

# CHAPTER

WINTER 2021

## IVAN DAVIS

Speaking for those  
who can't

## STAYING YOUNG

The positive impact  
of ageless play

## SWITCHED ON

What our online  
lives look like

## GLORIOUS GARDENS

From little things,  
big things grow



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## Welcome

to our ninth edition of Chapter. By the time you read this, winter will well and truly have taken a hold. Across most states the trees will have been stripped bare, grass growth stagnated and many flowers will have gone into hibernation.

Yet while the cooler season is typically a time where we retreat indoors, grab a blanket and familiarise ourselves with the virtues of a good hot chocolate, it also presents a great opportunity to remind ourselves of the need to regenerate in preparation for the transformation of Spring.

For some this may mean eating all the comfort food we can lay our hands on to maintain good body temperature. For others it may mean sourcing as much vitamin C as we can to help stave off the flu.

For this issue's cover star, 67-year-old Ivan Davis, it means maintaining a solid fitness regime which includes regular swims in Tasmania's icy Derwent River. Part iron man and part politician, Ivan shares with us why he believes maintaining a healthy lifestyle is just as important as speaking out for those unable to speak for themselves.

Another way to keep healthy this winter is by playing an active part in ageless learning. This issue we speak with *Old People's Homes for 4-Year-Olds* geriatrician Dr Stephanie Ward about the importance of intergenerational play.

In this spirit of maintaining connections, we also look at the issue of digital communications and the ways in which COVID-19 has fundamentally changed the way older Australians are interacting with online technologies.

Also, hearty congratulations go to Chapter readers Janice Neill, Marlene Fennell and Susan Buxton who are the winners of last issue's Downsizing Made Simple competition. We hope you enjoy your prizes!

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# Beyond the call of duty

Aveo Derwent Waters resident Ivan Davis spent half his life following orders. Now he's found a new passion he hopes may help him change the rules.

Ivan Davis has two speeds: one flat stick and the other full throttle.

What the Aveo Derwent Waters resident doesn't have, however, is a single regret at not making the most of all the opportunities that have come his way.

After dedicating much of his career to the military, more recent times have seen the 67-year-old working to improve the lives of others via an assortment of roles, including foster carer, half-way house supervisor, community housing manager and trainer of the long-term unemployed.

Two years ago he took on a new challenge after agreeing to contest his local seat on behalf of the Animal Justice Party.

While unsuccessful this time around, Ivan feels it's important to offer his voice for those unable to speak for themselves.

His efforts are not entirely selfless, he says.

"If I can walk and/or talk, I can provide some sort of community service and in those many and varied processes have fulfilment. Some people just need a quiet, non-judgemental, listening ear. I haven't driven a community bus for years but recently I typed up an old mate's stories before he died. I am thankful for all these opportunities because they create joy in my life."

### Working out what's important

Born and raised on Kangaroo Island, Ivan's family were pioneer farmers and raised him and his five siblings on a subsistence farm which was surrounded by scrub.

Most of his schooling was completed by correspondence and school of the air. While he and his family enjoyed limited interaction with

other people, they never considered that a disadvantage, he says.

In 1969, when Ivan turned 15, he joined the Australian Regular Army as an apprentice musician. Viewing music as his best means of communication, therapy and recreation, Ivan grew up with a bellows organ but later mastered the clarinet. In due course he reached a level significant enough to be playing lead chair in various Army bands while adding saxophone, flute, bass guitar, guitar and the bagpipes to his repertoire.

His pay at that time equated to around \$85 per fortnight and for this he was given the opportunity to train as a soldier and a musician at the Army Apprentice School at Balcombe in Victoria.

Ivan says at the time the program was run by ex-Vietnam veterans. Many had problems of their own in a society that often treated them as pariahs.

"The system was set up to allow apprentices with one or two years' experience to administer and discipline newer, younger soldiers. Many did not survive this regime which was eventually abandoned due to its many failures."

Having passed selection, he was posted to Perth. After two years with the Special Air Service (SAS) regiment, he took discharge but after less than one year out of the army he re-joined.

While those early years in the army were undoubtedly tough, Ivan stuck at it and in a military career spanning 23 years, he reached the rank of Warrant Officer Class One with the appointment of Regimental Sergeant Major at the Defence Force School of Music.

He was discharged for the second time in December 1992.

### A different calling

Despite acknowledging that democracy is "messy", Ivan says he became interested in a political career some time ago after it dawned on him complacency breeds contempt.

That idea stuck with him and he realised to effect change, he first had to be prepared to get his hands dirty.

"I think that there are many reasons for people to be overly critical of our governments and yet remain uninvolved. One reason is that

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**"If I can walk and/  
or talk, I can provide  
some sort of  
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being involved requires real effort. Just to stay informed requires us to look at news reports or listen to commentators who have different views to ourselves. It seems to me that few people are prepared to do that.

"To actually make a difference requires even more effort. To write a personal letter or email takes thought, effort and organisation."

Ivan says his interest in animal welfare was initially sparked by his father.

If an animal was suffering and we couldn't help it, he would insist that it be put out of its suffering, he says.

"In other words he would euthanise it by killing it as quickly and stress free as possible. Along the course





of the years I was always appalled by any form of factory farming. It seemed to be an affront to our humanity and yet it was legal and those farms have thrived. I was bemused by our ability to adore and protect some species, while we put others through a life of pain and suffering and then eat them.

"Finally, after years of knowing that I was not a very compassionate person something happened in my mind and I realised that every sentient life form was very similar to me. They wanted to live, and to prosper."

Ivan says personal experience has taught him how it feels to be powerless – a situation he does not wish to repeat.

"I still hate bullies. I don't know why but instead of becoming a bully myself, I choose to stand up for those who can't stand up for themselves. For me that not only includes all

sentient beings but also for our environment, our home, and the only world we currently have to live on."

### The true test

Ivan rarely passes up a chance to challenge himself physically and mentally.

