

MYPLACE

NEWSLETTER FOR TENANTS AND RESIDENTS OF HOME IN PLACE
ISSUE ELEVEN

Home
in Place



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YOU'RE INVITED!

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A Message from Emma O'Hara

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
HOME IN PLACE AUSTRALIA



Hello, and welcome to Issue 11 of the MYPLACE Newsletter.

I couldn't agree more with Crooner Andy Williams. It's the most wonderful time of the year!

I love the Christmas season—twinkling lights on a Christmas tree, Christmas carols, spicy and warm Christmas smells, spending time with family, and being able to eat rum balls for breakfast!

But while I could talk endlessly about my love of the season, we need to get real about Christmas and acknowledge that this is not everyone's experience or expectation of the season.

Christmas can be a tough time for some people – financial stress, complex family relationships, grief and isolation can all be made harder during the festive season.

If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed or just in need of a listening ear this Christmas, please remember you're not alone.

Reaching out for support, whether to a friend, family member, or community or support group, can make a world of difference. There are many church and community groups, and support agencies that have tools and resources available to you at no cost such as counselling, financial hardship and food relief, gift appeals and community activities and meals.

Reach out to your local Community Participation Officer or Tenancy Relations Officer to find out more about what is available in your area.

LIFELINE www.lifeline.org.au or 13 11 14

BEYOND BLUE www.beyondblue.org.au or 1300 22 4636

We are continuing to receive feedback from New South Wales tenants relating to the new water usage policy and billing process – we are reviewing this feedback and looking to make improvements to the appearance of, and information you get in your bills – so watch this space!

In view of recent legislative changes in New South Wales and Queensland, we have also been reviewing our **Pet Policy, Alteration to Property Policy** and both state **Social Housing Rent Policies**. The updated policies are going through final approval stages and will soon be available on our website or by contacting your local office.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties this Christmas please always contact your Tenancy Relations Officer to discuss your situation before cancelling your rent payments.

Home in Place can assist you with making affordable payment plans, referring you to local services that can assist with food relief or Electricity Assistance Payments (EAPA), as well as referrals to financial counselling services for longer-term education and support.

TRG and OVP Update

The Home in Place **Tenant Reference Groups** (TRGs) provide a local forum for Home in Place tenants and staff to discuss key aspects of the services provided by Home in Place. Members of this group meet quarterly to discuss a range of issues that affect their lives and provide feedback from other Home in Place tenants. The TRGs feed into the **Our Voice Panel** (OVP) which links to the Home in Place Board.



The TRG and OVP Groups completed their quarterly meetings in October 2024. Tenants who attended the meetings provided positive input from their respective regions.

TRG Meetings were held in Brisbane, East Maitland, Newcastle, Central Coast, Taree and Upper Hunter regions.

TRG MEETINGS

Key items discussed at the October meetings were:

- Christmas event plans 2024
- Upcoming events and event ideas
- General issues and challenges
- Ideas for improvement
- Volunteers adjudicating the Tenant Incentive Scheme (TIS) awards.

OVP MEETING

The OVP meeting, comprising of five members representing each region, was held on 17 October 2024. Two potential new members joined this meeting and the following items were discussed.

Solar Panels on Home in Place Properties

QUESTION: *Are tenants allowed to install solar panels on their properties and/or does Home in Place have any plans to install solar panels on its properties for tenants?*

Tenants can request to install solar via the Alterations Policy, however this may require tenants to uninstall/remove the solar when leaving the property, which may be expensive. There is currently some government funding available for Community Housing Providers around sustainability measures including solar. Community Housing Providers are also having

conversations with government around responsibility for installing solar on government-owned properties.

Inspection Outcome Letters

QUESTION: *Is there a letter or inspection report that Home in Place can send to tenants after all periodic inspections regarding the inspection's outcome?*

Home in Place does have a routine inspection thank you letter. A reminder will be sent to Home in Place teams that this should be sent as a part of their finalisation process for routine inspections.

Occupancy of Property Policy

The OVP provided feedback on this policy. It is currently under review by Home in Place and will provide clarity relating to visitors, and conditions around absences relating to incarceration, respite and rehab.

Pet Policy

Home in Place is updating this policy to reflect changes to legislation relating to the reasonable approval of pets and clarity on the guidelines on the suitability of pets by dwelling type. The OVP is providing policy feedback on keeping exotic pets and fostering animals.

