

The Heartbeat

AUG/SEP 2025

At ABH our philosophy is to embrace change and to envelop all new residents and clients in a big metaphorical (and sometimes physical) warm hug. We are home to a hundred and thirty-six people, and each and every one of you has your own set of personal wishes and factors which make a place home for you. From family photos on your walls, to takeaway deliveries, from a daily full cooked breakfast, or just a simple morning cuppa, we've got you covered.

We recently celebrated NAIDOC Week and explored the importance of cultural safety. It has been fifty years since Australia has recognised NAIDOC week – fifty years of courage, advocacy and cultural celebration. What a milestone and achievement that continues to work towards a unified country on behalf of us all.

Our full refurbishment of Brunswick wing is well under way and other bedrooms throughout ABH are renovated when they become vacant. The vision statement, 'A new Bethel by 2000' came to fruition when the old Surbiton was rebuilt in 1997 and then AH Orr Lodge was fully modernised in 2005. We are working hard to develop a new masterplan and vision statement for the next twenty years to meet the evolving needs of future generations and continue the visionary goals started by Reverend Harry Orr in 1950.

Leigh



Coming up...

AUGUST

- 05** Maria – Entertainer
- 05&08** S'mores Cooking Class
- 06** Excursion to The Grounds, Alexandria
- 18** Lifestyle Team Training Day
- 21** Art Group

Armchair travel to JAMAICA



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SEPTEMBER

- 02** Del Ryan – Entertainer
- 05** Amazon/Brazilian Dancers
- 07** Fathers' Day Lunch & Gifts
- 11** R U OK Day
- 26** Geoff Suede – Entertainer

Armchair travel to BRAZIL



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The lifestyle team will be running quizzes, poetry, art, bus trips, cinema time and more tailored for each double wing.



A regular visitor during Covid, Woody dropped in recently to supervise a policy meeting.



People & Culture

As we reach the midway point of the year, the HR team has been hard at work driving key initiatives that will shape the rest of 2025 for the whole of the ABH community.

We're excited for what's ahead and confident we'll continue to achieve great things together.

Cesar, HR Manager

New HRIS Implementation

We're excited to announce that the rollout of our new HRIS (Human Resources Information System) is gaining momentum. This powerful tool will not only streamline several of our internal processes but also provide all staff with an easy-to-use online portal with to all things employment related, including training, benefits, personal information and more.

Strengthened Aged Care Standards

While the implementation has been pushed back, our team continues to make significant progress in preparing for this important change. The whole ABH team is committed to ensuring all our policies and procedures align with the new Strengthened Aged Care Standards being rolled out in November. We will deliver a more personalised quality of care to our residents and improved work environment for our dedicated staff.

Staff Development Days

Our Staff Development Days are aimed at fostering growth and learning within our team. We believe that continuous learning is essential to creating an engaged, empowered workforce. Thanks to all staff who attended.

Below left: New Clinical Educator Kate Gallagher. Below right: Staff mandatory training in June. Opposite page: Specialist Dementia Training workshop participants.



**Congratulations to
Brogane Clayton,
our new Maintenance
& Property Team Leader.**

Brogane has been working in Maintenance part time since February last year while studying her Bachelor of Psychology degree, so she’s familiar with all the systems we use to manage our wonderful facilities. Please say hi if you see her.



Happy 100th Ira! (30 May, pictured)

Happy **BIRTHDAY!**
AUGUST

- August 12 Ruth P
- August 12 David M
- August 12 Gladys S
- August 13 Silvana D
- August 13 Greg M
- August 15Eileen B
- August 16 Veronica C
- August 20 Ivka N
- August 25George B
- August 31Heather T

Welcoming New Faces

We’ve had the pleasure of welcoming these new staff to the ABH team recently and we look forward to supporting them as they embark on their journey with us. Be sure to give them a warm welcome when you see them around!

