

the GoodLife

Issue 2 2022

The age of independence

The importance of being independent

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Ian's off and racing

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the GoodLife

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Cover Image: Former IRT Seaview resident Arthur Cowley was a strong advocate for pursuing independence, what makes you happy at all stages of life, and lifelong learning. At age 87, Arthur embarked on a Bachelor of Creative Arts at the University of Wollongong (UOW) and was UOW's oldest graduate. At the time he said "why should you stop learning just because you reach a certain age?". Arthur sadly passed away in June 2021 aged 89, and to recognise his thirst for continual learning, the Arthur Cowley Lifelong Learning Award was presented at the IRT Academy 2022 graduation ceremony. You can read more about Arthur and the inaugural award recipients on p.15.



IRT Customer Promise

We are committed to delivering consistently high quality experiences to help our customers achieve their optimum quality of life.



Easy
Our processes are simple and easy to understand.



Connected
We create a sense of belonging to help our customers feel connected.



Personal
We understand individual needs and embrace diversity.



Trusted
We are industry experts and can be relied upon.



Kind
We act with compassion and understanding.

Independence

We all strive to maintain our independence no matter our age or stage in life, so in this edition of *The Good Life* we explore why being independent is so important to us.

Image by SK on Unsplash

At the crux of being independent is our ability to be in charge of our own choices and decisions. Professor Victoria Traynor from the University of Wollongong spoke to *The Good Life* on the subject of independence, and she explains that as we grow older we may face barriers that impact our ability to be in control of decisions. Prof Traynor says we can still maintain our independence despite these barriers; we just need to redefine what being independent means.

As part of the feature *The Good Life* spoke to IRT Greenwell Gardens resident Vivian Wolff who recalls some key moments of independence throughout her life in South Africa and Australia. The vox pop offers additional insights into how our residents define independence over different stages of their lives.

In the news section, we share a lovely tale of reunion between two IRT residents who attended boarding school together more than 60 years ago, while our Out and About section shares the latest news from across our aged care

centres and retirement villages, including Easter activities; celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee as well as a 104th birthday and 106th birthday!

On pages 4 and 5 you can read about IRT Peakhurst's Ian Stuart who volunteers as a flag marshal at some of Australia's biggest motorsport races, and on page 11 we feature the DanceWise seated dance program that has become part of the regular lifestyle program at our aged care centres.

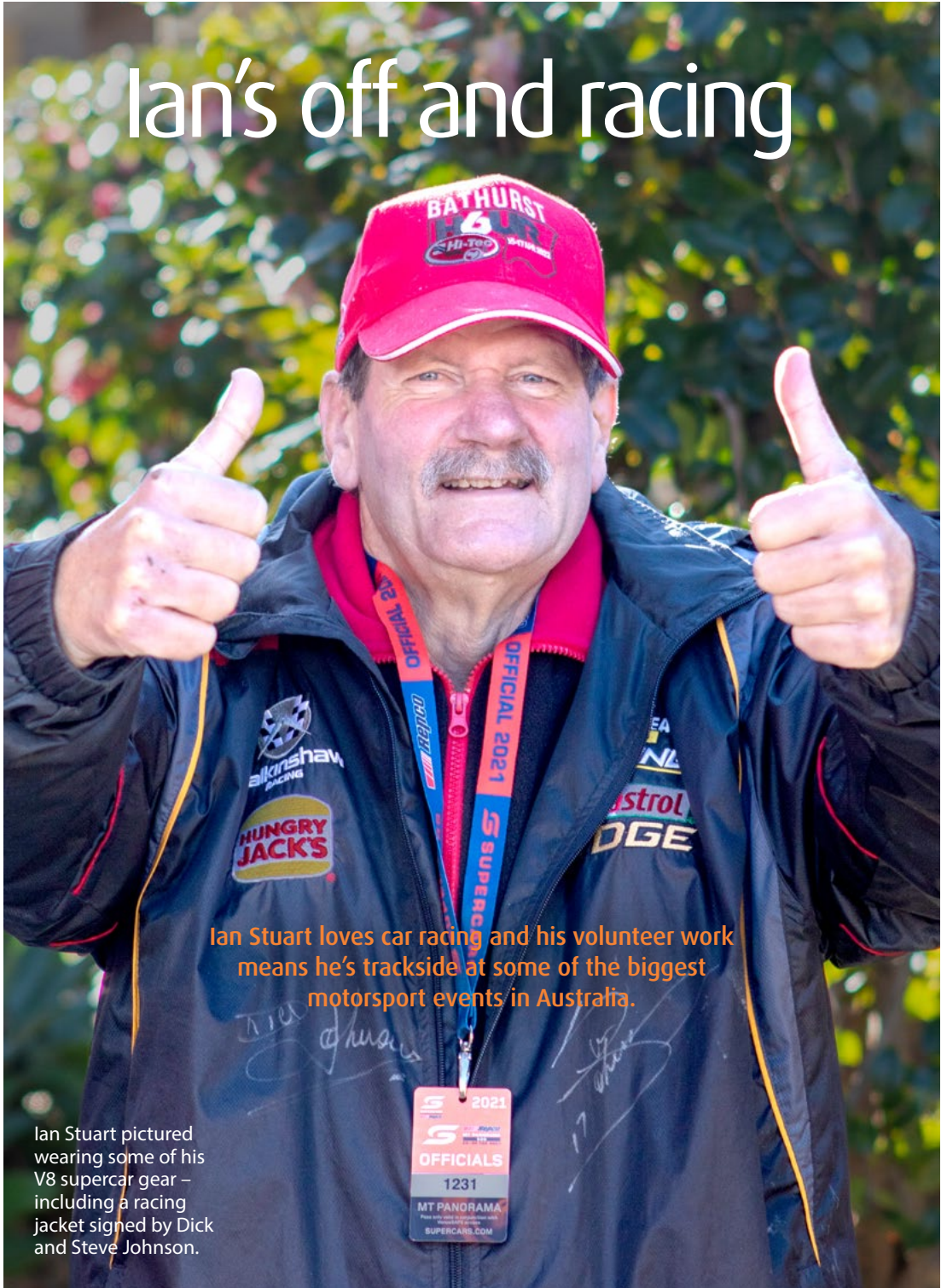
I hope you enjoy this latest edition of *The Good Life*. You'll notice it has a new look and feel - it's more compact while still featuring all of our regular columns and great stories from our customers and residents.



Patrick Reid
IRT CEO



Ian's off and racing



Ian Stuart loves car racing and his volunteer work means he's trackside at some of the biggest motorsport events in Australia.

Ian Stuart pictured wearing some of his V8 supercar gear – including a racing jacket signed by Dick and Steve Johnson.

IRT Peakhurst resident Ian Stuart enjoys being close to the action when he volunteers as a flag marshal at the supercar races.

Ian, 67, is an accredited flag marshal with the Australian Racing Car Drivers and car racing, in particular the V8 supercars, is a passion close to his heart. "There's always something different happening," Ian explains of the motorsport. "My best mate John is also involved and it's something we enjoy doing together."

Ian became a flag marshal when another friend of them both, Alan, who was a flag marshal at Amaroo Park, a former raceway at Annangrove in Sydney, invited John to join him. "Alan said to John he had no one to go with to Bathurst and John said he'd go and then spoke to me about it – and we've been doing it ever since."

Ian earned his credentials at Mount Panorama Motor Racing Circuit in Bathurst, learning on the job. He explains there are six different flags used by a flag marshal, which are different colours, including red and yellow stripes, which Ian explains is waved if there is petrol or oil on the track. "If there's a bad prang they have to bring out the safety car and when they can start racing again you bring out the green flag," Ian explains.

Flag marshals also have a two-way radio, plus a back-up radio, to do their job.



IRT Peakhurst resident Ian Stuart with his step mum Sunny Stuart, who also lives at the retirement village.

Ian volunteers his time at Sydney Motorsport Park (formerly Eastern Creek International Raceway) and Mount Panorama. As well as being a flag marshal, he's also helped out with ticket collection at Sydney Motorsport Park.