Earlier this year he undertook a day-long expedition within the Derwent Legislative Council electorate. The expedition was an Ironman triathlon format: swimming in the Derwent River, cycling up the Central Highlands, and a 42-kilometre run through the suburbs of Claremont, Austins Ferry and Herdsmans Cove.

A late bloomer in a physical sense, his interest in fitness didn't develop until he turned 18 and discovered he was adept enough to pass the physical requirements for the SAS.

However, years of running and putting his joints under stress soon

caught up with him and he found himself unable to complete many of the tasks he had previously taken for granted.

A radical change to the way he walked and ran soon had him back training and he began working towards a lifelong dream of being a professional athlete upon his retirement.

"I knew that would be almost impossible as an age group triathlete but I gave it a fair go. For three years I trained like a professional athlete, often up to 30 hours a week in actual training."

Unfortunately, Ivan says he reached the limits of his capacity which was not good enough to be a real professional.

"In spite of that I would often tell people I was a fully sponsored professional athlete, and then quietly add that was due to the age pension."







Ivan and Tasmanian  
Labor's Craig Farrell.

PHOTOGRAPH: NIKKI DAVIS JONES/NEWSPIX

### The unfortunate side of public life

As both an athlete and a politician, Ivan's choices in life have meant he has been forced to develop a tough skin over the years – having regularly found himself the target of the general public's ire.

To this day he finds cycling on public roads daunting owing to the small percentage of road users who seek to intimidate their fellow road users by either driving too close, too fast, or by hurling abuse.

"I am aware that there is a very small segment of drivers out there that treat me as if I am almost just another animal in their way. Then there is another small percentage of drivers whose skill level is low. They can also be very scary. I have personally been twice knocked off my bike by cars and every serious cyclist personally has known somebody who has been killed by a vehicle driver."

As with cyclists, politicians are not always popular, Ivan says.

Surprisingly, he says, as a politician he has copped direct abuse from only one individual.

"Most people either ignore me or are thankful I am there. The thankfulness is most apparent when I knock on doors. When I do stalls at markets or in shopping centres most people ignore me, but some will stop for a chat and even when we disagree, they are polite and reasonable.

"The only place people are unreasonable and not polite is on social media. The bad behaviours and the medium are in my opinion damaging for our society in general," he says.

### What lies ahead

If it hasn't become obvious by now, persistence is a key factor in both

Ivan's professional and personal life.

But making each moment count, is clearly what matters most to the proud father and grandfather.

Married to wife Angela for the past 25 years, Ivan says he would never have been able to achieve what he has had it not been for the unwavering support of his life partner.

"I am extremely thankful to have the opportunities in front of me. I am also thankful to have a partner willing to put up with me," he says.

"When I retired, I realised that I could still be alive and active for another 30 years. That meant to me that I must do something if I didn't want to end up bored and bitter. I don't anticipate leaving any significant legacy. What I do today is what counts for something or nothing. If I leave this world better for being here that will be good." ●





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# Switched on

COVID-19 is fundamentally changing community and social life around the world and nowhere is this more pronounced than in the way active seniors are interacting with online technologies.

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On March 15 last year the president of the NSW U3A Network, Laurene Mulcahy, sent out a concerning message to member networks.

Her bulletin warned each U3A association to “carefully consider the risks that may accrue from one of their members, who has unknowingly contracted COVID-19, participating in a U3A activity” and reminded them that they may “choose to highlight concerns that a returning traveller may have on the health of others should they be carrying the virus”.

On March 19, Mulcahy’s ‘special alert’ advice centred on the importance of a phone tree to maintain contact with older members in the event they were feeling unduly isolated due to the pandemic health alerts.

Four days later and Mulcahy’s report contained a piece by a member sharing his thoughts on the lessons learned when he was in Nigeria during The Western African Ebola virus epidemic where 28,646 people were infected and 11,323 died.

But fast forward to the same month this year and just like initial warnings about the Australian economy,



Mulcahy’s special bulletins had taken on a decidedly more optimistic tone.

Not only were her messages reflecting on how U3A activities were getting back to normal while meeting the requirements of current COVID-19 restrictions but they also praised the use of video meeting tools such as Zoom in providing what Mulcahy referred to as a “stay at home” option for presentations and other activities.

But U3A is not the only group of active seniors who are





changing the way they use the internet to communicate after life in lockdown.

A new report by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) shows Australia's COVID-19 restrictions have led to more active seniors using digital communications, including social media apps, than ever before.

The *Communications and Media in Australia: How we communicate* interactive report showed the number

of people aged 75 and over who use social media doubled from 18 per cent in June 2019, to 41 per cent in June 2020.

The findings also revealed that for older Australians, emailing had more than doubled (increasing from 37 per cent in 2019 to 81 per cent in 2020) while the use of messaging and calling apps and mobile texting had also increased significantly.

"Older people increased their online activities during the





COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for communication and entertainment. They were more likely to have just started or increased video conferencing and consuming video online,” the report noted.

The results suggest that older people are engaging in a notably broader range of online activities across different devices and connecting to the internet more than ever before. They also prove that mobile phones and tablets – rather than desktop computers – are now this age group’s main gateway to the internet.

### What it all means

ACMA Chair Nerida O’Loughlin says her organisation’s research shows that the digital divide between younger and older Australians has narrowed, with this trend accelerated by the desire to maintain contact with friends and family during lockdowns.

“After years of gradual drift towards communications and social media apps, we have now seen a more pronounced shift in the way Australians connect. More people are relying on social networking apps and mobile

communication services like Facebook Messenger and Zoom to stay connected.”

O’Loughlin’s comments are supported by a report from the Global Centre for Modern Ageing (GCMA), released last year, that investigated the way older Australians used technology, their confidence in it and how they were using it.

The GCMA survey found that while many respondents already had some experience with technology prior to COVID-19, 23 per cent of Australians aged 60 or older began using technology that is new to them (such as an iPad, smartphone apps, or video calls) since the pandemic started.

While showing that older Australians were open to trial and new usage, the survey also showed that those in this age group were displaying an increased confidence in their use of technology as a result of the pandemic.