Carers

Anusha T Aditi K
Sandhya S Yuna S

Registered Nurse

Akriti K

Clinical Educator

Kate G



SEPTEMBER

- September 1 Frank P
- September 1 Joan T
- September 4 Marcia M
- September 4 Elaine M
- September 8 ... Elizabeth M
- September 16 Angela L
- September 26 Maria Z

Say hello to **RESIDENT KEVIN O'CONNOR**

I was born in Ashfield and raised in Allibone Street in Ashbury. The area hasn't changed all that much since then. We still have the same neighbours, Sue and Kevin, and her brother lives two doors down. The house became a multigenerational family home through the years.

I was the youngest of eight siblings. My siblings were all grown up when I was born. My brother and sister were already married. Mum gave birth to eight kids over twenty-eight years, she was forty-eight when she had me. So Mum had her work cut out for her. I went to St Francis Xavier Ashbury in Kindy, then I went to De La Salle in Ashfield. My dad had the news stand in the Ashfield station railway tunnel. My sisters Betty and Marie worked there for a bit.

I worked at Tooth's brewery as a Town Boy when I first left school. I would take messages and papers from the brewery in Broadway to solicitors and that. They gave me an allowance for travelling on the bus but I looked young so I paid a child's fare and pocketed the difference! I also did National Service back in 1953, when I was 18.



After that I joined the Post Office where I worked for forty-four years. I sorted the mail on the mail trains. I come from a postal family, my niece Cath's father was a postmaster and my brother Jimmy was a counter jumper (postal clerk). I also had to do pension checks. I sorted through the bundles every second Thursday for delivery. They gave me a special allowance for working in the sorting room in Chinatown because of the peculiar smell of the food.

I'm a Lifetime Member of Wests Leagues Sports Club. I used to get there for lunch a bit but I don't really know many people anymore. When I was ten years old, I was the ballboy for Wests (The Magpies). They played at Pratten Park which was just a few streets away. When it was my first game as ballboy we were all ready to run onto the field. There was this other bloke who always liked to be first in everything. Harry Wells was there, he was a test

Above: Kevin and niece Cath.

Below from left to right: Kev on the telly!; Receiving award for best Wicketkeeper; Kev's mug from Terry and Peter.



player at the time. He pulled the bloke back by the Guernsey and said, 'Kevin's the ballboy, and the ballboy always runs out first.' Years later I got interviewed on television at Pratten Park. Michael Clark was playing for club and I said I reckoned he would amount to something big. My mate called when he saw me on the telly and called me a 'b***dy limelighter!'

Sport has always been a huge part of my life. I played lawn bowls and played in the Pennants (a regional bowls tournament). I played cricket and took the most catches in the district when I played as wicket keeper. I'm a bit sports mad. I saw a job with ABC Radio as a sports reporter but I worried it would interfere with playing sport at the weekend.

I used to love a dance. I went every week, on Friday nights to Strathfield Town Hall, then on Saturday Nights I'd be at the Albert Palais at Leichhardt. I went with my friends Brian and Donny and some other mates.

I moved into ABH in January 2023 after being a Bethel Home Care client for a while. Cath looks out for me and visits a lot. My sister Edna, Cath's mother, lived here before me so I knew the place. I've got a telly in my room and love



watching the races. My nephew Peter up in Queensland helps me with putting on a flutter. He and his partner Terry made me a mug with a picture saying 'Three Way Turf Talk' which was a popular show on a Saturday morning.

I loved reading. Mostly crime, hard core stuff. Cath would bring me books from the library when I first moved in but I'd usually read most of them! I get the paper delivered every day which I still enjoy.

I haven't travelled much. The furthest I've been is to Lord Howe Island to visit Fred and Cath. I've never had a passport. I've never had a credit card, a driver's licence or owned a property or a car. I had to go six times to get an ID card as I never had enough proof. The only thing I have is my birth certificate. I'm always under the radar.

I'm pretty easy going. I love a joke and I've always been a good mate. I haven't had a boring life. I reckon everyone should make the best of the time they have.

*Above: Pete, Fred, Kev, Ed, Michael, Julia - Xmas Allibone St.
Below from left to right: Footy fan!; Meeting a snake; Out and about on the bus.*



PhysioCORNER

At ABH, fall prevention is an issue we take very seriously. All staff are educated to recognise risks and work with the clinical and physiotherapy teams to decrease or remove these risks for all our residents.