"It's a long day when flag marshalling," Ian says. "Sometimes you start at 7am and finish past 5pm. When you are a flag marshal you are not far away from the cars when they go past."

Ian explains his work is voluntary but he has lunch provided and is often recognised for his efforts with a certificate or merchandise.

"I get to meet nice people," explains Ian when asked about what he likes most about being a flag marshal. "We are rev heads."

The volunteer work has its perks – you get a great spot on the track, are close to the

action and you get to meet a few icons of the sport too. "I've met Neil Crompton [former driver and now commentator], Mark Skaife [former driver and now commentator], racing car driver Garth Tander, Jess Yates [presenter], and father and son Dick and Steve Johnson."

In his IRT Peakhurst home Ian has some motorsport memorabilia including an old racing jacket signed by Dick and Steve Johnson.

Ian likes the Red Bull racing team, which races Holdens, and his favourite driver is Shane Van Gisbergen, a Kiwi supercar driver. "He's very good," Ian says. "Once he was starting back in 22nd position and he came up and won the race."

Ian's favourite race is the Bathurst 1000. "There are some good competitors in there too," he says and looks forward to getting back to Mount Panorama in October.



Kevin Hudson in the garden at IRT Macarthur, which is his pride and joy.

Located near the entrance of block five at IRT Macarthur Retirement Village the flowerpot garden puts the spotlight on Kevin Hudson's creative skills.

The garden includes 29 flowerpot people, all handmade by Kevin, who are embracing life outdoors as they play on a swing, ride a motorbike and try their hand at fishing.

Retirement village resident Kevin first started working on the garden back in 2017 and back then *The Good Life* magazine popped in and gained an appreciation of all the hard work he's put into the garden.

"I didn't think it would become as big as it has," Kevin explains but has been adding to it ever since.

During last year's lockdown Kevin took the opportunity to give the garden area a complete makeover, which included adding new plants and five new features – all which he made by hand and include water and solar power.

One of the garden's newest features – the water wheel – took a couple of months to put together. "I just wanted the challenge of it," he explains.

Kevin's flowerpot people are made out of terracotta pots, which he paints and assembles. He's also made a small fairy garden using cut tree stumps and trinkets.

While the garden is Kevin's passion project he does have the help of fellow IRT Macarthur residents Michael Bright and Kevin English when it comes to the heavy lifting, weeding and watering.

"I do it because I can't be idle," Kevin explains. "I don't watch a lot of TV and I have a technical background. I try and be a bit creative. I have a small workshop in my garage."

Besides the enjoyment of keeping active Kevin enjoys the gardening side of his project too.

"Back when I started the garden I only had two plants in a small tray and no idea what type of plants they were," he says.

Today, some of the more spectacular plants in the garden are the agave desmettiana.

Kevin also likes to decorate the garden and dress up the ornaments and flowerpot people in the relevant festive theme, such as at Christmas and Halloween.



A neighbour when you need *a hand around the house.*

IRT has been around for over 50 years. Our highly trained home care team are more than just an extra pair of hands, they're a shoulder to lean on.



Personal care



Cleaning and household tasks



Getting out and about

The two of us

JUDY VALENTINE
AND TONY GIRDLER

IRT Woodlands resident Judy Valentine and IRT Peakhurst resident Tony Girdler attended boarding school together in Gympie, Queensland in the 1950s. Over 60 years later the pair were reunited, following an article in *The Good Life* and Judy's keen detective skills. We caught up with Judy and Tony to find out more.



Tony and Judy at the St Patrick's combined dance in Gympie in 1958.



JUDY: "A peripheral glance to the right was the only look we could get away with. Mother Superior and her 'flock' of nuns were already seated in the pew behind the girls at St Patrick's in Gympie. They were watching for any eye contact made with the Brothers' boys who filed into church daily for mass. A turn of the head, even a smile or smirk would see the girl standing in front of the wagging fickle finger of fate that belonged to Mother Superior.

"Every year St Patrick's put on a concert to raise money for the church and schools. As I had taken dancing classes, I was asked to assist the Brother's boys, who were putting on the play '*H.M.S. Pinafore*', with a dance. Three days a week I gave the boys classes and three times a week I stood before Mother Superior and her wagging finger. She lectured me about the punishment I would receive if I carried notes between the girls and boys. I never carried notes but saw no

harm in passing on a spoken message and Mother Superior never mentioned anything about flirting!

"In 1958 a combined dance was held at the girls' school. Every nun was on duty that night, strategically placed around the hall to keep an eye on the girls to make sure they behaved in a virtuous manner.

"They hired a photographer and I had my photo taken with my boyfriend of that time, Tony Girdler. Our romance had taken a step forward as we were now holding hands on the dance floor.

“ We reminisced about the old days, and the old people! ”

"After high school, Tony and I went our separate ways. Then, in early 2022 I was flicking through the pages of *The Good Life* (Issue 3 2021), when I thought I saw a familiar face – older certainly, but I had to check out his name – Tony Girdler. I raced to find the old photo from the dance and showed my husband, David. David said "Could be," and we asked Maria John (IRT Woodlands staff member) who agreed. Maria contacted staff at IRT Peakhurst who confirmed our suspicions.

"Sixty-four years is a lifetime

ago, but Tony and I have been catching up on what has happened in the in-between years. Hopefully, we will have many more years to reminisce on 'the good old days.'"



TONY: "The thing I remember about boarding school was I couldn't wait to get out. The girls' school was on one side of the road run by the Sisters of Mercy, and the boys' school was on the other, run by the Christian Brothers.

"Once or twice a year we would hold combined dances. We'd dance the Waltz, the Gypsy Tap, the Boston Two Step and the Pride of Erin.

"I learnt how to move early in life when I would attend the local dance with my parents. At boarding school I would teach the boys how to dance, but had to do it backwards for the girls' part.

"At the dance, I'd go and talk to the girls, which would usually be someone else's girlfriend and then I'd be in trouble! But we were there to ask a girl to dance. There were to be no wallflowers!

"If I'm honest, I don't quite remember how Judy and I met – it was a long time ago! Maybe I caught her eye during mass, or on one of our trips down to the shopping complex.

"We had some great school holidays. I remember one holiday, although Judy reckons she can't remember it, when my father took some friends and me to Caloundra, which is where Judy's family lived. Before he headed back to Gympie, Dad helped us cut saplings and construct a tent in a local park where my friends and I stayed for about a week.

"We were invited to Judy's place by her mother for dinner. I hadn't met her mother before, but presume she asked us around because can you imagine a bunch of teenagers trying to feed themselves for a week?! We certainly appreciated the meal!

"I'll admit I didn't recognise Judy instantly in *The Good Life*. We appeared in the same edition (Issue 2 2021), when she was featured with her husband for their diamond anniversary, and I was part of the group asked about their bucket list. The following issue I was profiled for *The Good Life* about my professional performing career, and that's when Judy noticed me. I was only too happy to speak with Judy when she reached out – we reminisced about the old days, and the old people!

"I'm looking forward to another catch-up very soon."



Fernando serves a diplomatic century

Fernando Ribeiro turned 100 on 22 March 2022.

There was an extra special guest in attendance at IRT Kangara Waters resident Fernando Ribeiro's 100th birthday celebrations in March, when the Portuguese Ambassador to Australia hand-delivered a birthday message for Fernando from the President of Portugal.

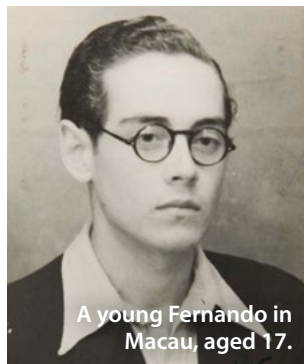
Fernando received the message in recognition of his time served in the Portuguese Diplomatic Service in Hong Kong and Australia, a career that spanned more than 40 years.

Fernando said he was surprised when the current Portuguese Ambassador to Australia Pedro Rodrigues da Silva personally delivered the message during his birthday morning tea.