Thirty-four per cent of those aged 60-plus reported feeling ‘more confident’ with technology than before the COVID-19 outbreak while a further 46 per cent said their confidence had not increased, because they were ‘already confident’.



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## “More people are relying on social networking apps and mobile communication services like Facebook Messenger and Zoom to stay connected.”

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Among the 23 per cent of over 60s who used a technology for the first time, 56 per cent claimed they were now feeling more confident with technology.

### Activities being done online

So what are Australia's active seniors doing online? ACMA research shows that, in parallel with their uptake of digital devices, more older people are using the internet for a wider variety of activities and tasks.

In May, ACMA released the findings of its *The Digital Lives of Older Australians* report, which looked at how the way active seniors use of online technologies had changed between June 2017 and June 2020.

The findings showed that almost all older people now use email, while banking, viewing video content, and buying goods and services online have increased substantially over the previous four years, to become relatively common behaviours for this age group.

The results showed that 95 per cent of those aged 65-plus used the internet to email in the six months to June 2020 (eight per cent more than during the same period in 2017).

The numbers of active seniors using online banking tools also increased between the two periods, rising from 59 per cent in 2017 to 77 per cent in 2020.

The most pronounced change in usage occurred in online shopping with 20 per cent more active seniors going online to shop in 2020 than four years earlier.

The previous four years had also seen a marked increase in the take-up of online entertainment among older age-groups, the results show.

### Streaming services also better utilised

However, it wasn't only for everyday tasks where online usage was going up.

The results showed that the proportion of those using

online subscription services, catch-up television, online platforms like YouTube, and free video content has also risen considerably since our pre-pandemic years.

The report shows that the proportion of older people streaming content on devices has more than doubled since 2017, with seven in ten streaming content at June 2020 compared to the same period four years earlier.

Their use of subscription or pay-per-view services also increased in 2020, to 61 per cent, up from 36 per cent in the corresponding period in 2017.

ABC iView remained the leading catch-up TV service, accessed by 87 per cent of Australians aged 65-plus, followed by SBS On Demand which was accessed by 59 per cent of those in this age group.

Interestingly, while their behaviours have changed considerably, the research shows older people's views of the digital world remain circumspect.

ACMA's various reports say that the majority of people in this demographic continue to feel overwhelmed by technological change, and may be largely unmotivated to find out more.

“Their engagement in online environments appears to have been prompted by perceived (or actual) necessity, rather than by seeing benefits in ‘going online’ or feeling confident about doing so.

“This research suggests that older people may be feeling somewhat ‘forced’ online – a situation that may have been accelerated by the pandemic, but also by the increasing digitisation of life in general.”

ACMA says that this highlights the importance of supporting active senior's digital literacy and providing them with the skills to navigate what can be confusing and potentially risky environments.

“In this way, not only will they use the internet, but they can engage with the digital world safely and confidently.” ●







# The importance of play

When it comes to intergenerational play, there are no losers.  
So why did it take a TV series to show us what we were missing?

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The nourishment that comes from pairing active seniors with young pre-schoolers is a form of pharmaceutical-free medicine that many believe should be available to all Australians.

It is a behaviour clearly identified by Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw who rather prophetically noted: "We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing."

This modern form of bonding is one that Aveo Durack has clearly taken to heart, with the Queensland-based aged care and retirement community joining forces with Playgroup Australia to undertake regular ageless play sessions.

The initiative sees older and younger people brought together weekly for the purpose of providing meaningful social roles and to share their experiences and skills.

Helen Bond, the Lifestyle Coordinator at Aveo Durack, says while the program has only been going for a short time, it has struck a positive chord with participants.

"The residents love it. They look forward to catching up with the playgroup families each week to play,

read books, have sing-a-longs and see what new skills their little friends have mastered.

"Residents, including some of our male residents, chat with the new parents about their own children and the stages of growing up, and enjoy sharing their experiences. The residents and playgroup families have come to know each other quite well."

## Sense of fun

Playgroup Australia says research into the benefits of intergenerational programs suggests there are benefits for all ages including people living in retirement villages and aged care facilities, families, young children and employees.

For active seniors this translates to enjoyment through the sense of fun and energy that young children can bring, and to share their value through lifelong knowledge and experience.

At the opposite end of the age scale, children involved in these types of programs develop social skills and awareness, empathy, gentleness, and unbounded love through an extension of family.

"Research continues to highlight the benefits of play and relationships in supporting the best start to life for children and families, while wellbeing studies report the benefits of physical and mental activity for ageing populations," Playgroup Australia says.

"Through intergenerational initiatives like Ageless Play we are combining the two – increasing positive intergenerational outcomes to support a more connected, inclusive community without ageism."

## Key to the future

Dr Stephanie Ward has made it her life's work to specialise in the care of older adults.

Dr Ward is a senior research fellow at the University of New South Wales' Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHeBA) and a staff specialist in geriatric medicine at The Prince of Wales Hospital.

She is also a co-investigator on the Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA)-led Intergeneration Integration Initiative which is establishing and evaluating intergenerational preschools involving community-dwelling older adults.

She is best known, however, for

her appearances on a groundbreaking ABC documentary series that brought together a group of retirement community and aged care residents and pre-schoolers for daily activities to see if uniting young and old could improve the health and wellbeing of older people.

The TV series, *Old People's Home For 4-Year-Olds*, proved an instant hit with viewers and prompted a huge surge in interest in this form of social structure. The first series of the show led to 2,000 inquiries to Playgroups Australia for it to set up intergenerational playgroups around the country.

Having recently aired its second season, it is also credited with helping spur the Victorian government's decision to pledge \$500,000 for the building of a 66-place intergenerational centre on the Mornington Peninsula.

Feedback such as this has Dr Ward "extremely excited" about the potential of intergenerational contact to improve well-being for older adults.

Having seen first-hand the benefits that intergenerational contact has for everyone involved, she says being part of the experiment has shown just how important having purpose, meaning and connection is for us and for our health at any age.

It has shown how much joy and magic happens when the generations are brought together, and how this joy translates into better physical and mental health all around, Dr Ward says.