Social Housing Rent Policy

The Social Housing Rent Policy is currently being reviewed and the OVP will provide feedback on the draft when it is produced.

The OVP is working with Home in Place to develop a Good Neighbour Guide that we hope to share with tenants soon.

THE TRG IS A GREAT WAY TO GET INVOLVED IN THE WAY SERVICES ARE DELIVERED AT HOME IN PLACE. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL TRG REP OR BRANCH FOR MORE DETAILS ON JOINING YOUR LOCAL TRG!

Grow a Star

Grow a Star is a **youth mentoring and scholarship program** that helps young people from disadvantaged backgrounds overcome the financial or generational obstacles that are preventing them from following their **academic, sporting or artistic** dreams. The program was created by Home in Place and is the first of its kind to be designed and operated by a Community Housing Provider.



12-year-old Wahta loves ballet and has been dancing since she was three years old. She may have inherited the love of dance from Patricia who was one of the original dancers at the iconic Indigenous dance company, Bangarra.

Patricia is happy to support her daughter's love of ballet and desire to be a prima ballerina because Wahta loves it, but also because ballet has given Wahta friendships, discipline, confidence and a desire to work hard. But as a single mum living in social housing, Patricia relies on scholarships to assist with the cost of the classes, costumes, travel, and accommodation costs that ballet brings.

Wahta

A Grow a Star scholarship has allowed Wahta to attend an Associate Program with the National College of Dance. The intensive program includes workshops, training and summer school.

"Wahta's ballet teacher asked if she could apply for the program but there was no way I could afford the fee on top of her normal weekly ballet fees." Patricia said.

Wahta was selected to go to the Australian Ballet School Intrastate Training Program, involving two trips to Melbourne a year. Patricia and Wahta have taken the train to try and save on travel costs.

Luckily this year's Australian Classical Challenge, which sees more than 100 dancers from across Australia compete, was held in Wahta's hometown of Newcastle NSW. She was a finalist in the 11 to 13 year old category.

This year Wahta also attended the two-day Claudia Dean Scholarships in Brisbane. She was a finalist in the Royal Academy of Dance NSW Awards and she placed second in the 11-12 year olds at the Australian Institute of Classical Dance AICD Awards in Sydney.

The team at Grow a Star is excited to support Wahta on her ballet journey. We hope she continues to nurture her passion for dance and shine brightly both on the stage and in her everyday life.

With dedication and support, we believe Wahta has the potential to become a true star, inspiring others with her grace and commitment.

YOU CAN READ MORE OF WAHTA'S STORY AT [GROWASTAR.ORG](https://growastar.org)

Do you know a young person who needs support with their education, sporting or artistic pursuits?

Contact the Grow a Star Coordinator Shane Marshall at shanem@homeinplace.org for more information or go to www.growastar.org/general-applications to apply today.



Star Fun

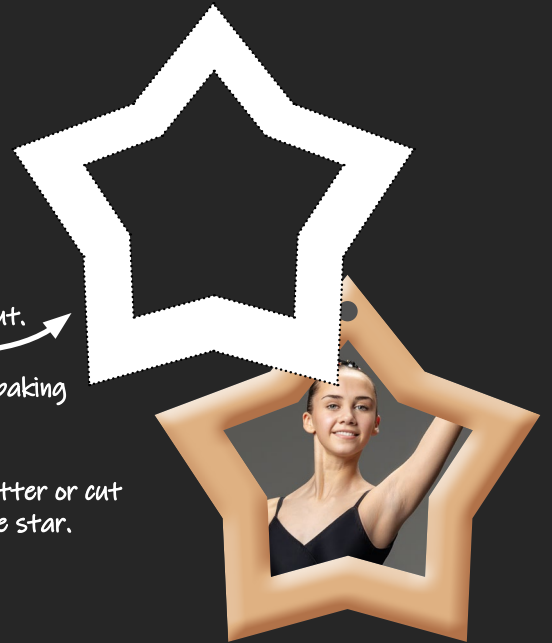
Continuing the Grow a Star theme, and in the spirit of Christmas here are a few fun family activities. We hope you enjoy them!

SALT DOUGH STAR FRAMES

Salt dough is easy to make and fun to play with.