We hold a regular falls prevention group exercise class utilising dumbbells and balance exercises. This is run by a team member who has worked in falls prevention for many years. Our team also run regular physio-led group exercise classes which utilise therabands and dumbbells. All residents are welcome and encouraged to join! The physio team also love using the MOTOMed exercise bike for our residents to work on both arm and leg strength, both of which dramatically impact our falls. Our physiotherapist works extensively and individually with each resident to continuously focus on preventing falls for all our residents.

For the less mobile, our team conduct regular one-on-one sessions such as sit-to-stand strengthening exercises.

The likelihood of falling grows, and the consequences worsen, as we age. What steps can we take to protect ourselves? Please contact Liz for a copy of an excellent recent Sydney Morning Herald/ Sun Herald article helpful for all ages.

Alana Colombo

**ABH Physiotherapist - Team Lead
(Plena Healthcare)**



*From top to bottom:
David and Joyce in a
physio led weight session;
Janice taking David
and Barry through their
exercises;
Parachute play helps
focus coordination skills;
Con doing in room physio
exercises.*

Bungarribee Wildlife Workshop

To recognise Naidoc Week we were treated to a wildlife workshop by Josh from Sydney Zoo. Our residents learned about First Nations culture and wildlife by being introduced to native animals through an interactive hands-on experience. Residents touched snakes, a turtle, a lizard and an emu egg and were treated to a performance on the didgeridoo.



Say hello to...

PHILEMON DAWEN DAMBRING, CARE STAFF

I grew up in Nigeria in a village called Fwangkwak in Plateau State. Nigeria is a country with an abundance of human and natural resources and a very rich cultural heritage. The granite seam that forms the primary source of tin and columbite gave Plateau State the name “The Tin City.”

My early life was filled with fun, celebrating traditional festivals like the Bwanzuhum Festival. This was held annually by the peace-loving people of Kerang District which has the only volcanic mountains in the state.

I am the oldest of five brothers. All my brothers are in Nigeria. Our dad is still alive, and my brothers live nearby and look out for him, for which I am grateful. The Dambrings are a very lovely and supportive extended family. My parents and grandparents are my lifelong role models, instilling in me the values of hard work, dedication, integrity, respect and above all, society’s interest before mine. They have inspired me to always do my best in my own little way. I miss home very much but thank God for technology that enables me to stay connected with my family.

I am very interested in mining and have studied mining engineering extensively. I studied a degree and post graduate degree in Mining Engineering in Nigeria and post graduate degrees in Geo Physics and Technical Engineering. I also lectured in the engineering faculty at the University of Jos. I studied a Masters in Mines and Engineering in Ghana before deciding to move overseas for my PhD studies. I researched countries with the best mining engineering practices in the world, and I opted for Australia.

I completed my PhD program in Mining Engineering at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) plus several other construction training certificates.

Sometimes destiny can change your way of thinking. I completed a Certificate in Aged Care and Disability. I thought – ah, this is so great, it can give me something to do before finding a job in my field of studies. Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that one day I would find my place in the health sector. What connection does mining engineering

Above: Philemon at ABH. Below from left to right: ABH friends; ABH 75th partybooth; Philemon chatting with Board Chair David Glinatsis at the ABH 75th.



have with the health sector? It is destiny, destiny, destiny - we need to allow nature to take its course in our lives.

Working at ABH is fantastic. I have been a carer here for 15 months and the journey has been inspiring and incredibly fulfilling. I am learning a lot of great things, forming connections, and supporting the residents. I cherish working here as putting a smile on somebody's face gives me self-fulfilment and a sense of purpose. I have learned so much, different approaches like ways of talking to people and even operating manual handling machines! I employ the ABH values every day to make people happy and create a sense of belonging irrespective of beliefs, culture, tribe, or nationality. I live here in a unit in Parr Wing, and I am very grateful to ABH for helping to create my single family unit.