"Anecdotally what I observed is that older persons that have contact with younger people, children and younger members of the family regularly seem to be happier. I observed that in my clinical practice as well the magic and

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**Intergenerational contact is an amazing way to give people moments of joy which can then bring about all sorts of other benefits as well.**

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the joy that visits from young people bring, especially to residents of aged care or retirement villages.

"What the research does tell us is that contact with younger people may help improve a sense of wellbeing, quality of life and for persons living with dementia may also help with effective engagement. The research also tells us it is good to have some structure to guide such interactions – there should be no age limit on joy or fun."

#### **The time needed**

Dr Ward says while intergenerational play is relatively new in a formal sense, the concept where pre-school classes visit or sometimes take place in aged care facilities or in co-located facilities, is quite common in places such as the United States.

What hasn't been around for long has been a strong evidence base around the benefits, particularly an evidence base looking at quantifiable health metrics, she says.

In addition, little is known about the frequency of contact that can make significant health differences.

"The studies that have looked at intergenerational contact have varied in length of exposure, frequency and duration. From my reading there

is no clear cut answer. In the *Old People's Homes for 4-Year-Olds* social experiment, that was a really intensive experiment where the two generations were brought together for about six hours a day, four days a week over six weeks. That was a very intensive interaction and the TV show demonstrated significant benefits.

"When you look at the frequency you have to look at what is going to be sustainable for older people, for younger people and their educators, and for the care staff that are involved. It needs to actually be practical. The type of interaction we saw in the TV show is not easily translatable but I would say that any contact is better than none."

#### **The current state of play**

While it is clear that pre-COVID-19 a number of aged care facilities and groups had established meaningful relationships with local preschools, early childhood centres and/or school groups, Dr Ward says there are a number of support structures that are required for these types of programs to be formalised.

In addition to needing a willingness from relevant organisations, it also requires initiative and reaching out to make partnerships with other local groups, she says.

"I've heard from mothers, parents, school groups wanting to reach out with older people in their community and vice versa from aged care providers looking to link in with preschools. There needs to be a willingness of leadership to explore and be committed to this. There needs to be a reasonable risk management in terms of safety for children and safety for older adults and adequate staffing."



To help aid this process, Griffith University has launched a specialised toolkit as part of its Intergenerational Care Project. The aim of the project is to re-connect communities through the development, implementation and evaluation of intergenerational programs and it marks the first time different models of intergenerational learning programs have been formally trialled and evaluated in Australia.

To help further expand learnings in this area, a second project – the Intergenerational Integration Initiative – serves as a literature review of all the evidence for intergenerational programs for older Australians still living at home.

To date an electronic survey on expectations and barriers to participating in such a program has been carried out and focus groups

held. Recently a 10-week pilot intergenerational preschool was launched, operating for roughly three hours a week, once a week at a local preschool where 11 older adults from the community join with 10 preschoolers for structured activities together. It is hoped funding will be sourced to undertake a larger study later this year.

### Where the future will take us

Dr Ward says while it is important to continue the momentum in the right direction, it's important these aren't rushed to ensure proper evaluations of each program can be conducted.

More time needs to be given as to what's going to work out from the children's point of view, what's going to work from the older adults point of view and where the

commonalities are, she says.

"The TV show is showing what is possible but we need some more dedicated research into this space to work out what is feasible and to look at how we can translate what we see on TV into the real world in a way that helps guide further initiatives.

Despite this, Dr Ward says she is excited by the prospect of more intergenerational programs being rolled out across Australia and what this will mean for older Australians, preschoolers and those who love them.

"Intergenerational contact is an amazing way to give people moments of joy which can then bring about all sorts of other benefits as well. It is something so beautiful, so important, and so very much needed in our society today." ●



Diana and Maximilian from *Old People's Home for 4-Year-Olds* bonding over bubble blowing.

# Staying fit and healthy - are you well balanced?

As we grow older an active lifestyle becomes more important than ever. Regular exercise will boost energy levels, assist to manage pain and help maintain our independence as we age.

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Starting and maintaining a regular exercise routine is not always as easy as it first appears.

Whether you have a niggling injury, or you would like to improve your overall strength and fitness, one thing any physiotherapist/exercise physiologist will tell you is that balance is key.

A large contributing factor to falls is decreased balance. Over time our muscles naturally begin to reduce in size. This directly affects our strength and balance and increases our risk of falling.

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Great balance will keep you ahead of the game so you can enjoy life, stay strong and keep active; and it can easily be practiced in the comfort of your own home.

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The good news is, like most things health-related, you are in control of how you approach maintaining your health. There are many things you can do to help improve your balance and reduce your risk of falls.

Great balance will keep you ahead of the game so you can enjoy life, stay strong and keep active; and it can easily be practiced in the comfort of your own home.

### Working with professionals

There are many types of balance exercises you can participate in, such as belly dancing, aqua classes and tai chi – however, before you jump straight into these, it's a good idea to make sure you are physically up to it.

But just how much of an issue is balance with older people and how can you tell how good your balance is?

Mobile Rehab managing director, founder and physiotherapist Helen Weston says balance is definitely a primary focus, as it is one of the key measurements of overall function.

Weston whose agency does a great deal of work with residents of Aveo communities, says despite the fact Aveo offers an extensive well-being program for all residents, falling remains a real fear.

"There are any number of exercises you can do to improve balance. If you are worried about your balance, or already know that it's a medical problem like vertigo, then it's better initially to work with an allied health professional."

### Testing your balance

Weston suggests trying these simple tests at home to get an accurate gauge of how well you are able to balance.

Begin by standing at your kitchen bench and rest your hands on the

### Do you have good balance?

How is your balance at the moment? Do you think it could be improved? Tick any of the boxes below that you answer 'YES' to.

#### Have you noticed that you are:

- ☐ less flexible than you were 12 months ago?
- ☐ tripping over small things more frequently than 12 months ago?
- ☐ taking longer to regain balance after a small stumble?
- ☐ less confident walking distances without the use of an aid?

