



## News from Engadine Community Services (October 2022)

### Message from Mel – ECS Manager

September was a month of ups and downs at Engadine Community Services. Most significantly, we were shocked by the death of our Vice Chairperson, David Gilmore, who was a close friend of management committee members and worked with the organisation over many years during his career at Sutherland Shire Council. He had been unwell, but stoically maintained his commitment to community service. We plan to acknowledge David at the **ECS Annual General Meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> October at 2 pm.**

In further upheavals, the management committee made the difficult decision to reduce the paid hours of all the staff due to shortfalls in Australian Government and Council funding. After he presented a Local Hero Award to our volunteer Garry Keir (pictured below), we enjoyed a visit to the office by our local State representative, Mr Lee Evans MP, Member for



Heathcote, who wanted to find out how he could help us.

Other surprise visitors to ECS included people who came to sign the official condolences book

for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, prior to the public holiday for mourning on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. We are also distributing hundreds of free RATs each week to eligible people for the NSW Government.

On the positive side, we started our social bus outings in partnership with the retirement village formerly known as John Paul Village! I have been working with Peter Wells, who is the manager of St Vincent's Retirement Village Heathcote, for several years through the Collaborative Against Abuse of Older People in Sutherland Shire and Garry was already driving the bus. Our clients who go on the Wednesday shopping buses and monthly lunches will now enjoy the company of village residents.

We hope some SVH residents will become ECS clients and use other Aged Services such as the Monday Seniors Fitness Group [see flyer to the right]. We will be promoting ECS at their Open Day [see ad on the next page].

Finally, we are still benefitting from the assistance of our students from St George and Sutherland Shire Community College. Please read the articles below written by our current student on placement, Karrah.

## Seniors' Fitness Group



**Mondays 2.30 –3.30 pm**  
**\$10 per class [invoiced monthly]**

Join a small class, with low intensity exercise focusing on movement & maintaining core abilities as you age:

- Balance
- Flexibility
- Strength
- Good posture
- Coordination

You need a My Aged Care referral (1800 200 422) for Engadine Community Services [Social Support Group] & to complete a pre-screening form.

*Our instructor, Mitch, has Certificates III & IV in Fitness (including older clients). A volunteer can be organised to assist individuals.*



*This activity receives funding from the Australian Government through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme*

### My Aged Care Face-to-Face Service

Older Australians trying to access aged care services through my Aged Care can get help in 80 locations by the end of 2022, including one in Hurstville

The service will make it easier for older Australians and their families to make decisions about their care. Services Australia's Aged Care Specialist Officers will provide information about Aged Care services, fees, registration and referral for aged care assessment, and connecting seniors to local support services.

For an appointment, call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 weekdays between 8am and 8pm and on Saturdays between 10am and 2pm only or visit [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au).



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## Meet Rhonda – Reception Volunteer



Rhonda Jones is the face of ECS and the voice on the other end of the phone every Tuesday and two Saturdays each month when ECS is open. She is also the Friendly Phone Caller to Aged Services clients.

It is arguably the job she was made for, although it's come more than half a lifetime after she was told, while working at St George Bank as a teller, that she talked too much to the clients.

"I think it was meant to be", Rhonda says.

Newly-retired from the cleaning business she ran for 20 years, she had just accompanied a friend to ECS and dropped in to say hello to her old customer. Mel, who promptly offered her a volunteer job! That was in February.

Now she enjoys a busy Tuesday at ECS, balancing the demands of reception and front desk enquiries with Friendly Phone Calls with seniors who have been referred to ECS by My Aged Care. Each phone call takes about ten minutes, and this is just to check on the client, to have a chat and make sure that they are ok. Rhonda said she adores talking with clients; everyone is different and wonderful. Sometimes a client will joke with her and with others she has tried to do crosswords together.

Rhonda is also working every 2nd and 4th Saturday each month, and helps with anything from playgroup to the Toy Library, restocking the brochure displays,

or odd jobs for Mel, with whom she shares an interest in developing and maintaining systems for tidying and organising.

During her spare time, Rhonda loves her one cup of coffee a day at her favourite local café, Big Red, meeting with the people there saying hello or sometimes she's with her daughter.

You can see Rhonda and other ECS Team members talking about how much they enjoy volunteering on the ECS website [<https://www.ecs.org.au/volunteer>] or meet her at the Open Day at St Vincent's Retirement Village Heathcote on October 8<sup>th</sup>.

Join us for the first ever **SENIORS FESTIVAL** at St Vincent's Care Heathcote



**DATE:** 8 October 2022  
**TIME:** 10am to 2pm  
**WHERE:** St Vincent's Care Heathcote  
**ADDRESS:** 15 The Avenue, Heathcote NSW 2233

- Live music
- Local Student Artwork
- Food Trucks
- Guided Tours
- Market Stalls
- Seniors Information Stalls
- Animal Farm

**Fun for all ages including the kids!**

 **ST VINCENT'S CARE HEATHCOTE**

Residential Aged Care | Independent Living | Home Care

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 02 8020 5962**

**We can't wait to see you there!**

**Caring for an older person is not about control.**

There's no excuse for being mean and hurtful.





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