"I spent many years working for the Portuguese Government, but I thought having been

retired for so many years, that it would be forgotten," Fernando says. "I was touched to get a message from the President to celebrate my birthday. It made my day very special."

Fernando was born in Carcavelos, Portugal on 22 March 1922 and grew up in Macau (a Portuguese territory until 1999). During World War II, Macau became a haven for refugees from nearby Hong Kong who were fleeing the Japanese invasion.



A young Fernando in Macau, aged 17.

As Fernando was fluent in Portuguese, English and Cantonese he was asked by the Portuguese Consulate to move to Hong Kong and help in the recovery process when it reopened following the war. In 1946, Fernando married his childhood sweetheart Maria Fernanda and relocated to Hong Kong to join the Portuguese Diplomatic Service.

Fernando was integral in the running of the Consulate and supporting the Portuguese community in Hong Kong, and received several honours including being made a Cavaleiro (Knight) of the Portuguese Order of Militar do Christo in 1956.

In 1963, Fernando and his family moved to Australia after he accepted a position at the Portuguese Embassy in Canberra, a post he held until he retired in 1987.

The pair moved to IRT Kangara Waters Retirement Village when it first opened in 2009. Sadly, Maria Fernanda died in January 2020, at the age of 96 and in July 2021 Fernando moved into residential care at Kangara Waters.

Outside of his career, Fernando was a talented tennis player, including playing representative tennis with the ACT Veterans Team for 32 years. Fernando is also an enthusiastic photographer, amassing more than 120 albums over the years.

Happy Birthday Fernando!

Just dance to the beat



Residents at William Beach Gardens at IRT Kanahooka enjoy the DanceWise seated dance program as part of the regular Lifestyle activity calendar at IRT, including Judy Bertinato (right).

When *The Good Life* magazine attended a DanceWise class at William Beach Gardens at IRT Kanahooka, our first question to the group of whether they used to hit up the dance floor in their youth was met with a resounding, “Yes!”

“I used to go out dancing all the time when I was younger,” says resident Beverly Lyall. “We’d go down to the dancing hall and do the Twist every Friday night. The boys were always waiting at the door for us!”

Run by not-for-profit organisation Dance Health Alliance, DanceWise is a seated dance program that offers a dance class for those who are limited in their movement. The innovative program focuses on therapeutic and movement classes that increase mobility, functional independence and psychosocial involvement for people living with age-related limitations, dementia, parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis and arthritic conditions.

DanceWise sessions with Dance Health Alliance have been run across all IRT aged care centres in 2022. With IRT lifestyle staff receiving training in June to become certified DanceWise program facilitators, the program has become a

regular part of the Lifestyle activity calendar for all IRT aged care centres.

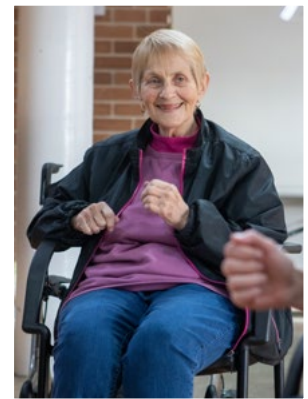
William Beach Gardens team

member Klaudija Danic said that participants had provided some really positive feedback regarding the DanceWise classes, and more and more residents had been coming along to attend the sessions.

“I’ve noticed all our participants have really progressed in picking up and following the moves each week, and our residents have seen an improvement in their mobility and balance,” says Klaudija. “The classes really do loosen you up – I come in so stiff, and by the end of the class even I feel so much more relaxed!”

Resident Anne Marie Harding said she loves coming along to the DanceWise classes.

“I wouldn’t come along if I didn’t enjoy the class! It makes you feel good. And the music’s lovely,” says Anne Marie. “There’s nothing better than having a dance. You can’t help but move your feet. It’s good for your mind and soul.”





A wheelie good surprise

John Wiseman on his original 1936 Royal Enfield, and below, John when he saw the restored motorbike for the first time.

When David Sadd attended a family slide night, he had an idea. An idea for a project that paid tribute to one of his grandfather's (IRT Tarrawanna resident, John Wiseman) first loves. *The Good Life* caught up with David to find out more.

"We often had family slide nights and my PaPa (John) would always give a presentation – he hated a chat," laughs David. "The whole family would turn up and PaPa would talk about the different trips he went on as a young man and with my Grandma (Howard Court at IRT Pioneer Place resident Pat Wiseman)."

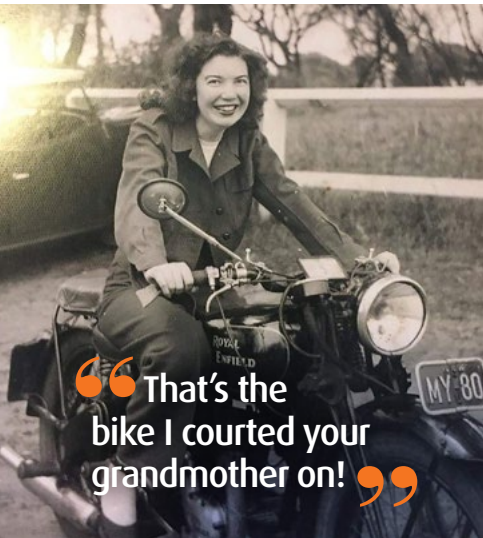
"While I was looking at the photos, there was a motorbike that kept turning up in the pictures so I asked PaPa about it and he said 'That's the bike I courted your grandmother on!'"

David recalls that John had always been a lover of motorbikes. "PaPa always had bikes. He used to ride a lot with his mates," says David. "PaPa



told a great story of when he and Grandma were going for a ride to Albury – there's only two seats, and only the one at the front had suspension. Grandma refused to get on the seat with no suspension, so she rode the bike and doubled PaPa!"

Sadly John recently passed away but before he did David was determined to do something special for him and his love of motorbikes.



“That’s the bike I courted your grandmother on!”

Left: John’s wife Pat enjoyed rides on the 1936 Royal Enfield with John. Right: The restored 1936 Royal Enfield.

Diagnosed with dementia John had recently moved to the IRT Tarrawanna Aged Care Centre, while Pat continues to live at Howard Court. “He forgot the grandkids’ names but he remembered his bikes,” says David.

Inspired by this love for the two-wheeled machine, David decided to see if he could track down a bike like his grandfather’s – a Royal Enfield.

An internet search yielded a match on a farm west of Wallacia (west of Sydney) so David headed out to have a look.

“I rang PaPa and told him I’d found a 1941 Royal Enfield, but my grandfather informed me his bike was pre-World War II, a 1936 model,” says David.

In an amazing twist of fate, the owner of 1941 Royal Enfield also had a 1936 model, and offered the bike to him after hearing David’s plans.

David, who enjoys restoring old cars, knew there would be challenges, not least in getting the Royal Enfield home.

“The 1936 came in about 11 different boxes! It was just parts. Bits of everything,” says David. “I definitely know a lot more about cars than bikes. Funnily enough, I was never allowed a bike!”

After bringing the bike home “in a million pieces”, David set to work tracking down parts. He ended up acquiring parts from all over the

world, including a set of headlights from Cairo, Egypt.

“I’ve been really lucky to have help from two local guys [Paul Calder and Rob Gray]. Rob’s an engineer who rebuilt the Spitfire for the HARS Aviation Museum in Albion Park (south of Wollongong),” says David. “And bits and pieces I haven’t been able to find have been handmade locally, even nuts and bolts.”

After four and a half years of hard work, David completed the project and revealed the bike to his grandfather.



“The smile on PaPa’s face when we started the bike for the first time was priceless,” says David. “There weren’t too many dry eyes around, except PaPa – he was just cheering!”

“For my grandfather to finally see and hear the engine start meant the world to everyone involved. It was such a happy day that the family will treasure forever.”

John had photos of the restored Enfield and proudly enjoyed showing the bike to the staff and other residents at IRT Tarrawanna.

“One of the staff members that cared for PaPa has a bike as well, so they got along like a house on fire,” says David. “My PaPa passed away peacefully recently, and I now have his motorbike jacket to always treasure.”