To make these Christmas tree ornaments simply....

1. Preheat your oven to 50°C.
2. Mix and knead together 2 cups of plain flour, 1 cup of salt and 1 cup of water.
3. Roll the dough out flat on a piece of baking paper with a rolling pin or a bottle.
4. Use a big star cutter and a small star cutter to cut the middle of the stars out. If you don't have a cookie cutter you can trace around these star shapes.
5. Poke a hole in the top of the stars and place them on a baking tray lined with baking paper.
6. Bake for a few hours.
7. Once they are cool you can paint them with acrylic paint, sprinkle them with glitter or cut out a photo just a bit bigger than the centre hole and paste it to the back of the star.



PADDLE POP STARS



This is too easy but a lot of fun... especially if you collect the paddle pop sticks by eating the iceblocks first!

1. Simply create a triangle by sticking three paddlepop sticks together. You can buy paddle pop sticks at craft and discount stores. Repeat to make another triangle.
2. Turn one of the triangles upside down and glue them together to create a six point star.
3. Now the really fun part - decorating it. You can paint it, add glitter, wrap colourful wool around it, stick colour beads on it... anything you want. Put some ribbon through the top point to hang it on the Christmas tree.

DON'T LIFT THE PEN!

Can you draw these shapes without lifting the pen and without tracing the same line more than once?

Level 1



Level 2

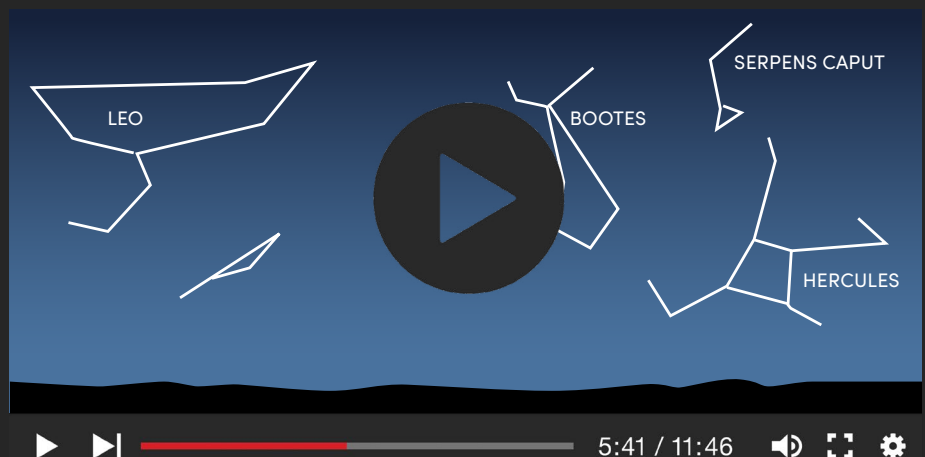


INTERACTIVE NIGHT SKY

The clever people at timeanddate.com have developed an interactive Night Sky Map that simulates the sky above your house.

Go to www.timeanddate.com/astronomy/night/australia then type in your location in the search bar at the top.

These are some of the constellations visible above Newcastle NSW on 31 October 2024.





Andrew's Story

Andrew says his new Home in Place managed SDA home in Sydney is giving him independence and the opportunity to revive his drum teaching business.

He only moved in June but says he is already reaping so many benefits.

"I have gained so much independence, I have been able to cut my Hireup support in half," Andrew says.

"I am cooking for myself, often doing my own meal prep. I only use my supports when things are more difficult. My partner Miriam comes to stay a little and I get to cook for her a bit. It is so great being able to reach a stove from my wheelchair."

Reviving his drum teaching business is another benefit Andrew hopes his new SDA home will bring. Andrew has been a drummer for 44 years and teaching for 20 years.

"I am trying to re-establish myself a little as COVID killed my work. I can work with NDIS Plan or self-managed people who wish to use their funding."

When his parents bought him a drum kit at the age of 10, it was about overcoming challenges as well as a love for music. He has performed internationally and co-founded Can Do Musos, an organisation that supports musicians with disabilities worldwide.

"Despite my disability I never took no for an answer."

"I'd been watching lots of music shows on TV, particularly Countdown, and wanted to be that drummer on the stage."

