I have enjoyed living here. My wife Theresa was here first, in Kimberley House, and she lived here until she passed in April 2015. Theresa and I lived next door in the St Ives Village, so we had a lot of friends and as a result, I have a constant stream of visitors. Besides the social aspects, I also enjoy the variety of fresh food that is served at Opal Murdoch.



Feature: Meet the team: Sean Bilton
Opal Moments



This edition we meet Sean Bilton, Head of Commercial.

We sat down to talk about the changing face of aged care, and got Sean's perspective on Opal's mission and what it's like to work here.

Meet Sean Bilton

Q. How did you come to work at Opal Aged Care?

A. Prior to joining Opal Aged Care, I was at financial services firm, AMP, for more than a decade. I spent my last five years at AMP managing their investment into Opal. In 2010 I was asked to come and work directly in the Opal business with the new management team. So, joining Opal wasn't part of a carefully-executed plan on my part, but more a case of taking the opportunity when it came along. I'm very happy it's worked out this way.

Q. How is Opal different now to when you joined?

A. Back in 2010 the management team had a very different focus. We'd recently taken over the Principal Aged Care homes from Moran and acquired the Domain Aged Care business, based in Queensland. We were building the corporate office team and integrating our portfolio of homes, which meant taking things

day-by-day. Now, we are much more forward-looking. Today, we're focused on enhancing our homes, having put in place the building blocks over the last five years.

Q. What can you tell us about your role?

A. There's an increasing demand for quality aged care, and the Commercial team is responsible for ensuring Opal can meet this need, through well-planned growth, providing homes in the areas of Australia that need aged care most. In practice, this means building new homes, refurbishing older homes, making acquisitions where appropriate and providing ongoing maintenance.

Q. Why do you enjoy working in aged care?

A. I've worked in a diverse range of sectors during my career, including agriculture, mining and financial services. But in those





roles, I rarely felt a strong sense of purpose. Aged care has given me the opportunity to work in a people-focused sector. In a nutshell, I get to develop my career, while improving the lives of our residents. A rare opportunity indeed, especially for someone without a clinical background.

Q. What's the most challenging aspect of your job?

A. Definitely juggling priorities! At present we have a growth pipeline, which involves providing 2,000 new aged care beds across more than 20 major new home developments. In addition we are introducing new products and services into our existing homes and participating in sector discussions on the next wave of aged care reform.

Aged care has given me the opportunity to work in a people-focused sector. In a nutshell, I get to develop my career, while improving the lives of our residents.

Q. What's a typical day like for you?

A. I'm not sure there is a typical day – and I suppose that really contributes to my enjoyment of this role. I try to get up before the kids and do some exercise. On any given day I could be out on a development site, in design meetings for a new home, looking at refurbishment of an existing home or at my desk writing a business case for the Opal Board. Usually I'm out of the office at least a couple of times a week and interstate once or twice a month.

Q. What's the most surprising thing about working in aged care?

A. I think people see aged care as a slow moving industry; and there are still some elements of that. However, aged care is quickly becoming a dynamic growth industry which must change; not just to meet demand, but more importantly, to meet the community's expectation of quality aged care.

Q. What are your hopes for the future of aged care?

A. I hope we can change the public's perception of what aged care is and isn't. I want to alter the old stereotypes and provide contemporary aged care that meets the expectations of residents and their families. We can only attract and retain the workforce to deliver on our promise, if we change public perception of what aged care is all about.

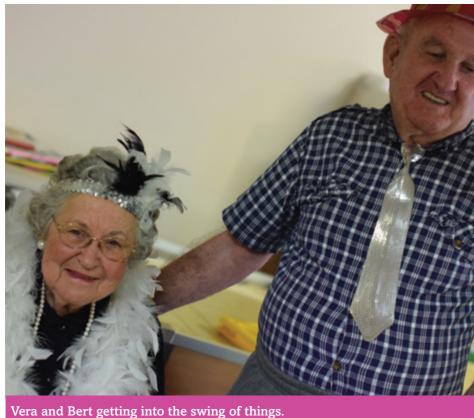
Q. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

A. I love sports, whether playing or watching. I still play competitive soccer. Otherwise, my time away from work is largely spent with the family, and chasing my two daughters around (they are six and two).