If you have ticked any of the boxes above, it is recommended you make an appointment with your GP. Regain control and increase your confidence through a strength and balance exercise program designed by a health professional, just for you.

bench for support. Place your feet about shoulder width apart.

1. Standing on two feet can you close your eyes without excessive swaying or increasing your grip on the bench? Well done. You could try the next exercise.
2. Can you comfortably stand on one leg without excessive swaying or gripping? This is great. Have a go at the next one.
3. Can you stand on one leg with your eyes closed (holding on); count how long (one banana, two banana, three banana etc)? Terrific – most healthy people over the age of 60 can only do this for two seconds without holding on.
4. Olympic level – don't try this one until you have mastered the first three. One leg, eyes closed, hands off the bench.

Weston says it's vitally important to stay safe. She recommends

completing the above with a friend, and while holding onto the bench.

"You should not experience any pain or dizziness while doing these activities. If you do, stop immediately and consult your medical professional," she says.

Your balance can be improved, along with exercise, by looking at how appropriate your footwear is, managing your medication, looking after your eyesight, or reviewing your home environment to see if anything could be made safer.

This could be minor modifications to your home with specially designed equipment, or just tidying up some of the clutter around your home.

Don't wait until something happens before you think about your balance. Start working on improving your balance today, so you can get on with all your plans uninterrupted by frustrations and appointments. ●

For more tips from Mobile Rehab visit  
[www.aveo.com.au/activeretirement](http://www.aveo.com.au/activeretirement)



# Aveo community spirit

With warm smiles and generous hearts, Aveo communities have been doing what they can to have fun while supporting others.



funds have gone to support amazing research projects, including University of Queensland's Diamantina Institute (QDI) and the Metro South Breast Cancer Institute. The ground-breaking research project into breast cancer by QDI's Group Leader Associate Professor Fiona Simpson and her team has also benefited with Professor Simpson's work recognised in the world's top journals. Her team are now even coming up with new clinical trials in breast cancer, head and neck cancer, adenoid cystic carcinoma, prostate cancer and pancreatic cancer. To learn more about Professor Simpson's work and receive an update on her challenge for 2021 visit [www.aveo.com.au/project-pink/](http://www.aveo.com.au/project-pink/)

## A million reasons to celebrate

Aveo residents have raised an impressive \$1 million-plus in support of life-saving breast cancer research.

Since 2016, residents, staff and partners across over 90 communities have rallied together to donate to the Project Pink campaign. These



## Going for gold

Aveo Robina recently hosted a mini-Olympics and invited residents from Aveo's Southern Queensland communities to compete. Residents and staff competed in a range of events, including ten pin bowling, thong bucket throwing, table tennis and more. Congratulations to "The Kermit Kohorts", from Aveo Banora Point who took home the gold. Silver was awarded to "The Orange Piths" from Aveo Southport Gardens, and bronze to "The Reigning Champions" from Aveo Amity Gardens.







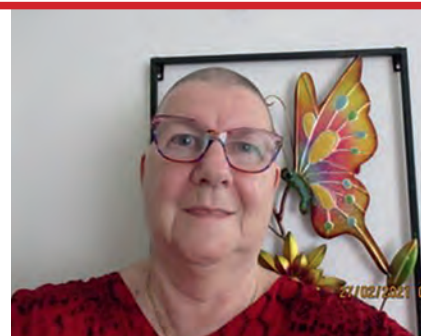
### Cooking up a storm

Aveo is the leader in many fields across the retirement and aged care sector but the recent addition of a new team member has raised the bar even higher. Chef Manager Jeremy Henderson has recently joined the Aveo Bella Vista fold after a 25-year career in the hospitality industry. Eager to contribute to Aveo's five star food approach, Jeremy is now plating up truly mouth-watering dishes for residents and guests in the village restaurant.



### Shave for a cure

The residents of Aveo The Parks in Cairns have given their support to a fellow resident, Rosalie Farrel, who decided she would shed her locks, for the sixth time, to raise funds for The Leukaemia Foundation. While four other brave volunteers were being shorn by invited shearers, remaining audience members were entertained by the Aveo All Stars playing their ukuleles. Four other residents contributed by having their hair dyed and glittered, much to everyone's amusement. In total the group raised \$570 for the Shave For A Cure Foundation through this event. In total over \$2400 was sent to the foundation.



Above: Rosalie showcases her new look. Below: Lorraine makes short work of James's hair.



### A stitch in time

Freedom Cleveland residents know how anxious children can get in the event of a medical mishap. To support the local ambulance service, residents have been knitting and crocheting trauma teddies for paramedics to give to sick children riding the ambulance to comfort them. Their efforts are put to good use with dolls like these widely used in hospitals and other situations to help children recover from unexpected medical incidents.



### Reptiles were a huge hit for residents!

Residents at Aveo Fulham were visited by Radicool Reptiles, who brought 20 Australian native reptiles for an education and interaction session, including pythons, a baby crocodile, a turtle, and lizards of all ages and species. Owner and founder of Radicool Reptiles, Nadia, also spoke about conservation and her job as a snake catcher.



### Garden Gurus

From little things big things grow as can be seen at the community garden at Aveo Hunters Green in Victoria's Cranbourne East. Thirteen years ago three residents came together to form the Garden Gurus, specifically set up to grow and sell plants to fellow residents. The garden has since grown to the size of an orchard. Funds raised from selling the produce contribute to the Residents Association and maintaining the gardens.



### Wrapped with love

Every Saturday afternoon a number of enthusiastic ladies get together in the Community Centre at Aveo Lindfield Gardens. They gather to have a catch up, share an afternoon tea and importantly to knit. Together they knit 25cm squares of brightly coloured wool which eventually comes together as colourful rugs. The rugs are then donated to an Australian organisation called 'Wrapped with Love' which distributes the rugs all over the world to aid agencies and charities. Since launching in 2003, the group of around 16 have produced more than 1,020 rugs – an incredible achievement.