John’s family gave [The Good Life](#) permission to publish this article in his honour. John’s family would like to acknowledge and thank all the staff at IRT Tarrawanna for the care, love and support given to this special man.



Cathy Robinson (left) and Rhoda Boyce recently attended the Death Café at William Beach Gardens.

Café event sparks conversation over a cuppa

IRT has partnered with The Groundswell Project to run a series of Death Cafés for aged care and retirement village residents.

While the name may feel confronting, the café events provide a discussion space that aim to help normalise the conversation around death, dying and end of life.

The events were run in conjunction with not-for-profit organisation The Groundswell Project at IRT Macarthur, William Beach Gardens at IRT Kanahooka, IRT Sarah Claydon, IRT Moruya and IRT Thomas Holt Kirrawee. Residents from the co-located retirement villages were also invited to attend.

IRT Strategic Projects Manager Alex Reed said the cafés were

generally a success after some understandable hesitation towards the name.

“We ran the cafés to create a different conversation about the living before the dying, and turn the conversation about death away from being relatively clinically focused,” says Alex.

The café at William Beach Gardens was a very successful event, with close to 20 residents in attendance.

William Beach Gardens team member Tegan Fletcher said the café provided a great opportunity to bring together care and retirement village residents again.

“There was no agenda at the café – it wasn’t run to discuss funeral insurance or

sell anything. It was a safe place for participants to share stories and learnings from their experiences with grief, loss and different palliative approaches,” says Tegan.

Here’s what William Beach Gardens residents said about the Death Café:

Cathy Robinson: “Curiosity got me there. There were a lot of discussions on important topics and people walked away having learnt something new. The information about making wills was very helpful, and I was pleased what was said matched what I have prepared.”

Rhoda Boyce: “The session covered a lot of ground. I hope the Café helped people understand having a will doesn’t mean you’re going to die straight away – it just means all the important things are dotted and crossed for peace of mind.”

Jenny Donaldson: “I thought the Café was very informative. Everyone who attended was really engaged. We talked a lot about preparation – preparing your family, telling your family what you want, preparing your will and living will, power of attorney, and an advance care plan.”

Anne Strachan: “It’s funny how my friends and I talk about absolutely everything, but you can’t discuss death, and I think we should. There was no agenda at the Café, it was very non-threatening. You could talk and contribute or just sit and listen.”

IRT Academy celebrates 25 years

Happy Birthday to IRT Academy, which celebrated 25 years as a Registered Training Organisation in April.

In 1997 IRT expanded its focus to include professional development and education, and on 7 April 1997 IRT College was officially born. The College was one of the very early private registered training organisations to be established in NSW, and in 2016 was rebranded to become IRT Academy as we know it today.

Over the years, IRT Academy has proudly welcomed thousands of students through its doors to gain nationally recognised qualifications and targeted accredited courses and skill sets in the areas of aged care foundations, more advanced clinical skills, leisure and health, and leadership and management.

As part of the Academy's 25 years celebrations and 2022 graduation ceremony the establishment of a new award was announced – the Arthur Cowley Lifelong Learning Award.

Arthur Cowley was an important member of the IRT family for many years, living at the IRT Seaview Retirement Village community



Adrienne Takerei

at Woonona, and had an extensive career in education and a passion for the opportunities that vocational education and training can bring to people's lives.

Sadly he passed away in June 2021 aged 89, but he had been the embodiment of life-long learning, beginning a Bachelor of Creative Arts at the University of Wollongong at the age of 87, which made him the oldest student to ever begin a degree at UOW.

Two years later, he also became the University's oldest graduate, and at the time already had a degree, a Masters, a PhD and other vocational qualifications.

In recognition of Arthur's thirst for continual learning, the award in his name was presented to two worthy IRT



Tae-Young Pillay.

Academy graduates who have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to lifelong learning in their personal and professional lives – Adrienne Takerei and Tae-Young Pillay.

Adrienne has been a valuable member of the Home Care South East Sydney team since 2008. Her studies include ageing support, assisting clients with medications, caring for people with diabetes, and leisure and health.

Tae-Young works in the aged care team at IRT Macarthur and holds qualifications in Individual and Ageing Support, and has also studied in the areas of palliative care and medication skills.

Congratulations Adrienne and Tae-Young, and happy 25th birthday IRT Academy!

Celebrating our volunteers



Wendy Brushe (left) enjoys volunteering at IRT Woodlands, where her husband Ian (right) is a resident.

IRT celebrated the significant contributions volunteers make every day to the lives of our residents and customers in May as part of National Volunteer Week.

Celebratory morning teas were held across NSW, the ACT and Queensland in honour of our volunteers who selflessly donate their time and skills to help improve the lives of older people.

IRT Volunteer Unit Manager Mia Parsons said the National Volunteer Week events were a great way to acknowledge the valuable contribution volunteers make across IRT.

"Our volunteers play a big part in life at IRT, helping our residents and customers stay socially connected to their communities and we thank them for donating their time to make a positive difference in the lives of older Australians."

Why volunteer? Some of our incredible volunteers shared their story of what volunteering means to them:

"My husband Ian is a resident in the dementia unit at IRT Woodlands. As Ian's wife I see the sadness and loss of the dementia story, and I understand how wonderful it is for people to talk to and enjoy the company of the residents. I like to volunteer, it's a time to listen to stories, take walks in the fresh air, help with morning teas, listen to music and see the happiness volunteering can bring to the residents. I would love to see more volunteers come in for whatever amount of time they can. Some days will be joyful and some days you will need to put in more effort, but it's always worthwhile. Just go in with a smile and the time to listen." – **Wendy Brushe**, IRT Woodlands

"I do a bit here and there at IRT Peakhurst. We bounce ideas around to find opportunities that will enhance the retirement village community around here. Recently we had a mobility aids day with a mobility aids supplier who put on a display and did any maintenance required. I've started a men's morning tea to help men around the village come together, make connections and have a chat about the good things in life. I've received some really good feedback from residents and that's encouraging in a lot of ways." – **Lyndon Mitchel**, IRT Peakhurst



"I've been volunteering for approximately 12 years after a resident at IRT Kangara Waters convinced me to put my hand up to drive the bus for shopping and day trips. I currently do a shopping run for independent residents and a scenic drive for aged care centre residents."

I thoroughly enjoy the social contact and camaraderie that comes with the driving. – **Brian Harry**, IRT Kangara Waters



Brian Harry

"I enjoy visiting residents at IRT St Georges Basin. Everyone has a unique life story to tell. A lot of their experiences cannot be replicated today since technology has replaced a lot of the things we used to do, like sitting around the pianola singing (instead of watching Netflix as we do today)." –

Geoff Wainwright,
IRT St Georges Basin

"I feel humbled and privileged to give communion to some of the residents at IRT Berala on the Park and spend a little bit of time with them, especially those who are more socially isolated. I feel honoured and blessed to witness their appreciation receiving Holy Communion. I will continue to share my faith in serving the residents of IRT for the glory of God." – **Brother Rolando Javier**, IRT Berala on the Park



IRT partners with Greenacres

IRT is partnering with Greenacres to teach members of its team valuable skills.

IRT is proud to partner with Greenacres as part of Greenacres' Community Connect volunteer program.

Greenacres Skilled 'n' Social Program Officer Leonie Way says Greenacres has partnered with IRT as part of the program for over four years, and the team is flourishing as a result.

"Our team has learnt valuable gardening skills from IRT Facilities Management employees which they use at IRT locations as well as at Greenacres and their own homes," Leonie says.

"Last year, the team worked with IRT to make 1400 hand-painted potted plants for IRT residents for Mother's Day and 900 handmade photo frame key holders for Father's Day. The gifts were so well received that Greenacres was inundated with notes, emails and phone calls to say thank you from the residents.

"It's a beautiful partnership that Greenacres is extremely proud of, and we look forward to continuing into the future."

Interested in becoming a volunteer?

Volunteering now, more than ever, is vital.