From our homes **Opal Moments**

The Roaring Twenties return

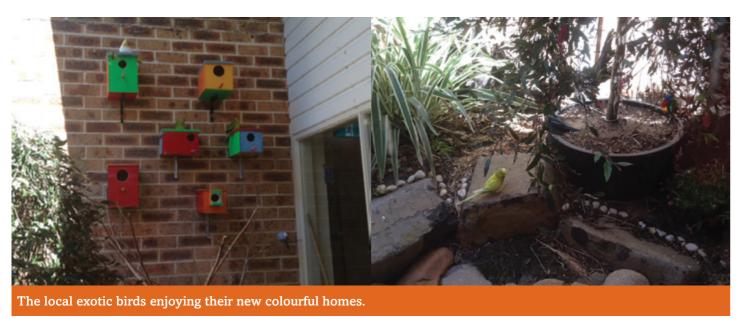
'The Roaring Twenties' was the theme at Opal Berkeley Village's Senior Ball earlier this year. Residents, families and staff dressed up for the occasion, memorabilia from the 20s decorated the home, and music was provided by one of the home's favourite entertainers who played all the old time greats. Everyone danced away the evening and one of the home's oldest residents was on the dance floor in her wheelchair for most of the night. Great fun was had by all and families and residents were talking about what a great night it was for days afterwards!



Spirits soar with new bird aviary

Earlier in the year, staff at Opal Berkeley Village found a large exotic bird wandering the grounds of the home which became a source of much discussion and joy for the residents, and brought about

the idea of introducing a bird aviary to the home. After much planning, design and research, the Lifestyle staff determined which birds would be best suited for an aviary and what plants the birds would enjoy. The aviary was set up and residents are thoroughly enjoying it, with some pulling up chairs to sit and watch the birds. Two cockatiels have since mated and all eyes are now on the nesting boxes, eagerly awaiting the result!



Residents contribute to the community

Residents at Opal Florence Tower have formed a fundraising committee with the goal of working together to improve quality of life for the wider community. The committee was recently involved in a unique fundraising project which raised \$700 for the children's ward at

the local Tweed Heads Hospital. Resident Pam Elliot came up with the idea to fundraise for this cause: with a team of residents she began collecting items to raffle off, including bottles of wine, jars of jams and pickles, taxi vouchers and homemade gift boxes, assembled by residents and

containing wrapped lollies and chocolates, pencils, scarves and toiletry items. A special High Tea was held to raffle the jars off, and residents then visited the hospital to donate the cheque of \$700 which was raised.



Animal magic for residents

Quakers Hill Nursing Home residents were visited by Australia's Unique Wildlife, who brought along turtles, lizards, snakes, frogs, stick insects and a crocodile. The presenters shared stories about the animals and provided a hands-on experience for the residents with the animals. Residents enjoyed interacting with the animals, with smiles all round. Many found it to be a calming experience. The event was a great success - and residents are looking forward to another visit to the home.



A resident having a close encounter with Australian wildlife.

From our homes Opal Moments

Elvis makes a comeback

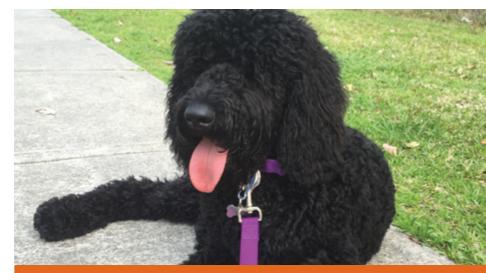
greatest hits.

Elvis performing some of his

The residents at Opal Seahaven were treated to a one hour performance by none other than the international star. Mark Andrew. Before the show, residents could not quite believe that they would really see the famous Elvis impersonator perform live. They greatly enjoyed his performance, but his speech made a particular mark. He stated what an honour it was to give back to the community, saying, "what every senior here has contributed to the local area. and the world, is an inspiration". Mark shook everyone's hand and had photos taken before he left. Mark performs regularly at the Crown Casino in Melbourne and is planning to visit the USA in 2017 for the King's 40th Anniversary.