### We would love to hear from you!

For your chance to appear on these pages please send us details of fun events, fundraising initiatives, or just something interesting your community has been up to! Our top 10 submissions will receive a copy of *Live Life Cook*. Email us at: [chapter@aveo.com.au](mailto:chapter@aveo.com.au)







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# A viticultural voyage

When the colder months roll around, enjoying a full-bodied glass of wine beside a log fire is one of life's true pleasures. But even if you are a non-drinker, Australia's many wine-growing regions can still help bring warmth to the dreariest of days.

By virtue of their typography, wine regions always have plenty to offer travellers.

Yet whether you are in possession of a sophisticated wine palette, someone who favours the grain rather than the grape, or are a complete teetotaler, before heading off on such a journey it's always wise to arm yourself with some facts about Australia's burgeoning grape growing industry.

**Two million** – this is the number of bottles of wine that leave Australia every day heading for 111 international markets.

**\$168,000** – is the sale price of the most expensive bottle of Australian wine ever sold.

**1800s** – the period when many of Europe's established vineyards were destroyed by the phylloxera disease.

Some of the only survivors were the vines brought here on board the First Fleet, meaning Australia now has some of the oldest grape vines in the world.

**170,000** – the number of hectares in Australia covered in vineyards.

Journey with us as we highlight three of the best.

## **Margaret River, Western Australia**

Situated at the tip of southern Western Australia, the Margaret River Region stretches from Busselton to Augusta and is an easy 2.5-hour drive from Perth.

**For the wine lovers** – Margaret River has built a global reputation for its outstanding Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. Today there are around 150 wineries producing premium wines. It is worth a visit to the region's founding

wine estate, Vasse Felix, for its stunning cellar door, restaurant and gallery, while sustainability fans will enjoy Voyager Estate which has recently announced its move to full organic certification. It's worthwhile taking a behind the scenes tour where you can fill your glass straight from the barrel.

**For the abstainers** – Head up the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse, Australia's tallest mainland lighthouse, and see where the Southern Ocean and Indian Ocean meet, or visit Cape Naturaliste Lighthouse for panoramic views. For those who are feeling adventurous, head underground to check out one (or all) of the region's four magical caves: Jewel, Lake, Mammoth and Ngilgi. If you are in the mood for more of a challenge, try walking a section of the 135km-long Cape to Cape



Track, and drink in the numerous sea creatures, beautiful wildflowers and magnificent coast along the way. If travelling between September and December you may be lucky enough to spot migrating humpback, southern right and blue whales.

### Barossa Valley, South Australia

Situated just a 50-minute drive north east of Adelaide, the area encompasses towns such as Tanunda and Nuriootpa, with the stone cottages and Lutheran churches throughout testament to a 19th Century wave of German settlers.

**For the wine lovers** – Barossa boasts the longest unbroken lineage of winemaking and grape growing families in the country. With about 150 wineries and 80 different cellar doors in the area, Shiraz is the region's hero red. Producing wine since 1890, Chateau Tanunda is a must visit. Select from one of its award-winning wines or just visit to take in its beautiful architecture or the incredible views of the Barossa Ranges. While Yalumba offers an impressive selection of great wines, be sure to make time to enjoy a tour of its wine barrel making facility – the only on-site winery cooperage in Australia.

**For the abstainers** – The Barossa is home to many iconic landmarks and heritage buildings including the Seppeltsfield Mausoleum, the Whispering Wall and the Angaston Heritage Walk. Make time to check out the Angaston Blacksmith Shop and Museum where, for just \$2, volunteers demonstrate the art of blacksmithing and guide you through three rooms of memorabilia. Leave a late afternoon free to head to the Eden Valley Lookout where, surrounded by stands of ancient red

gums, you can drink in the panoramic views as the sun sets.

### Orange, New South Wales

Orange is a city in the Central Tablelands region, located an easy 3.5-hour drive from Sydney or Canberra and just a quick 40-minute flight. One of the state's best known food bowls, it has a history of fruit-production spanning almost 200 years.

**For the wine lovers** – The Orange wine region, home to over 60 vineyards and wineries, boasts some of the country's highest-elevation vineyard sites. It is best known for its premium expressions of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc. Nashdale Lane offers visitors the chance to breathe in refreshing mountain air while sampling the wines at the cellar door, a 70-year-old converted apple packing shed offering unobstructed views and a wood fire. While the cellar door at Philip Shaw Wines may not have a restaurant, it provides lunch and graze picnic hampers featuring tastings of local produce to enjoy on the cellar door's tiered lawns.



**For the abstainers** – Take a self-guided Orange Heritage Trail or undertake a scenic drive to the historic villages of Carcoar, Barry or Lyndhurst. The ancient volcano of Mount Canobolas is home to a variety of walks, such as the Spring Glade walking track or visit Pinnacle Reserve and Lookout, where you can relax in picnic shelters near a trail to Town Pinnacle, overlooking Towac Valley. You can also learn about the traditional custodians of the land, the Wiradjuri People, on an Indigenous Cultural Adventures tour. ●



## Walnut Porridge with Baked Pears

Serves: 4 Prep time: 15 mins Cooking time: 35 mins

### Ingredients

2 pears, washed  
¼ cup maple syrup  
½ cup walnuts  
2 cups rolled oats  
1 tbsp brown sugar  
1 cup water  
4 cups milk  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
½ cup raspberries  
Pinch of salt

### Method

1. Pre-heat oven to 160°C. Line a deep tray with baking paper.
2. Using a mandoline, finely slice pears from the bottom up, across the core.
3. Place pear slices on baking tray and drizzle with maple syrup. Cover with a lid or tightly with foil and bake for 30 minutes.
4. Add walnuts and bake for a further 5 minutes uncovered, until walnuts are toasted. Remove tray from oven and set aside.
5. In a saucepan, add oats, sugar, water, milk, vanilla and salt. Stir constantly over a medium heat, slowly bringing to a simmer and cooking until thick and creamy.

### To serve

Ladle porridge into bowls.  
Spoon pears and walnuts on top  
and sprinkle with raspberries.