Andrew started teaching drumming after leaving a career in IT.

"I wanted to do something more rewarding in my life and help others."

He says he is not a music therapist, but his lessons are much like therapy sessions. He teaches using his life experience of living with Cerebral Palsy.

"I use backing tracks of popular songs to teach students to play by feel rather than by a book."

"Many of my students have Autism, Cerebral Palsy, ABIs, or vision impairment. Some lessons help people learn to retain information as drumming is so repetitive. One student I was teaching to play popular rock songs to help build his memory after a major car accident."

As well as individual tutoring, Andrew does drum circles using hand drums and percussion for groups for up to 15 people.

For details visit www.drummerstix.com.au.

**YOU CAN READ ANDREW'S STORY,
AND OTHER TENANT STORIES AT
HOMEINPLACE.ORG/STORY**

Cooking Corner

CHRISTMAS RECIPES WITH ONLY FIVE INGREDIENTS
- FROM TASTE.COM.AU

EASY TRUFFLES Serves 36

INGREDIENTS

250g pkt plain biscuits (e.g. Milk Coffee)
1/3 cup cocoa powder
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup desiccated coconut
395g can sweetened condensed milk



STEP 1

Put the biscuits into a plastic bag and hit with a rolling pin until crushed into small pieces. Transfer to a bowl. Add cocoa powder, walnuts and 1/2 of the coconut. Make a well in the centre.

STEP 2

Add the condensed milk. Mix together with a wooden spoon until evenly moistened. Chill for 30 minutes.

STEP 3

Spread the remaining coconut onto a plate. Roll level tablespoons of the mixture into balls then make slightly egg shaped. Roll in the coconut. Keep in an airtight container in the fridge.

RASPBERRY AND WHITE CHOCOLATE SCONES Makes 16

INGREDIENTS

3 cups self-raising flour
1 cup chilled lemonade
600ml thickened cream
150g frozen raspberries
150g finely chopped white chocolate



STEP 1

Preheat oven to 220°C. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

STEP 2

Place the flour in a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Pour in the lemonade and 1 cup of the cream. Add the raspberries and white chocolate. Use a flat-bladed knife to stir until a soft, sticky dough forms.

STEP 3

Turn onto a lightly floured surface and lightly knead until just smooth. Press into a 3cm-thick disc. Use a lightly floured 5cm pastry cutter to cut discs from the dough, re-rolling dough if necessary. Place the scones, side-by-side, on the lined tray. Lightly brush the tops with a little of the remaining cream. Bake for 12-15 mins or until lightly golden and scones sound hollow when tapped on the top.

STEP 4

Whisk the remaining cream in a bowl until soft peaks form. Serve scones warm or at room temperature with the whipped cream.

THUMBPRINT COOKIES Makes 24

INGREDIENTS

180g butter
1 cup caster sugar
1 egg
2 cups plain flour
1/4 cup raspberry jam



STEP 1

Preheat oven to 180°C. Line two baking trays with baking paper.

STEP 2

Use an electric mixer to beat the butter and sugar in a bowl until pale and creamy. Add the egg and beat until well combined. Stir in the flour.

STEP 3

Roll tablespoonfuls of mixture into balls. Place on lined trays, allowing room for spreading. Use your thumb or the end of a wooden spoon to make an indentation in the shape of a heart in the centre of each ball. Spoon 1/2 tsp of the jam into each indentation.

STEP 4

Bake, swapping trays halfway through cooking, for 15 mins or until light golden. Set aside on the trays to cool completely.

CHRISTMAS CRACKLES Makes 24

INGREDIENTS

2 cups rice bubbles
50g butter
1 cup white marshmallows
30g white chocolate melts, melted
20 Jaffa lollies

STEP 1

Place rice bubbles in a large bowl. Combine butter and marshmallows in a small saucepan and melt over low heat until smooth. Pour onto rice bubbles and stir to combine.

STEP 2

Spoon mixture into mini patty cases and leave to set for about 20 mins.

STEP 3

Spoon white chocolate over the crackle and place a Jaffa on top of each one. Leave to set.