A new pet brings joy to residents

Opal Macquarie Place residents and staff were very excited at the arrival of their new therapy dog 'Opal'. Opal is a 'Groodle', bred by resident Ruth Onions' granddaughter. Groodles are a non-allergenic cross between a poodle and golden retriever. After visits from Opal's mother in the lead up to her birth, and many weeks of training, Opal joined the Opal Macquarie Place family. Opal has been described as a very friendly, gentle and smart dog, often found walking beside residents as they are up and about in the home, receiving many pats when visiting residents' rooms, joining residents when they're outside and attending lots of activities within the home, especially when food is involved! Opal also welcomes and befriends children that come to visit the home, and enjoys relaxing with her pillow and blanket on cold, rainy days.



'Opal' the Groodle relaxing in his new home.

Resident's walk for a good cause

Opal Aged Care is proud to be the principal supporter of Alzheimer's Australia's Memory Walk & Jog in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. As part of Opal's involvement with these fundraising events, Opal Roxburgh hosted their own 'My Memory Walk'. Residents from the home's 'Living Well With Dementia Unit' walked and recorded their steps to reach a combined total of 27 kilometres during the month of May, raising \$270.



Residents setting the pace at their Memory Walk & Jog event.

An important birthday brings back regal memories



Joyce celebrates her 100th birthday with a delicious cake and her two daughters.

A much-loved resident at Opal Cardinal Freeman turned 100! Florence Joyce O'Neill, (affectionately known as Joyce) celebrated her special day at the home with staff and residents. Joyce received her congratulatory letter from the Queen, and fondly recalled meeting the Queen as a child.

"I was 11 years old and I remember the day very clearly. I think it must have been about 1927. All the schools in NSW were invited to the Sydney Cricket Ground for a huge sports carnival to perform in front of the Queen Mother, the Duchess of York. I remember my school teacher came to me at the beginning of the sports carnival and told me she had a job for me, I couldn't begin to think what that job may be, and then she continued to tell me that I had been chosen to present the Queen Mother with a beautiful bouquet of flowers in front of all the schools and also the Governor General, the Duke of York and the Minister of Education. I remember walking across the field to where there was a little podium; I stepped up onto the podium and saw the Queen Mother with her entourage including her small child, Elizabeth, who of course is the Queen today. I presented the bouquet of flowers to the Queen Mother and I remember clearly she replied "Thank you girls, they are beautiful". Since turning 100 I've received a letter from the Queen congratulating me on my milestone, who of course I met on that day".

Special guests at Killarney Vale

Two Clydesdale horses recently paid a visit to residents and staff at Opal Killarney Vale. Residents were able to stroke and pet the horses out in the garden, and some staff had the opportunity to sit on the horses' backs and walk around. The visit brought up many happy memories and stories for residents who grew up with horses or other animals. Staff from the home described the whole experience as very heart warming, with looks of pure joy on the resident's faces.



Residents and staff enjoying the Clydesdale horses.

From our homes Opal Moments

A special birthday

Opal Raynbird Place took the opportunity to celebrate its tenth birthday, combining the celebration with this year's annual Service Award celebrations (where staff are recognised and thanked for their contribution and extended service to Opal). Celebrations took place on a Saturday morning and included high tea, face painting and music; with many family members joining in. One of the residents' granddaughters baked a cake, which was cut by the home's newest resident together with its longest resident. Seven residents who moved in ten years ago were each presented with a floral pot plant to commemorate the occasion.



Bill's wisteria

Two years ago, Opal Salford Park resident, Bill Merriweather, noticed a wisteria plant struggling in the home's garden. Very concerned the plant would die, he spoke regularly with the Facility Manager regarding the proper treatment and upkeep of such a plant. The home decided to make the restoration of this plant Bill's project, and followed his strict instruction on the creation of a structure to support the plant as well as the ongoing care of the plant. Bill is very happy that he has been able to see the plant bloom again this season. Residents, staff and visitors all enjoy this area of the garden and Bill is very proud of his handiwork.



