

The Heartbeat

Building work on The Cunningham, our new retirement-living community on Queen Street, began in May this year and is due to be finished in May 2028.

You may notice some noise, trucks and workers near the site on weekdays. Your care, meals and daily routines will not change. Your safety and comfort remain our top priority. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to any of our team. We'll keep you updated as the building takes shape.

If you or anyone you know is interested in the project and would like to find out more please visit www.thecunningham.org.au. You can also contact Margaret Pistevos on 1800 115 220 or at sales@thecunningham.org.au.

We are celebrating Christmas this year with our traditional resident lunches on 16 and 17 December (and yes, it's only 92 days away!) Please lock these dates into your calendars – we can't wait to host you. Our theme will be "White Christmas".

Just a reminder that I will be on leave from 2 October returning 26 October – taking some time to visit Tasmania and Victoria. Nitin Parakh, our GM Finance, will be filling in for me during this period. Please feel free to reach out to him at nparakh@abh.org.au or 9797 3601.

Leigh

Below left: Marina off on a bus trip. Below right: Out and about on a bus trip.

Coming up...

OCTOBER

04 Labour Day Holiday

15 Resident BBQ
Lunch – Café

20 Armchair
travel to Egypt

30 Fiona Marie
Entertainment



NOVEMBER

03 Melbourne Cup
Sweepstake

10 Geoff Suede aka Elvis
Entertainer

11 Remembrance Day

23 Dale Ryan Entertainment

24 Armchair travel
to Morocco



*Twice monthly
visits from Canterbury
Childcare Centre*

*Bus trips Wednesdays
Bus trips (plus car) Fridays*



People & Culture

There has been plenty happening across ABH, and we're excited to share some of the key initiatives, achievements and updates with you.

EMPLOYMENT HERO: PAYROLL & ROSTERING – WE'RE LIVE!

We're excited to announce the implementation of the third and final module of Employment Hero.

Following the successful rollout of HR and Learning & Development, we have now launched Payroll and Rostering, completing our fully integrated Human Resources Information System.

Implementation has been a major cross functional project and significant step towards simplifying our internal processes and creating a smoother system for staff.

A huge thank you to all staff for their patience, feedback and support throughout this journey and while managing teething problems. We appreciate everyone who has embraced the changes and helped us get to this point.

One system. Simpler processes.
A better staff experience.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT – GROWING TOGETHER

All our staff take part in a range of sessions focused on strengthening our skills, knowledge and workplace culture, presented by key members of management, including:

- **ABH Values** – strengthening our understanding of what our values look like in practice.
- **Documentation** – reinforcing the importance of accurate, timely and meaningful documentation.
- **Falls Management** – building awareness and knowledge around falls prevention and management.
- **Clinical Deterioration** – recognising and responding to changes in a resident's condition.
- **Employee Happiness** – exploring ways we can contribute to a positive workplace experience.

Below left: HR Coordinator Ivette talking at a staff development day. Below right: VR Dementia training.



- **Bullying & Harassment** – reinforcing our commitment to a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace.
- **Self-Leadership** – focusing on personal accountability, ownership and being empowered to make a difference.
- **Safety Fundamentals** – strengthening our understanding of our shared responsibility for safety at ABH.

Thanks to all our staff, residents and families for your continued commitment, support and contribution. We look forward to sharing more updates, achievements and stories with you.

Cesar Antonio Suazo, HR Manager

NEW STARTERS

Carers

Diego H
Manisha S

Registered Nurse

Anna K

BHC Support

Workers
Adriana M
Sari T
Sujal G
Dewi L

After Hours

Weekend Manager
Jo-Anne V

BHC Admin

Sally A

Maintenance/
BHC Gardener
Bill V

Home Care
Coordinator
Julie Y

GM Operations
Tony H

Internal
Communications
Coordinator
Kathie T

Clinical Educator
Rista S

ABH VISA SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

We have progressed into Year 2 of our Labour Agreement and Employer-Sponsored Visa Scheme. The scheme has already provided a valuable pathway for eligible employees, and we received many expressions of interest. Unfortunately, due to the capped number of available sponsorship places, we are not able to progress every application. We are currently engaging with the Australian Government to explore opportunities to increase the number of sponsorships available to us.

For those unable to progress this year, we understand this may be disappointing. We remain hopeful that we may have greater opportunities available in future years and will continue to provide updates as further information becomes available.

Congratulations to Jeevan, Gokul and Manisha whose visa sponsorships have progressed, and to Philemon, Swastika, Pamela, Asia and Barsha who have been successfully nominated in this year’s intake.