Puzzle Time

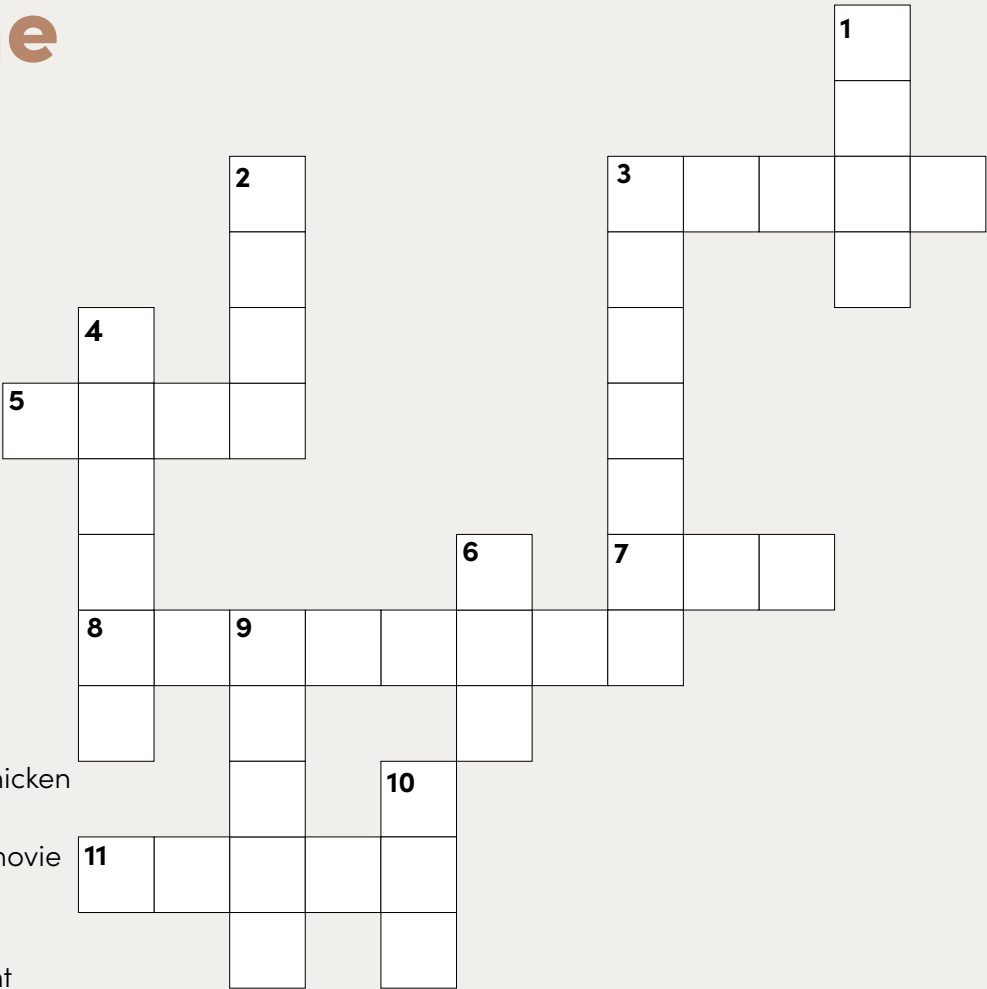
CROSSWORD

DOWN

- 1. Often put at the top of a Christmas tree
- 2. Colour of Elvis' Christmas
- 3. A series of short high ringing sounds
- 4. Day after Christmas
- 6. Santa's spy that sits on the shelf
- 9. One of Santa's reindeers
- 10. Colour of Rudolf's nose

ACROSS

- 3. In what country do people celebrate Christmas by eating chicken from KFC
- 5. Highest grossing Christmas movie of all time ____ Alone
- 7. Classic Christmas movie
- 8. Another name for Santa, Saint ____
- 11. Colour of Bing Crosby's Christmas



B	T	L	A	G	I	J	D	I	B
G	N	U	J	N	I	K	R	A	D
I	A	U	R	A	N	N	O	W	U
M	N	D	J	R	A	N	R	A	B
I	P	I	R	I	B	A	R	O	E
R	I	R	U	J	D	A	R	I	W
O	A	R	E	G	A	J	L	A	L
W	I	L	Y	A	K	A	L	I	U
A	W	A	B	A	K	A	L	N	G

WORD SEARCH

Awabakal, Barna, Bidjigal, Biripi, Darkinjung, Eora, Jagera, Turrbal, Wilyakali, Wiradjuri, Wonnarua, Worimi.