Vintage Cars spark memories

As part of the home's Father's Day celebrations, Opal Raynbird Place held the first of their Vintage Car Displays for the residents. The event was so successful that it will now be an annual fixture. A relative of a former resident and his car club generously donated their time to come and show their vehicles of yesteryear to the residents. Residents were very excited, reminiscing around stories and memories that these cars sparked for them, and many residents sat in the vehicles and enjoyed getting photos to show their family and friends. Thank you to Doug Rath and his car crew for kindly donating their cars for the event.



Opal residents turn their hands to poetry

Residents at Opal Mudgee put together a poem to celebrate Senior's Week and have kindly shared this below.

Getting old is not so bad...

Getting old is not so bad
We've come to understand
Whilst we've had to slow
everything down
We get waited on foot and hand.

Our sight might dim, our mind forgets Our bodies groan and creak Our hair goes grey, we dare not run But of great memories we speak.

The mirror lies with wrinkles and lines

But with wisdom we are blessed We share our lives with all around And reminisce with zest.

Youngsters and grandkids keep us young
They lift our spirits up
But when they get too noisy
We hand them back and have a cup!

We often get to jump the queue And lead the way, of course! Shouting out "Seniors rule the world!"
Until we all go hoarse.

By residents of Opal Mudgee Aged Care

Hear from our families **Opal Moments**

Each month we receive thank you letters from families and friends expressing their gratitude for our wonderful staff. Here are a selection.

Opal Greenfern Place (QLD)

Dear Jeanette.

My mother Joan Hartley was a resident at your home. I would like to thank all staff who cared for my mum especially Jeanette (RN) and Josh who were constantly by her side.

Thank you, Julie

Opal Seahaven (VIC)

Dear Wendy,

I would just like to say a big thank you for introducing the Montessori program to the residents. I was there for cooking sessions and a music program and I thought they were very stimulating for the people involved.

Many Regards, Sue

Opal Maitland (NSW)

Dear Jo,

Thank you to you and all the wonderful staff at Maitland, the care and love you gave mum will stay in my heart forever. Also the kindness that was shown to us during this sad time we will never forget.

You are all very special people who give so much of themselves to their work, I just want you to

know how much we appreciate all that you do for others as what you did for us.

Many thanks, Debbie

Opal Shoalhaven (NSW)

Dear staff,

Words alone are not enough to convey our thanks for everything you all did for Bede and our family in the last six months.

Your professionalism, compassion and care made this journey easier to bear. So we hope that you will get some time even on your busiest day to indulge in a coffee or hot chocolate and relax for a couple of minutes and remember the work you do is appreciated deeply.

Our thanks always, Leagh, Rachel & Sam

Opal Bossley Park (NSW)

Dear Opal,

The carers showed nothing less than kindness, sympathy, courtesy and understanding towards my father, even in the days that it was difficult for him to settle down and respond.

To all the staff at Bossley Park Nursing Home, who looked after my father with professionalism and dedication, a big thank you

from all the Pacenza family. Your job is a hard one, demanding special qualities when working with the frail and elderly, your contribution to society is often taken for granted.

Finally, I would like to mention Sisters Lyn, Rita and Mariella, who always had a friendly understanding and compassionate attitude towards my dad and they always knew when my dad was in a good or bad state of mind on the day.

We would like you to acknowledge and inform the matron, nurses and carers, how grateful we were that my father's last years were as comfortable as they could have been, under the circumstances.

Thanks again, The Pacenza Family

Annandale (NSW)

Opal has the right idea, very client centred, warm and professional, efficient and dedicated. If I could make any suggestions it would perhaps be providing information for relatives of residents on certain specific care issues. In our case, it was a regarding care for someone that's had a stroke. The Care Manager of the home was wonderful at answering my questions, but perhaps a handbook for specific issues and more about what to expect when you first enter the home would be helpful.