We have fulfilling volunteer opportunities for people from all walks of life who are driven to make a difference in the lives of older people.

Find out more by contacting the Volunteer Unit on **134 478** or go to **www.irt.org.au/about/age-matters/volunteer-with-us** for more information.



Some of the Age Matters team (from left to right) Brooke Ingram Costanzo, Toby Dawson, Donna Geary and Gail Puckeridge attended the Race Against Homelessness event at Kembla Grange Racecourse.

Age Matters Race Against Homelessness a success

More than 300 people donned their racing finery at Kembla Grange Racecourse in June to raise funds for disadvantaged older people at Age Matters' Race Against Homelessness race day.

The event raised over \$33,000 that will go directly to Age Matters' efforts to help older people in the Illawarra who are homeless and/or vulnerable.



1. Natalie Burns (left) and Sharon Gilmour from IRT's Finance team. 2. (from left to right) IRT Director Peter Fitzgerald, IRT Executive General Manager (EGM) Customer and People Deborah De Santis and IRT EGM Strategy Sam McFarlane.



India from the Age Matters team at the drop-in service at the NSW Department of Communities and Justice Service Centre in Coniston.



Supporting Age Matters

Age Matters relies on grants, donations and fundraising to deliver on our vision for no older person to be homeless, isolated or without purpose. If you can spare a few dollars a week, please consider becoming a regular giver by going to our website agematters.org.au

You can also follow us on our Facebook page (@AgeMattersAus) and help us spread the word.

Outreach drop-in service

The Age Matters team has been providing a drop-in service at the NSW Department of Communities and Justice Service Centre in Coniston (near Wollongong) every week for the past few months.

Clients can pop in for a consultation or to drop off some paperwork.

This is just one way we are making ourselves more available to people who need a little extra help with their housing situation.

Inquiry into homelessness of older people in NSW

After continued advocacy by agencies supporting older people who are at risk of homelessness, we are very pleased the NSW Government has convened an inquiry into homelessness and older people.

Age Matters joined the Ageing on the Edge NSW Forum coalition, advocating for a specialised information and support service for older people who may

find themselves facing homelessness, as well as for the building of more social and affordable housing for older people.

We welcome this inquiry by the NSW Government and hope the findings raise awareness of the scope of the issue. Housing is a basic human right and essential to enable older people to age well.



Construction update



Jenny and Warren White on moving in day for Henry Brooks Estate Stages 3 and 4.

Henry Brooks Estate at IRT Kanahooka

Despite the unprecedented wet weather during the first half of 2022, we were pleased to welcome our first residents into Stages 3 and 4 in early May as planned. Almost all of the villas available in these two stages were occupied by the end of the June.

Civil works for Stage 5 of Henry

Brooks Estate began in May 2022 and are scheduled for completion in September/October this year, at which time construction of the villas in Stage 5 will commence.

Elements at IRT Towradgi Beach

The Development Application (DA) for the redevelopment of IRT Towradgi Park Retirement Village – known as Elements

at IRT Towradgi Beach – was on exhibition until the end of January. As part of the exhibition period, a number of public comments were received which will be considered by Wollongong City Council as part of their response to the DA.

IRT is working with Council to review and revise the DA to address additional planning requirements.

Feedback welcome

At IRT we value your feedback as it enables us to continually improve our services and your customer experience.

We encourage you to have your say whether it's feedback, a suggestion, a compliment or complaint.

You can provide your feedback to us by:

- speaking with your Aged Care Centre Manager, Retirement Village Manager, or any IRT team member
- calling us on **134 478**
- emailing us at: **feedback@irt.org.au**
- scanning this QR code (see right)



Graduate Nurse Program commences

IRT has welcomed nine nursing graduates to its 2022 intake for the Graduate Nurse Program.

The Program is for graduates who have completed their university degree and have qualified as a Registered Nurse.

Participants will learn the intricacies of their role in aged care through study and job-specific education, including completion of the University of Wollongong Aged Care Transition to Practice program.

The Transition to Practice program provides nurses in their first year of clinical practice with access to mentorship and professional development to support them in pursuing a career in aged care nursing.

Participants will have the opportunity to discuss their learning needs and establish a personalised learning plan with their mentor.



Image by Christina Morillo on Pexels.

IRT Senior Clinical Nurse Educator Elfriede Ashcroft says the Graduate Nurse Program is designed to provide better outcomes for residents and the aged care sector as a whole.

“Our graduate nurses have access to specialist learning to help them increase their skills and capabilities to establish themselves professionally as a registered nurse with a specialisation in gerontology [the study of ageing],” Elfriede says.

“A key part of their program is collecting evidence of their learning in the workplace for their portfolio, and includes reflecting on work practices and issues of importance.”

The Graduate Nurse Program runs for 12 months and participants’ portfolio of work is assessed by academics from the University of Wollongong’s School of Nursing.

Need assistance?

We recognise and respect the right to advocacy for all of our residents and customers. If you need assistance in providing feedback, the following organisations offer free, independent and confidential advocacy services:

Older Persons Advocacy Network

opan.com.au | 1800 700 600

Translating and Interpreting Service

tisonational.gov.au | 1300 575 847

National Relay Service

infrastructure.gov.au | 1300 555 727

The age of independence

No matter what our stage in life, we all strive for independence and this certainly doesn't fade as we age. For this edition of *The Good Life*, we spoke with Professor Victoria Traynor from the University of Wollongong (UOW) about why we are so focused on being independent and the importance of shifting our perspectives about independence over time.



Whether we're taking our first steps, moving out of the family home, or getting our first job, the importance of being independent is ingrained in us at every stage of life.

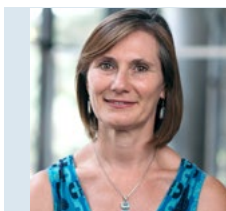
While our definition of being independent may differ from person to person, at its core independence is our ability to take care of ourselves and be in charge of our own choices and opinions, free from the control or influence of others.

So, while we're encouraged to walk as a toddler, we are

each ultimately responsible for making the decision as to when we will take our first steps based on our natural disposition and personality.

A sense of independence has many positive flow-on effects, including an ability to rely less on others, a greater sense of trust in your own choices and opinions, and the freedom to discover what can make us happy away from the influence of others.

As we grow older there can be physical, emotional and



Professor Victoria Traynor is a Professor of Nursing at the University of Wollongong, and is the Founding Director of ADHERE (Aged and Dementia Health Education Research), an interdisciplinary education and research centre that focuses on improving aged care services across care settings for older people, family carers and healthcare professionals.

social hurdles that can affect our ability to continue with our former ideas of independence. For UOW Prof Victoria Traynor, we can still maintain an independent life, we just need to shift our perspective.

“Even if an older person is frail or experiencing chronic health



problems, they can still enjoy their later years and lead a successful, fulfilling life. It's just a matter of redefining what being independent means,” says Prof Traynor.

“For some people, being independent might mean we can still go surfing or go on international holidays.

“But if we reframe our expectations we can still feel independent even if we are housebound, because we're making choices about where we live, we're making choices about our everyday activities. It's just that our choices might be different compared to those choices we had when we were younger.”

Critical to this adjustment in perspective is recognising there will be expected changes

to how we live as we age, and being in control of decisions around how we cope with these changes ahead of time. For example, if we're no longer able to mow the lawn, we can choose who mows our lawn, how often and how we would like the job to be done. If we are able to maintain our ability to choose, we can also maintain our sense of independence.

A person's ability to drive, as Prof Traynor explains, is a key aspect of many people's lives that can be impacted as we age.

“When I came to Australia from the UK, it was clear that gaining your licence is a significant milestone here – it's a sign that you're an adult now, that you're independent,” explains Prof Traynor. “When older people have to stop driving, it can be very damaging for their self-esteem as they feel like they're no longer legitimate. They're no longer an adult. They've lost status.”

“

Just because you're older, it's not inevitable that you don't lead a satisfying life.