For more recipe ideas and  
video cooking classes, visit  
[aveo.com.au/blog/food](https://aveo.com.au/blog/food)





# Korma Lamb

Serves: 4 Prep time: 45 mins Cooking time: 1½ hours

## Ingredients

1 kg lean lamb leg or shoulder,  
diced into 4cm cubes  
Juice of 1 lemon  
1 cup natural yoghurt  
1 tbsp korma curry paste  
300ml boiling water  
375g coconut cream  
150g blanched almonds,  
coarsely chopped  
150ml thickened cream  
75g pistachios, shelled  
Lime wedges, to serve  
Basmati rice, to serve  
Handful of fresh curry leaves,  
to garnish (optional)

## Method

1. Place lamb in a bowl with curry paste, lemon juice and yoghurt. Mix well and marinate for 2–3 hours in the refrigerator.
2. Add boiling water, coconut cream and half the almonds. Cover and simmer gently for approximately 90 minutes, or until the lamb is tender.
3. Before serving, lower the heat and stir through the thickened cream.

## To serve

Sprinkle over remaining the almonds, pistachios and curry leaves and serve with a side of rice.





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LIVE WELL





# Tips for aspiring green thumbs

With good planning and a little out-of-the-box thinking your outdoor zones can soon be turned into lush, productive garden spaces.

**G**ardening helps many active seniors lay the foundations for a positive approach to living well.

Yet while developing a green thumb has many health and therapeutic benefits, a scarcity of space combined with a lack of confidence means many active seniors fail to turn their dreams of having a beautiful garden into a reality.

## Maximising your small garden

Conor O'Shea, the CEO of Queensland-based Centenary Landscaping Supplies, says when you don't have the luxury of a big garden, making effective use of the vertical space you have available can add layers of much-needed depth to your garden space while also giving the illusion of more space.

O'Shea says it is worthwhile

introducing vertical structures to your garden such as hanging baskets, a plant wall or investing in an all-in-one vertical planting system, he says. Some even come with an in-built vermicomposting system.

"If you don't have much space for planters and pots, make use of fences, or the sides of a garden shed to grow climbing plants such as a kiwi vines, cucumbers, and passionfruit on trellises."

## Colour works wonders

O'Shea says while those beautiful red roses and hot orange dahlias look stunning when in full bloom, dark and bold colours tend to draw the focal point of the eye and can make your garden feel smaller.

"Instead, plant them sparingly and opt for lovely white or light pink

petunias, the soft light blue tones of hydrangeas or some charming white gardenias for a light colour scheme in your garden," he says.

## Use terraces to trick

In small gardens, all spaces must be put to work. By 'terracing' your garden you can make your small garden look visually bigger and have more planting space for your favourite plants.

When it comes time to plant a terraced garden remember to provide adequate drainage, ensuring that plants on different levels are all getting a healthy amount of sun and that plants on lower terraces don't obscure the view of those higher up.

## Plant varieties make a difference

Many plants come in a compact or dwarf form. With clever plant choices, you can still grow things of interest like lemon trees in a small garden to add interest. ●



# Financial peace of mind

In addition to providing us with shelter, housing plays a vital part in connecting us to our community. For this reason, the decision to sell the family home and downsize is never an easy one.

If some of this country's most high-profile commentators are to be believed, the blame for Australia's housing affordability crisis lies squarely at the feet of older Australians.

With the great Australian dream of home ownership proving increasingly out of reach for many, economists and financial media have for some time now been pointing the finger at baby boomers, empty nesters and retirees. They argue this demographic is at fault for putting undue pressure

on the market by staying put in their oversized family homes.

But not everyone agrees that active Australians are to blame for the issue, with demographer Liz Allen among them. Allen says Australia has a housing mismatch with young people struggling to get into housing that's secure and meets their needs, while older people are in homes that typically exceed their needs.

Policy settings make it difficult for active Australians to downsize or right-size while fees associated with

the legal and logistical aspects of moving make downsizing financially difficult, she says.

According to estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for 2017/18, 83.6% of people aged 65 years and over owned a private dwelling, with or without a mortgage. This compares to 66.2% of the total population, and 60.6% of the population aged under 65.

The underlying number of home owners aged over 65 was estimated to be 1.9 million.



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**“I now feel more financially secure because I have got peace of mind. I’m not a millionaire by any means but I can pay the fees here and still afford a good life.”—Sandra York**

---

It is clear many active seniors are precautionary savers with a strong aversion to debt in old age which may go some of the way to explaining why some older Australians are not in any rush to move on from their family homes.

However, with much of their wealth tied in the family home, downsizing is increasingly being seen as a win-win for older people who struggle to maintain their property and also wish to release some equity to supplement their income.

A 2015 report by the Australian Productivity Commission showed home equity is a major store of assets among older Australians, comprising about half of the total wealth of people aged 65 years and over.

### Accessing untapped wealth

Property market commentator Eliza Owen, also CoreLogic’s head of research, says the current real estate climate means there is now little reason why this wealth should continue to remain untapped.

Owen says that while CoreLogic research believes it is likely the monthly dwelling value growth rate peaked in March 2021 (at 2.8%), conditions are still very favourable for sellers, largely due to the following:

- The combined capital cities auction clearance rate has averaged a red-hot 76% over the past four

weeks, up from the decade average of 62%;

- National dwelling values have risen 10.1% since the start of the year;
- Typical time on market remains around its record low of 25 days, while vendor discounting rates are also around record lows with the typical discount from the original asking price recorded at -2.7% over the past three months.

Owen says total stock on the market available for sale remains around 25% lower than the five-year average.

“The sheer lack of available supply currently puts sellers in a very good position across many markets of Australia,” she says.

Owen says the Federal Government is also making moves to incentivise older Australians to consider making a move into a smaller residence.

From July 2022 the government will be lowering the age threshold for downsizer contributions from 65 to 60 years old.

Owen says this will enable more older Australians to use profits from the sale of the family home to contribute to their superannuation.