The left over letters spell out the name of the original custodians of northern coastal areas of New South Wales.

TRIVIA

- 1. Which sporting event begins on Boxing Day in Sydney?
- 2. What Australian Christmas tradition began in Melbourne in 1938?
- 3. Australia's Christmas Island has an amazing annual migration of which creature?
- 4. Which country came up with the dessert "White Christmas" made from coconut oil and dried fruit?
- 5. Which popular Australian Christmas dessert is made up mostly of a meringue base and topped with fruit?
- 6. In the Australian version of "Jingle Bells" what mode of transport is used instead of the one horse open sleigh?

PLEASE JOIN US!

Christmas Events



Home in Place tenants, please join us at a Christmas celebration near you!

ALL CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 MUST BE SUPERVISED BY AN ADULT.
WE MAY BE ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE ADDITIONAL GUESTS OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD, HOWEVER, PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO CURRENT HOME IN PLACE TENANTS.
Call 1300 333 733 or email communityevents@homeinplace.org for more information.

FORSTER TUNCURRY CHRISTMAS TRIVIA

Wednesday 4 December 2024
6:30pm – 8:30pm

NEPTUNE'S LOUNGE CLUB FORSTER
19 STRAND ST, FORSTER
Trivia, prizes and dinner!
RSVP 27/11/24 by calling
1300 333 733

SINGLETON BAREFOOT BOWLS

Monday 9 December 2024
11am – 2pm

DIGGERS SINGLETON
49 CASTLEREAGH ST, SINGLETON
Two hours of barefoot bowls, prizes
and finger food lunch.
RSVP 1/12/24
<https://tinyurl.com/yc4uf6sz>



CENTRAL COAST BAREFOOT BOWLS

Friday 6 December 2024
10am – 12pm

OURIMBAH LISAROW RSL CLUB
20 PACIFIC HWY, OURIMBAH
Two hours of barefoot bowls, prizes
and finger food lunch.
RSVP 29/11/24
<https://tinyurl.com/mrxrt2fv>



CHARLESTOWN BAREFOOT BOWLS

Tuesday 10 December 2024
11:30am – 1:30pm

CLUB CHARLESTOWN
5 LINCOLN ST, CHARLESTOWN
Two hours of barefoot bowls, prizes
and finger food lunch.
RSVP 1/12/24 by calling
1300 333 733

DUBBO END OF YEAR TENANT CELEBRATION AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday 7 December 2024
11am – 2pm

DUBBO AQUATIC LEISURE CENTRE
TALBRAGAR ST AND DARLING ST,
DUBBO
All day entry into the pool with a pool
slide, show bags, prizes and Subway
lunch.
RSVP 27/11/24 by calling
1300 333 733

MUSWELLBROOK END OF YEAR TENANT CELEBRATION AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

Monday 16 December 2024
11am – 3pm

MUSWELLBROOK POOL
WILKINSON AVE, MUSWELLBROOK
All day entry into the pool with a pool
slide, show bags, prizes and a pizza
lunch.
Transport available from Singleton
pending demand.
RSVP 11/12/24
<https://tinyurl.com/ye2aspp3>





MORPETH SENIORS TRIVIA LUNCH

Tuesday 17 December 2024

12pm – 2pm

COMMERCIAL HOTEL
127 SWAN ST, MORPETH
Trivia and lunch provided and prizes to be won.

**RSVP 10/12/24 by calling
1300 333 733**

BROKEN HILL END OF YEAR TENANT CELEBRATION AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

Thursday 19 December 2024

11am – 2pm

BROKEN HILL REGIONAL AQUATIC CENTRE
336 MCCULLOCH ST, BROKEN HILL
All day entry into the pool with a pool slide, show bags, prizes and a BBQ lunch.

**RSVP 11/12/24
<https://tinyurl.com/3fkfadrj>**

MT GRAVATT BOWLS

Wednesday 18 December 2024

10am – 2pm

MT GRAVATT BOWLS CLUB
1873 LOGAN RD, UPPER MOUNT GRAVATT
Christmas lunch, dessert, games prizes, face painting, music and of course, barefoot lawn bowls!