Family member

und the country

Our homes	arc
Queensland	
Opal Abbey Gardens	07 5495 9000
Opal Ashmore	07 5510 1800
Opal Burpengary Gardens	07 3481 6100
Opal Caloundra	07 5390 0200
Opal Greenfern Place	07 3809 1400
Opal Kawana Waters (Opening early 2017)	1800 175 563
Opal Kirra Beach	07 5587 5500
Opal Learnington	07 5557 7700
Opal Nambour	07 5444 9700
Opal Raffin Place	07 3723 0400
Opal Raynbird Place	07 3500 9300
Opal Varsity Rise	07 5554 8100
Northern NSW, Hunter & Central Coast	
Opal Berkeley Village	02 4337 0000
Opal Coffs Harbour	02 6659 4800
Opal Florence Tower	07 5590 2800
Opal Glenmere	02 4356 2900
Opal Hillside	02 4904 0100
Opal Hillside ALA	02 4904 0100
Opal Killarney Vale	02 4345 2700
Opal Killarney Vale ALA	02 4345 2700
Opal Macquarie Place	02 4944 1300
Opal Maitland	02 4015 3000
Opal Murwillumbah	02 6670 9700
Opal Norah Head	02 4352 8900
Opal Raymond Terrace Gardens	02 4980 0000
Opal Rutherford	02 4015 3800
Opal Tweed Heads	07 5599 6900
Southern/Western/Country NSW	
Opal Anita Villa	02 4780 0600
Opal Bathurst	02 6333 2500
Opal Cherrywood Grove	02 6363 4300
Opal Dubbo	02 5852 1600
Opal Denhams Beach	02 4412 3400
Opal Endeavour	02 4754 6000

Southern/Western/Country NSW	
Opal Anita Villa	02 4780 0600
Opal Bathurst	02 6333 2500
Opal Cherrywood Grove	02 6363 4300
Opal Dubbo	02 5852 1600
Opal Denhams Beach	02 4412 3400
Opal Endeavour	02 4754 6000
Opal Endeavour ALA	02 4754 6000
Opal Mudgee	02 6370 6200
Opal Narrandera	02 6959 5300
Opal Shoalhaven	02 4421 5911

General Enquiries	1300 362 481
Feedback	1800 767 074

Metro NSW	
Opal Annandale	02 8585 1900
Opal Austral House	02 8925 6400
Opal Belvedere	02 9372 3700
Opal Bossley Park	02 9426 1500
Opal Canterbury	02 9784 2111
Opal Cardinal Freeman	02 8799 7000
Opal Fernleigh	02 9809 3217
Opal Glen Lynn	02 9643 3200
Opal Lourdes	02 8467 3200
Opal Netherby	02 9372 3800
Opal Oceanview	02 9910 7100
Opal Palm Grove	02 8978 3100
Quakers Hill Nursing Home	02 8818 6500
Opal Seaside	02 9910 7600
Opal Stanmore	02 8594 6900
Opal Wallgrove	02 9784 3100
Opal Windward Manor	02 9370 0600

Central Victoria	
Opal By The Bay	03 5976 5700
Opal Gillin Park	03 5559 0600
Opal Gracedale	03 9844 8000
Opal Hobsons Bay	03 8325 7600
Opal Meadowglen	03 9408 4591
Opal Roxburgh	03 9303 6800
Opal Salford Park	03 9847 2500
Opal South Valley	03 5223 0900
Opal Warrnambool	03 5562 3343

Gippsiana victoria	
Opal Bairnsdale	03 5153 7200
Opal Lakeview	03 5179 5500
Opal Paynesville	03 5153 8400
Opal Sale	03 5142 1600
Opal Seahaven	03 5674 1700

Western Australia

Opal Applecross	08 6310 8300
Opal Armadale	08 9391 0300
Opal Bunbury Gardens	08 9726 6300
Opal Geraldton	08 9921 5010
Opal Melville	08 9424 0500
Opal Murdoch	08 6332 6200
Opal Murray River	08 9535 7466