“ABH has played an important role in my immigration journey. When I first came to Australia as a student, I did not have a clear or realistic pathway towards permanent residency. Being offered the opportunity to work at ABH and receive employer sponsorship changed my situation significantly. It gave me stability and allowed me to continue building my career in aged care while pursuing nursing. I am genuinely grateful to ABH for believing in me and giving me an opportunity that has had such a positive impact on my future.”
Jeevan Chapai



The Cunningham **GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY**

Staff, families and residents were invited to the official ground breaking ceremony at the Cunningham building site on Queen Street, Ashfield in September. The ceremony marks the beginning of construction on a project that has been years in the making and reflects the dedication, collaboration and perseverance of everyone involved.

Many thanks to all stakeholders who have contributed to reaching this important milestone. Please email sales@thecunningham.org.au if you would like to receive regular updates.

Below: The whole project team with Leigh and Margaret at centre. Bottom row: Leigh and David receiving a print of the finished development from Steve at Total; Resident Peter (centre) and family members Barry and Vince; David checking out the progress.

Brendan Kerin delivered a beautiful and meaningful Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony.

Excavation is well under way and the project is on track for the move in date of May 2028. Residents regularly enjoy watching the progress through our viewing window.



Baby bonanza

CONGRATS TO NEW DADS FRANK, NIRAJ, CESAR

“It has certainly been a busy time balancing work and family life, but it has also brought an incredible amount of joy, excitement and happiness. Thanks to everyone who has shared their congratulations and kind wishes. They have been very much appreciated.”
Cesar, HR Manager

“We’re very happy to introduce our little princess, Nirika, who joined our family on 2 July 2026. Since she arrived, she has filled our home with so much love, happiness, and of course a few sleepless nights. We both are enjoying this new chapter of our lives and feel incredibly lucky to have her. Sarika and Niraj (Mum and Dad) are happily enjoying every moment with our little one and learning something new every day.”
Niraj, Finance Team



“My wife Barakat and I are very happy to welcome our new son Adebayo into the world on 10 August. His three siblings Bradley, Haniya and Ayo are getting used to the new family set up!”
Frank, Care Manager



Happy birthday Angela and Agnes!

Happy BIRTHDAY!

OCTOBER

- October 1..... Gloria K
- October 1..... Gaetan Z
- October 5..... Shirley C
- October 7..... Mary C
- October 7..... Antonio D
- October 8..... Tonka T
- October 8..... Vincent W
- October 14 Mary H
- October 14 David T
- October 15 Yiota D
- October 19 Katina N
- October 20 Steve H
- October 24 John K
- October 24 Con N
- October 25 Angela S
- October 25 Peter T

NOVEMBER

- November 4 The N
- November 15 Kalliope B
- November 15 Anna S
- November 18 Doug C
- November 18 Prasad W
- November 19 Pam G
- November 22 Michael R
- November 24 Julie S
- November 27 Rosaria M

SLICE OF LIFE AT ABH

Top row: Jennifer and Lydia enjoying armchair travel to Greece; Feeding the birds on a bus trip; Elvis (Geoff Suede) is in the house. Middle row: Pina enjoying a visit from her son; Morag and Naomi after a bus trip; Emily enjoying Youtube. Bottom row: Cardinal Freeman ukelele group; Rosemary showing her parents David and Judith photo albums from their Papua New Guinea days.



Physio Corner **STAYING ACTIVE & SAFE**

WHY STRENGTH MATTERS AT EVERY AGE

One of the things we regularly work on with our residents is maintaining and improving strength. Strength is important for so many everyday activities- getting up from a chair, walking, standing safely, getting in and out of bed and maintaining independence. Even small improvements in strength can make everyday movements feel easier and help support balance, confidence and mobility.

The physio team works with residents individually and in our exercise classes to keep everyone moving and functioning at their best. This may include sit-to-stand exercises, resistance band exercises, weights, leg strengthening and balance activities - depending on each resident's goals. Our twice-weekly group exercise classes also have a strong focus on strengthening where we incorporate TheraBands and weights alongside other exercises to help residents build and maintain strength in a fun and social environment.



PHYSIO TIP
Move little and often!

If you are able, try to avoid sitting for long periods. Stand up, stretch your legs or

take a short walk throughout the day. And remember – every bit of movement counts! If you're unsure where to start or what exercises are right for you, speak with the physio team. We can help you find exercises that are suitable for you, or get you involved in one of our exercise classes.

Tina Giokaris, Physiotherapist Lead



*Above: Residents enjoying balloon tennis with Alvin.
Left: Physiotherapist Lead Tina.*

ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

At ABH we celebrate the lives of all the people who live and work here. Our Chaplaincy team holds an annual service inviting all families and friends of those residents who have passed in the last year.

Chaplain Danny hosted a beautiful service celebrating each person with personal song favourites, family stories, special memories and a reading. Families were invited to write the name of their loved ones on the back of special Memory Stones and place them in our fountain.

Below: Memory stones.

Bottom: The Bartlett family placing Gerald's stone in the fountain.