**RSVP 4/12/24 by calling
1300 333 733 or by email to
adminqld@homeinplace.org**

END OF YEAR TENANT CELEBRATION AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

Friday 20 December 2024

10am – 2pm

AUSTRALIAN REPTILE PARK
PACIFIC HIGHWAY, SOMERSBY
All day entry into the park with animal encounter, show bags, prizes and a BBQ lunch.

Transport Available

Bus 1 Depart Swansea, Toukley, The Entrance, Tumby Umbi and Ourimbah
Bus 2 Depart Woy Woy, Gosford and Wyoming

**RSVP 10/12/24
<https://tinyurl.com/7bpud9h7>**

END OF YEAR TENANT CELEBRATION AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

Thursday 19 December 2024

11am – 2pm

OAKVALE WILDLIFE FARM
3 OAKVALE DRIVE SALT ASH
All day entry into the farm with animal encounter, show bags, prizes and a BBQ lunch.

Transport Available

Bus 1 Pick up Charlestown and Wallsend
Bus 2 Pick up Cessnock and Kurri Kurri
Bus 3 Pick up Maitland and Thornton
Bus 4 Pick up Forster and Tuncurry
Bus 5 Pick up Taree

**RSVP 9/12/24 by calling
1300 333 733**

LET'S CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AT THE MEETING PLACE

Monday 23 December 2024

11am – 2pm

THE MEETING PLACE
1 NORTHUMBERLAND WAY,
TUMBI UMBI
Free BBQ buffet lunch, lucky door prizes, kid's lolly bags and Christmas activities!

**RSVP 16/12/24
<https://tinyurl.com/3kzv3rj>**





Maree's Story

Maree has been a tenant with Home in Place for 15 years and credits her ability to help others to the security of having a safe and affordable home.

Maree is in her late 60s and has been knitting since she was 10. For the past five years the grandmother of six has been using her skills to help families with sick kids in hospital.

From her Home in Place unit in a suburb of Newcastle in the NSW Hunter region, Maree knits beanies, mittens, outfits, socks, slippers and the occasional blanket and donates them to John Hunter Children's Hospital. Her daughter-in-law also takes some items down to the Randwick Children's Hospital in Sydney every six months.

Maree is now knitting little items for premature babies as well as kids 12 months and up. She will often buy items she finds on sale to include with her parcels.

"I've lost count of the number of outfits I have made. It would be more than 100," Maree said.

"I haven't seen the babies in the clothes but knowing I am helping a family is very fulfilling," she said.

"My grandkids don't need many items now, so this keeps me knitting, which I love. It keeps me busy and my mind occupied."

"Each time I go up to John Hunter to drop the items off, the staff tell me how appreciative people are. A week or so later I always get a card from the hospital thanking me for the donations."

"Many families don't expect their children will be in hospital or to have to stay for as long as some do. At

least they have an outfit or item to wear home. It saves having to buy something."

Maree's 22-year-old grandson was in and out of hospital receiving successful treatment for cancer when he was 7. She said this gave her an understanding and empathy for the families for whom she now knits.

"Until then, I didn't appreciate just how many kids end up in hospital for cancer and other illnesses. The number has grown since my grandson was there. Last time I was at John Hunter I asked the staff how many premature babies they were caring for. The nurse said they were busy but not full. But there were 30 babies."

Maree has been a Home in Place tenant for around 15 years and in her current place she shares with her cat for almost 4 years. Home in Place team member Ellen praised Maree for being generous and such a good tenant.

Maree said that she likes to keep her place clean and tidy and be respectful.

"I am grateful that I have a place to call mine and I don't have to pack up and move from one place to another. Having a safe and affordable roof over my head helps me to help others."

**WE LOVE SHARING OUR TENANTS' STORIES.
IF YOU'D LIKE TO TELL YOURS PLEASE CONTACT US AT
HELLO@HOMEINPLACE.ORG**

Stay in Touch

HOME IN PLACE CUSTOMER CALL CENTRE 1300 333 733

Business hours for all general tenancy enquiries or 24/7 for emergency tenancy and maintenance issues.

W WWW.HOMEINPLACE.ORG E CONTACTUS@HOMEINPLACE.ORG



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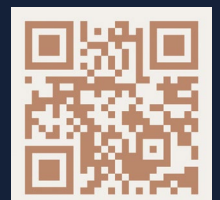
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