”

However, if a person acknowledges what might impact their driving as they age, they can take control of decisions around continuing to

drive, modifying their routines, or handing in their licence and making new plans for how they can get around. This allows a person to maintain their independence even if they no longer have the ability to drive.

“In the case of driving, a person might consider selling their car and calculating how much they could save on petrol and maintenance and spend on taxis weekly instead. If that person lives in a rural area they might say ‘If I can't drive it's okay because I can appreciate other benefits of where I live’ or they might think ‘what changes do I need to make, do I need to move close to the city where there is public transport so my choices aren't limited?’”

Whether we realise it or not, our perspective on being independent continues to transform. For Prof Traynor, if we can continue to shift our expectations around what taking care of ourselves and being in charge of our own decisions looks like, we will be able to maintain our independence and the positive flow-on effects that come with it well into the future.

“Just because you're older, it's not inevitable that you don't lead a satisfying life, because you can modify your expectations. You can say ‘Okay, my body is changing, my social network is changing, let me think about what I can do in my day-to-day life to maintain my independence in different ways’. It's all about making an adjustment.”

Standing on your OWN

IRT Greenwell
Gardens resident
Vivian Wolff.



IRT Greenwell Gardens resident Vivian Wolff has more than one tale to tell when it comes to being independent.

“My parents owned a grocery store, and when I was ten years old, there was a terrible flu epidemic and the whole family was sick except me,” says Vivian. “I remember virtually running the store on my own. That moment taught me independence and ever since I’ve always felt I could make my own way, no matter what happened to me.”

Growing up outside of Durban, South Africa, Vivian came to Australia in the 1960s with her young family.

“My husband was offered a

job in Australia and left two weeks before me,” says Vivian. “I was 24 years old and I had a child of four, a child of two and a child of four months – and I got on the boat alone with the children and came across the ocean for 16 days. And if you can do that, you can actually do anything!”

After 16 years in Australia, Vivian and her family moved to the USA. While there, she and her husband divorced and Vivian became a sales rep selling greeting cards and stationery, where she drove the whole of New Mexico and Colorado on her own.

“There was no internet, no mobile phones. I would plot my route on a paper map

and make little stickies on the dashboard to follow.”

During this time, Vivian also reconnected with an old friend, and they married upon returning to Australia.

For Vivian, acknowledging when it’s time to make lifestyle changes is very important in maintaining her independence.

“We’ve always lived in big houses, and every time we downsized we didn’t downsize enough. An opening at IRT Greenwell Gardens seemed like the perfect opportunity for a change,” recalls Vivian.

“My husband and I made the decision together and then we told our family. That’s where my independence comes through, making sure I’m in control of what I do without any influence.”

Vivian volunteers for Meals on Wheels North Shoalhaven, an organisation that assists hundreds of people in staying independent.

“A lot of clients are perfectly able-bodied, but it’s hard for them to cook and shop,” says Vivian. “The meals provide some support so people can continue to live at home comfortably.”

On reflection, Vivian says independence is about making decisions and taking action to be able to prevail on your own.

“I think independence is like two tall trees standing together. One not leaning on the other. Growing independently but always having someone beside you. We need people around for support, but we don’t want to lean on them.”



Designing for independence

Keith and Paula Guy in their new kitchen at Henry Brooks Estate featuring contrasting colour selections.

An important factor in our ability to maintain independence is ensuring our physical environment can adapt to our changing needs.

IRT Head of Commercial – Retirement Living and Age Matters, Rob Bruce explains that there is a lot of work going on to continually review models of accommodation and care to meet current needs and future preferences and expectations.

“What older Australians want when it comes to support as they age is changing,” says Rob. “People have always wanted to stay in their own homes for as long as they can, and there is acknowledgement now that with the right support and services, this can be a reality.”

From high-tech assistive technologies to simple adjustments, there is a variety of opportunities to adapt our surrounding environment to our changing needs and support us ageing independently at home.

For example, homes can be fitted with grab rails in bathrooms or automation systems where lights come on as you enter a room.

Rob says retirement villages are also being future-proofed to promote longer resident independence.

“The new Henry Brooks Estate at IRT Kanahooka has been designed for wheelchair and walker

accessibility,” says Rob. “For residents living with declining vision, we have introduced carefully balanced and contrasting colour selections throughout the village such as black roads with white flush kerbs, and in dwellings we’re installing contrasting benchtops and splashbacks to assist in dimensional awareness.”

There are a number of design concepts that can be incorporated into homes now to prepare for changing needs later, including wider entrance landings and door openings (to allow mobility aid access), and innovative kitchen designs that incorporate the dishwasher and oven at bench height.

“Our future plans such as Elements at IRT Towradgi Beach explore villas that are adaptable for future use, where for example, a garage could be converted for a live-in carer who will have their own bathroom and separate entrance to and from the dwelling.

“What we learn from new developments we put to good use in existing communities by improving our refurbishment specifications. We are also future-proofing our communities to incorporate the integration of the latest technology services to support independence, so watch this space!”

Vox pop – Independence

We asked IRT retirement village residents across NSW, Queensland and the ACT about what being independent means to them and a time they can remember feeling independent. Here's what they said.

Image by
Ravi Patel on
Unsplash.



June Sims
IRT Culburra Beach

"Independence means enjoying life and being able to do the things that I like without having to worry about others. After my husband passed away, I lived on in Sydney on my own for 14 years. I paid to have the lawns cut but the gardening became a bit much for me and that's when I decided I would come down to the South Coast to live near my daughter. My daughter wanted me to come and live with her, but I wanted her to have her independence and I wanted mine, so that's why I chose to move to IRT Culburra Beach."



Liz Allen
IRT The Ridge

"For me, independence is the ability to make informed decisions to enable me to continue to enjoy my life. It means living my own life on my own terms in my own way, and having the support of my family throughout the decision-making process. The first time I recall feeling independent when I was about 12, I would do small odd jobs and saved for a reference book *Chess for Children*. The cost was about 18 shillings and 6 pence. I saved that fortune and completed the purchase, all by myself. I still have the book in my bookshelf!"



Cheryl Abrahams
IRT St Georges Basin

"Being independent means I'm not relying on family or friends or anybody to be able to do what I want to do and go where I want to go. I remember when I joined Girls' Brigade when I was 13 or 14 – it made me very independent. For my first camp, my mum wanted to check my bag and I told her she didn't need to because I had a list and I had packed everything I would need. She was quite indignant because it was the first time I'd asserted myself and said 'I'm okay, I can do it myself!'"



Paul Scholtens, IRT Kangara Waters

"Independence is a freedom from being controlled by others. I don't think you're completely independent in the true sense of the word, you're just less dependent. I'm influenced by the needs of my wife, children and grandchildren, and they're influenced by mine. I think in people's naivety they think they're independent when they leave home. You think you're out of the influence of your parents, but I'd like a dollar for every child that goes home to their parents within two months of leaving for advice or help! As a couple, we had a feeling of freedom when we paid off our home loan. It's a big step in your life."

Down in the garden

By IRT Maintenance Gardener Brian Wardaugh

One can't begin this gardening column without mentioning the weather.

They are extraordinary times in the garden after the soaking summer and autumn rains, but early winter winds add another layer of discomfort and stress to people and plants alike.

Image by Pat Whelen on Unsplash.

With this edition of *The Good Life* highlighting the importance of independence it's time to look at plants that not only cope with extremes of drought and rainfall but wind as well.

High-need plants may still be desirable but many Mediterranean plants and some natives recommended during drier times fell victim to waterlogged roots. Lavender, rosemary, dwarf wattles, grevilleas, convolvulus and succulents, even in pots, were lost due to extreme rain. After battling dry soils for many seasons it comes as a shock.

Antarctic blasts also remind us that there is no room for complacency, and soft-leaved plants are no match for 100km winds.

To be free from the vagaries of extreme weather, you may like to consider going 'bulletproof'.

There is still a wealth of tough plants that will survive and prosper. It simply means reducing your plant palette.