“According to the ATO, for those eligible this is a non-concessional contribution and does not count towards contributions caps for those utilising the scheme.”

### Providing financial security

Sandra York is one of many active seniors who have sought to capitalise on the present state of the market.

Having lost her husband a few years ago, Sandra says she began finding it increasingly difficult to maintain her three-bedroom home in Sydney’s Kellyville and began looking for something smaller.

“I didn’t want to do gardens anymore and I was very lonely. There were just too many memories there,” she says.

Earlier this year, Sandra sold her three-bedroom home in Greater Western Sydney for \$1.2 million and purchased a two-bedroom unit in Aveo Bella Vista for \$755,000.

Her experience in buying the unit was hugely positive, she says, because “everything was upfront and easy to understand, there were no hidden costs and everything was in plain English – something that is especially important when you’re by yourself and don’t have anyone to run these types of things past”.

“It was a good time to make the move because there was a big difference between what I could get for my own home and what I could buy. From a financial perspective, I now feel more financially secure because I have got peace of mind. I’m not a millionaire by any means but I can pay the fees here and still afford a good life.” ●

# Aveo Fulham



Expansive gardens and a heritage homestead are just some of the many attractions offered at Aveo Fulham.

When locking eyes on Aveo Fulham for the first time, it's easy to get overawed by the incredible 129-year-old homestead for which the community is renown.

But the truth is, the retirement community that lies in the heart of Fulham has much more to offer than just its stunning heritage centrepiece.

Located just 15 minutes from the heart of Adelaide, the independent living community is spread across five acres from which it offers easy access to Glenelg, West Lakes and the gorgeous cosmopolitan seaside suburb of Henley Beach.

Community Business Manager Kirsty Sparshott says the village was originally founded on an old farm with its two-storey homestead dating back to 1892.

It was initially opened in two stages, the first of which was in 1984 which resulted in the construction of the first 22 independent living units.

Two years later, stages two and three were opened, comprising of a further 45 units, together with a number of serviced apartments, the latter of which are able to house 25 residents.

When fully occupied, the village can

now accommodate 161 residents.

The community is staffed 24-hours a day, with flexible employee numbers depending on the amount of activities taking place on any given day. Each resident is also given access to a 24/7 emergency call system.

Kirsty says the community's many onsite amenities are also a big drawcard for current and future residents.

Equipped with a community centre, hair and beauty facilities, and library, community members are also encouraged to utilise the many allied health professionals that make





frequent visits to the village.

The community also boasts its own chef and dining room where residents are treated to quality meals and themed special dinners, all of which are made onsite but without traditional restaurant prices.

For those residents whose main interests are not food-related, there is also an assortment of activities to choose from.

Kirsty says these can include everything from bingo and indoor bowls, to movie afternoons and happy hours.

One of the most popular events on the calendar is what the community refers to as its “sconversations” where residents are encouraged to get together for interesting conversations over tea and scones.

Offsite, but within walking distance to the community, is Fulham’s Airport Over 50s Club.

Operational for the past 30-plus years, activities staged at the club include line dancing classes, card games, pool and billiards, art classes and card making.

Many residents from the community are members, helping to aid relationships between the two venues, while also proving a valuable pillar in Aveo Fulham’s efforts to enjoy strong foothold in the broader Fulham community.

Kirsty says while Aveo Fulham features many impressive features, one of the best things about it is its great value for money.

“There is something affordable for most prospective residents with

prices starting at \$63,000 for a serviced apartment.”

The maximum price for a two-bedroom unit with lock up garage sits at around \$370,000, marking it as one of the more economic retirement living opportunities, she says.

“Fulham best suits retirees who are looking for a home that is surrounded by beautifully manicured gardens where property maintenance is taken care of, amenities are close by and friendly neighbours are around every corner.” ●

Aveo Fulham is one of 15 retirement communities Aveo has across Adelaide. To find your nearest community visit [aveo.com.au/adelaide](http://aveo.com.au/adelaide)





# Meet Edith Webster

Aveo communities are filled with an assortment of inspiring individuals from an array of backgrounds. This issue we meet Edith Webster of Aveo Fulham.

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**Can we start with a little bit of background about you, namely your family, where you were born and in which city/town you spent most of your life?** I was born in Port Pirie and grew up there but after beginning work I brought my own family up in Burra. My son now lives in Manoorra and my daughter is in Bridgewater.

**What was your profession prior to your retirement and at what age did you begin contemplating a move into a retirement community?** I was a teacher but retired at 50 when I married for the second time. My husband and I travelled all over Australia but could no longer manage in the campervan. My husband's health deteriorated so I began suggesting a move to a community. We now had seven children with our joined families but

most of them were not in Adelaide or even South Australia.

**When did you move into Aveo Fulham, how did you know the timing was right and how did you know it was the right place for you?** We moved into Aveo Fulham in 2016. My husband was 92 and very isolated where we were living so, with our daughters' help, we moved into the village. Here he found he could get out to the activities and enjoy the company that changed his life for the next three years.

**How involved are you in community life and how do you enjoy filling your days outside of your immediate community?** We both joined into community life – having lunch in the dining room once a week to get to know other residents. The social activities were enjoyable and I was happy to play the piano for a sing-along

once a month. I still play our church organ and attend church functions as well as working with a class of English as a second language. I no longer drive a car so this community is ideal as I can walk to the supermarket, chemist and the local hotel for a meal.

**What is the one thing your neighbours would be surprised to learn about you?** I used to drive trucks and buses. I also drove an ambulance as I was a trained St John Ambulance member.

**What advice would you offer to others thinking about entering a retirement community?** I would say it is the best thing we could have done. We both enjoyed the change and when I lost my husband I was, and am still, glad of the company of the other residents and staff. Even through COVID-19 meals were delivered to us and we were kept informed and supported by the staff. The friendliness of the staff and their efforts to provide interesting and enjoyable activities – as well as an efficient, smooth-functioning community – are excellent. ●

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**The friendliness of the staff and their efforts to provide interesting and enjoyable activities – as well as an efficient, smooth-functioning community – are excellent.**

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