I am the President of the Association of Plateau State Indigenes in Australia, (APSIA) which is a registered state government organisation. We link with newly arrived people from Nigeria and give them a helping hand – with accommodation, language, work and so on. It is so important for people to understand the ways things work in a different country. It's like the ABH Code of Conduct – other organisations have their own codes, and they are all

different. We explain the Aussie 'code of conduct'! Information is power.

On my days off I go to the library to read the latest research articles and publications so I can keep up with new technologies and research. For example, we are now using robots to drive mining trucks both on the surface and underground. This makes mine operations much safer and easier and minimises the need for human labour. For a holiday I would love to travel to the US, Canada, Singapore, Japan, and Germany. And New Zealand of course!

I love nature and understanding how the world works. God's hand is in everything, like how mineral deposits in the soil help to nurture the world. Without all this there would be no humanity - we are all products of mineral resources. I am a creative problem solver with a playful side. I enjoy learning new things and understanding how systems work to strengthen the wellbeing of humanity. My life philosophy is tackling challenges head-on, building resilience and creating a solid foundation for personal and professional growth.

Three words to describe me:

Resourceful, Analytical, and Practical.

Below from left to right: Research desk at UNSW; Field trip in Nigeria exploring limestone deposit (Phil squatting in grey shirt); Field trip Ashanti goldfields, Ghana.



ABH FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2024-2029

CONSUMER STATEMENT

I continue to feel part of my local community, regardless of what services I am receiving or where I am receiving services.

Nothing is more important to us than the care and wellbeing of our consumers - our residents and home care clients. Our full five-year strategy is available on the ABH Annual Report FY2024.

Objective 3: MANAGING ASSETS (NOW/INTO THE FUTURE)

We will deliver current projects as planned while developing new products and services to meet the changing needs of our community.

CONSUMER STATEMENT

I am offered choices at each stage of my care journey that are of the highest quality standard, reflect my needs and the needs of my community.



STRATEGIES*

We will support residents and clients to engage with the community.

We have developed a regular visiting program with the local childcare centre. Homecare clients are welcome. Preschoolers interact and engage with our residents, including dancing, playing and chatting.

We will develop a site masterplan.

Our business continually reviews our assets to ensure our physical care offer is future proofed to accommodate changing expectations and best market fit for future generations.

We will improve existing services.

ABH undergoes a continuous upgrade project for all physical spaces in the home, including full and ongoing refurbishment of each wing and room.

* Refer ABH 2024-2029 Org Strategy for full strategies.

Happenings

Top Row: New mobile library service; Ball games at any age; Cabarita Beach to watch the ferry. Second Row: Excursion to the (actual) movies!; Off to Maccas after the movie. Third Row: One on one laughs with Helen; Staff whacky dressups for Pandemonium Day. Bottom Row: Men's group barbecue lunch; Gretta getting ready for the entertainment.



Reflections

My chaplaincy role here alongside being a care giver has opened up a new world of untold and rich stories. There are the deep friendships formed, the patient mentoring, non-judgemental supervision, uplifting peer support and development opportunities that come along. I find myself saying yes to so many things that I haven't done before.

I genuinely know that God really can turn everything and anything around for good. Nothing is too difficult or too far gone for him. He faithfully and patiently restores and gives new life to all who ask. And it's never too late to ask.

*O Lord, your Word teaches that the wise hear and increase in learning rather than becoming complacent.
(Proverbs 18:15)*

Sister Jenieth Gesta, Interim Chaplain ABH



Spiritual care CALENDAR

AUGUST

Sunday Services

03 24 9:30am

10 17 31 9:30am online
Catholic Mass

05 19 9:30am

Devotional Service

13 27 9:30am

SEPTEMBER

Sunday Services

07 14 21 28 9:30am

Catholic Mass

02 16 9:30am

Devotional Service

10 24 9:30am

PASTORAL SUPPORT

Upon request –

*Ashfield Baptist Church,
Earlwood Baptist Church,
St. Brigid's Lewisham Parish,
St. Nectarios Burwood.*

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Acknowledgement of country Ashfield Baptist Homes acknowledges the Wangal People as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.