To combat the rain, drought and wind, you could consider lilly pillies of all shapes and sizes; bottlebrush as well (both drought and flood tolerant); wonderful new releases such as the native grass-like lomandra lime tuff which holds its shape and colour; nandina blush, a new form that stays deep red; or the compact indian hawthorn 'oriental pearl' in pink and white.

For a small to medium tree, the *tristaniopsis* 'water gum' luscious is a real winner, and the *Hibbertia scandens* or Guinea flower makes for a tough, indestructible climber or groundcover.

Mass planting or grouping different shaped plants that contrast, like grasses and mounds, creates interest and once established will provide independence from the tyranny of weeding and watering.

Keen gardeners will persevere with gardens and plants that inspire or challenge them, but be prepared to adjust your plant selection according to long-term climate trends and local conditions.

Drip irrigation systems will add extra insurance for the drought years but most gardens will survive into the future if we choose wisely and choose resilient.

A well-designed garden with compact hardy species is the way forward. We just have to ditch the prima donnas.



Chicken tikka masala

In this edition, the IRT Catering team serves up a crowd-pleasing curry, perfect for a cold winter's evening.

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 800g chicken thigh fillets, trimmed, cut into 3cm pieces
- 100g natural yoghurt
- 100g tikka masala curry paste
- 40g vegetable oil
- 6 curry leaves
- 1 red capsicum, chopped
- 1 brown onion, chopped
- 1 fresh red chilli, seeded and chopped
- 1 garlic glove
- 2.5cm piece fresh ginger, peeled & chopped
- 100ml thickened cream
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice

- 250ml chicken stock
- 400g chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato paste

Method

1. Combine chicken, yoghurt and curry paste and set aside.
2. Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat and fry curry leaves until fragrant.
3. Add capsicum, onion, chilli, garlic and ginger and gently cook for 2 minutes.
4. Add chicken, yoghurt and curry paste mix and lightly cook for 6 minutes. Add cream and lemon juice and stir.



5. Add stock, tomatoes and tomato paste, reduce heat and simmer for 4 minutes until sauce thickens slightly.

Serve with steamed rice and toasted naan bread.

Out and about

A good hare day at IRT Culburra Beach

IRT Culburra Beach Aged Care Centre residents were all ears when it came to Easter craft in April. With some inspiration and supplies from the local supermarket, residents made bunny ears and decorated Easter ornaments – and you can see from the photos the final results look great.



New community room opens at IRT Thomas Holt Kirrawee

The new community room at IRT Thomas Holt Kirrawee was officially opened in July, much to the delight of both residents and staff. The room, which features a large meeting area, new kitchen, television and a pool table donated by former Retirement Villages Manager Vanessa Royal, was officially opened by Federal Member for Hughes Jenny Ware MP and Sutherland Shire Mayor Carmelo Pesce. IRT Area Manager Retirement Villages – Sydney Donna Thomson says residents have been making the most of the new space for formal gatherings and casual get-togethers. “Special thanks must go to Thomas Holt Kirrawee resident David Crouch and IRT Maintenance Supervisor Stephen Loxley who put in a huge effort to transform the room into a comfortable space for all our residents,” says Donna.



Former IRT Retirement Villages Manager Vanessa Royal and resident Noel Adams enjoy a game on the pool table donated by Vanessa to the new community room at IRT Thomas Holt Kirrawee.

High tea at IRT Culburra Beach

It was an afternoon of delicious cakes and conversation at IRT Culburra Beach Aged Care Centre's high tea in April. Residents were invited to enjoy some conversation and tea



Above: Jean Benson pictured with some of the high tea's delicacies.
Left: Gwen Clarke enjoying a cuppa at the high tea.

and cakes in the care centre's gazebo. Some residents dressed up for the occasion and enjoyed the cakes and slices presented on a serving

stand, tea in china cups, beautiful table decorations and some gentle background music. It was a lovely sunny day too.

Wedded bliss

Two couples celebrated milestone wedding anniversaries earlier this year at IRT Kangara Waters.



Doreen and Sidney Wiscombe celebrated their 70th anniversary in March.

Firstly, Doreen and Sidney Wiscombe celebrated their 70th anniversary on 22 March. The couple were married in Weymouth, England and honeymooned at Torquay.



Geoffrey and Shirley Kearins celebrated their 60th anniversary in April.

They migrated to Australia, leaving England on Christmas Eve, 1970 and arrived in Australia on Australia Day. They have two children, six grandchildren and ten great grandchildren and two on the way. Doreen and Sidney say their love for each other is unconditional.

While aged care centre resident Geoffrey Kearins and his wife Shirley celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on 14 April. Geoffrey and Shirley were married in St Clements Church, Yass and honeymooned on the South Coast. Today the couple have three children and four grandchildren. Congratulations all 'round!

An egg-citing day at IRT Greenwell Gardens

Every bunny had an egg-celent time at IRT Greenwell Gardens Retirement Village's Easter celebrations. Residents celebrated Easter with a morning tea, Easter egg hunt, prizes for best dressed which went to Janet Hughes (first), Ian Hughes (second) and Roslyn McDonald (third), and lucky door prizes. IRT Area Manager Retirement Villages – Southern NSW Donna Mepham says that residents who were able to sing an Easter song got



an extra prize too. "I had a great time," Donna says. "And by the smiles on the residents' faces so did they."

Best dressed residents at IRT Greenwell Garden's Easter celebrations were (left to right) Roslyn McDonald (third place), Janet Hughes (first place) and Ian Hughes (second place).



A smile with every scoop

It's ice creams all round at IRT Greenwell Gardens with the addition of an ice cream cart in April, thanks to Sussex Inlet Men's Shed. IRT Aged Care Employee Sharon Matthews (pictured above) explains that she had friends that belong to the men's shed, who are also members of the local fire brigade of which she is a member. "I approached them about making an ice cream cart as I had seen that Culburra had one, which was made by the Culburra Men's Shed," Sharon explains. "I felt it would be bright and fun and it would put smiles on the residents' faces, not just for the ice cream." The ice cream cart even has a musical doorbell attached. "We have only used it a few times and they all love it," Sharon says.



Walk this way

IRT Greenwell Gardens residents are walking the walk and talking the talk as part of a new walking group around the village. The group (pictured above), which meets every Saturday, has been walking since April and ventures out rain, hail or shine. IRT Greenwell Gardens resident and walking group organiser

Janet Hughes says the group has been a great opportunity to interact with people from around the village again. "The Walking Group is great for the exercise but it's also a lovely chance to get to know each other and reconnect again after the lockdowns due to COVID-19," says Janet. The group is also planning some short excursions, including a trip to walk across the new Nowra Bridge.

Happy 104th Birthday Dulcie!

Happy Birthday to IRT Berala on the Park resident Dulcie Willing (pictured below) who celebrated



her 104th Birthday on 17 June. While she was a little embarrassed by all the fuss, Dulcie enjoyed her birthday celebrations with family and friends, which included a delicious cake, balloons and a crown for Dulcie to wear to make her feel like a queen for the day! Dulcie grew up in Cockle Creek near Newcastle, before moving to Sydney with her parents when she was 15. She and her late husband Ernest married in Guildford, and had two daughters, Gayle and Lynette. Dulcie lived in her house in Auburn for 61 years before relocating to IRT Berala on the Park. Dulcie worked as a dressmaker from home for most of her life, and also worked at Woolworths Variety in Granville in the drapery section while Ernest was away in New Guinea during World War II.

Happy Birthday Dulcie!

A vivid night out

Residents from IRT Peakhurst Retirement Village (pictured below) braved the cold in June to check out Vivid Sydney. The group travelled by bus into the city for the annual festival of light, where they enjoyed uninterrupted views of the Sydney Harbour Bridge from the Cahill Expressway. Some of the group then ventured down to the

Opera House and Botanical Gardens while others stayed closer to the bus at Circular Quay and enjoyed a warm drink. IRT Area Manager Retirement Villages – Sydney Donna Thomson says the group had a fun night. “We have an avid photographer in the group, Margaret Barnett, and we didn’t see her for most of the night as she zipped in and out of the crowded Quay capturing some beautiful shots,” Donna says.



Birthday celebrations for Doris

A big birthday shout out to Doris Kerslake (pictured right) at IRT Culburra Beach who turned 106 on 17 June. All IRT Culburra Beach residents were invited to celebrate Doris' birthday, which included plenty of cake, tasty treats and entertainment including live music (and a little bit of dancing). Doris was spoilt with a box of chocolates, a warm chequered scarf, and flowers from all her friends at IRT Culburra Beach. Doris also enjoyed another party with her family the following week at the local community hall. Doris is a very social person at IRT Culburra Beach and participates in most activities at the care centre, from DanceWise seated dance classes to crosswords. Doris used to love to ocean swim, and doesn't drink except maybe a sherry to celebrate her birthday!



Celebrations fit for a Queen

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was celebrated in style across a number of IRT aged care centres and villages in June. IRT Culburra Beach, William Beach Gardens at IRT Kanahooka and IRT St Georges Basin put on high teas, while in Queensland the IRT The Palms community hall was transformed into a sea of red, blue and white to enjoy the Jubilee proceedings. IRT Culburra Beach team member Heather Boyle says residents shared plenty of 'regal' treats over a cuppa. "We enjoyed reading 70 facts about the Queen and some of our residents shared stories about their visits to England," says Heather. "A great morning was enjoyed by all!"

Joyce Francis and IRT employee Jasmín Lancaster enjoyed the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations at IRT St Georges Basin.

Cute and cuddly visitors

Three of our Sydney communities were overrun with cuteness in May when they had a visit from the Sydney Mobile Animal Farms. Residents who live in the dementia units at IRT Peakhurst and IRT Thomas Holt Kirrawee and at the aged care centre at Sans Souci got to meet the mobile farm's animals which included rabbits, ducklings, baby chicks, goats and lambs. Nuisance the goat was a big hit at Sans Souci and one resident said the goats and lambs were very calm and great to pat.

At IRT Peakhurst the chickens and rabbits were a crowd favourite with one resident noting how soft the bunnies were, while at Kirrawee, the rabbits were again a favourite. IRT Lifestyle Manager – South East Sydney Mitchell Zammit said it was a great experience for residents and staff alike.

Residents at several of our Sydney communities enjoyed a visit from the farmyard animals who came to visit in April.

"It's great to bring these types of services in to residents after a tough few years," Mitchell says. "A lot of our residents had at least one of these animals growing up and it's great to see their faces light up as they get to interact with them again."



IRT locations

1 SUNSHINE COAST

- IRT The Palms, Buderim
- IRT Parklands, Currimundi
- IRT Woodlands, Meridan Plains

2 BRISBANE

- IRT The Ridge, Bracken Ridge

3 SYDNEY

- IRT Peakhurst, Peakhurst
- IRT Berala on the Park, Auburn
- IRT Macarthur, Campbelltown

4 SOUTH SYDNEY

- IRT Thomas Holt Kirrawee, Kirrawee
- IRT Thomas Holt Stafford Court, Jannali
- IRT Thomas Holt Kilpatrick Court, Sutherland
- IRT Thomas Holt Sans Souci Gardens, Sans Souci

5 NORTHERN ILLAWARRA

- IRT Seaview, Woonona
- IRT Birch Villa, Corrimal
- IRT Tarrawanna Gardens, Tarrawanna
- IRT Edwina, Corrimal
- IRT Woonona, Woonona
- IRT Tarrawanna, Tarrawanna

6 CENTRAL ILLAWARRA

- IRT Towradgi Park Lodge, Towradgi
- IRT Towradgi Park, Towradgi
- IRT Braeside, Keiraville
- Howard Court at IRT Pioneer Place, Wollongong
- Parkside at IRT Pioneer Place, Wollongong
- IRT Diment Towers, Wollongong

7 SOUTHERN ILLAWARRA

- William Beach Gardens at IRT Kanahooka, Kanahooka
- Henry Brooks Estate at IRT Kanahooka, Kanahooka
- Kemira at IRT Kanahooka, Kanahooka
- Jasmine Grove at IRT Kanahooka, Kanahooka
- IRT Harbourside, Kiama
- IRT Five Islands, Port Kembla

8 SHOALHAVEN NORTH

- IRT Greenwell Gardens, Nowra
- IRT Culburra Beach, Culburra Beach

9 SHOALHAVEN SOUTH

- IRT St Georges Basin, St Georges Basin
- IRT Sarah Claydon, Milton

10 EUROBODALLA

- IRT The Clyde, Batemans Bay
- IRT Crown Gardens, Batemans Bay
- IRT Moruya, Moruya
- IRT Dalmeny, Dalmeny

11 ACT

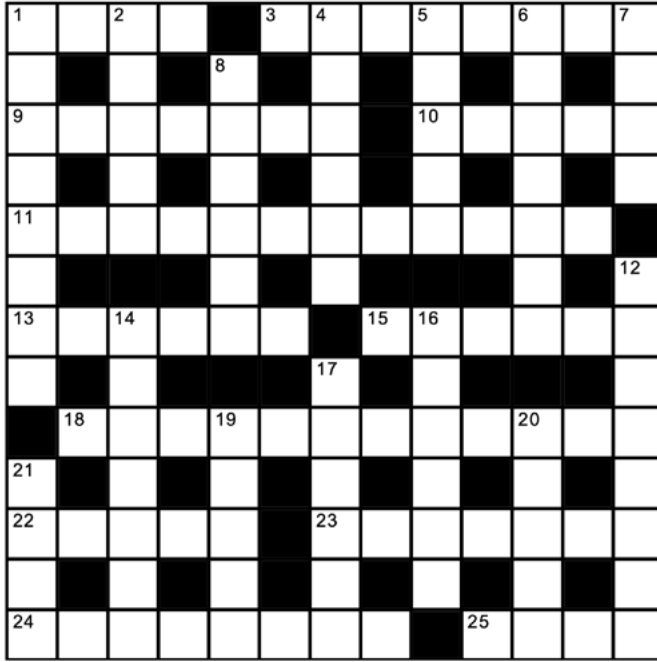
- IRT Kangara Waters, Belconnen

IRT HOME CARE

- We offer IRT home care services in South-East Queensland, South-East Sydney, South-West Sydney, South Sydney, Illawarra, South Coast, Far South Coast and ACT.



Crossword Corner: Independence



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Across

- 1 Slightly open (door) (4)
- 3 Ability to move (8)
- 9 Has an auburn tinge (7)
- 10 Accumulated financial nest-egg (colloq.) (5)
- 11 Self-sufficiency (12)
- 13 Winter team sport, ice _____ (6)
- 15 Helpful light (6)
- 18 Household appliances, modern _____ (12)
- 22 Happen (5)
- 23 1984 Wham song (7)
- 24 Anticipation (8)
- 25 Part of the eye (4)

Down

- 1 Kitchen essentials, _____ containers (8)
- 2 Supplementary (5)
- 4 Convenient (2,4)
- 5 Problem (5)
- 6 Has an effect on (7)
- 7 Knitting thread (4)
- 8 Not difficult (6)
- 12 Surmises (8)
- 14 Options (7)
- 16 Number of players on a cricket team (6)
- 17 Puts out candle (6)
- 19 Energy (5)
- 20 Fermented apple juice (5)
- 21 Chores, odd ____ (4)

Down: 1 Airtight, 2 Added, 4 On hand, 5 Issue, 6 Impacts, 7 Yarn, 8 Simple, 12 Presumes, 14 Choices, 16 Eleven, 17 Snuffs, 19 Verve, 20 Cider, 21 Jobs

Across: 1 Ajar, 3 Mobility, 9 Reddish, 10 Super, 11 Independence, 13 Hockey, 15 Sensor, 18 Conveniences, 22 Occur, 23 Freedom, 24 Suspense, 25 Irits

Answers

the GoodLife

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Email editor@irt.org.au

Mail The Good Life
c/o IRT Communications team
PO Box 2106 Wollongong DC
NSW 2500

Web irt.org.au

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