Say hello to

RESIDENT ELAINE ROBERTS

I was born at a small private hospital in Petersham — it's long since closed. My family lived nearby in Stanmore, and that's where I grew up. Money was tight in the early years — Dad was out of work for about two and a half years after the war, and my parents didn't marry until he found a job. They would have loved more children, but it just never happened, so I grew up as their only, much-loved child. My father managed the Sydney office of the Bundaberg Sugar company, and my mother stayed at home.

We attended Stanmore Church. Harry Orr was a junior minister there when I was a little girl, I was about the same age as his son. *[In 1950 Reverend Harry Orr was instrumental in Ashfield Baptist Church's acquisition of Bethel, which was the foundation of Ashfield Baptist Homes].*

I went to Stanmore Public School from kindergarten, then Fort Street for high school. I trained as a primary school

teacher at Sydney Teachers College, part of Sydney University. Then I took my first teaching post at a public school in Regent's Park, where I taught for three years. After I married and started my family, I later went back to casual teaching locally at Summer Hill while my boys were young. I even ended up teaching one of my own son's classes. He still called me "Mum" in the classroom!

I met my husband, Charles, at church. He started going after his father fell seriously ill and he decided it was time to know the Lord. We became a couple, went to bible college together, and married at Stanmore Baptist Church. We lived with my parents for a few months before buying a house of our own opposite the church. I went back to teaching to help save for the house, while Charles, a carpenter, went back to his trade.

We had three sons two years apart — David, Philip and Peter — and moved



Above: With daughter-in-law Bridget and her mother at the ABH Xmas party.

Below from left: Showing off her hand crafted needlework; Elaine and Charles' wedding day; The young Roberts family.



to a bigger house in Summer Hill to fit our growing family. Later we moved to Dulwich Hill. Charles served as a deacon at our church, and we were closely involved in church life. Weekends often meant a drive to the beach for a swim, and we had lovely two-week holidays at the same rented house at Copacabana every year. There was always a dog in the house, something Charles and I both carried on from our own childhoods. Charles passed away 25 years ago just before Christmas from mesothelioma after asbestos exposure. I still miss him dearly.

I stayed on at Dulwich Hill and kept up the garden myself. David and his wife lived just across the road. I sold the house before moving into ABH in July last year.

I've always loved needlework and painting. I hand-stitched an entire patchwork quilt, square by square, while I was still at school — the colours are still as vivid today as they ever were. I've also painted several pictures that hang in my room, including a floral tray design. Gardening was another love Charles and I shared — he always kept our garden immaculate.

Some of my fondest memories are my wedding day, our family holidays and celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary together. I treasure the closeness of my family. The way all my boys and their wives rallied around me the day Charles died is one of the most powerful memories I have of just how much my family means to me. I now have eight grandchildren, five boys and three girls.



I try to be kind to everyone around me, staff included. People here describe me as “a sweetie that everybody loves” — and I’m happy to take that! I feel proud to have had such a happy marriage, and I couldn’t ask for better sons. They’ve always been great kids.

From top to bottom: Elaine and Charles with her parents and friend; All the family (bar one grandkid); All the family at granddaughter Hannah’s wedding; Sons David, Philip and Peter.

Say hello to **SHREE BIBEK, CARER**

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in the beautiful city of Pokhara, Nepal, surrounded by the Himalayas and a close-knit community.

When did you move to Australia?

I first arrived in Australia in 2021, post-pandemic, with a dream to expand my tattoo business and pursue a new life chapter. While that specific vision didn't unfold as planned, it set me on a path of resilience. My journey here has been about learning to adapt and finding a new rhythm, with the support of a childhood friend who has been my rock here.

Tell us about your family.

I am the youngest child in my family, with an older brother and sister. My entire family now lives in the UK. Growing up, I was always the one who felt deeply and observed the world, which led me to my interest in spirituality and helping others.



What is your journey to your current role as a carer?

My professional path has been wonderfully diverse. I studied a Bachelor in Business Studies and worked as a Finance Manager at a finance and loan company in Nepal. During that time, I was also very active in social work with a girls' welfare club. I also followed my creative passion as a tattoo artist, running my own shop in Pokhara.

In Australia, I gained over four years of experience at Presbyterian Aged Care Ashfield, where I worked as a Team Leader, Roster Manager, and in Maintenance. Since February 2025, I have brought all

Above: Shree with his favourite book. Below: At the Opera House; With ABH staff in Christmas scrubs; Visiting Canberra.





Above: Shree and his parents; Shree with resident Alice.

my skills—my empathy, my organisational abilities, and my commitment to service—to ABH, continuing a fulfilling career in the aged care sector. It has been a wonderful experience so far. The sense of community and the opportunity to make a positive impact in people's lives truly resonates with me.

Tell us about your community.

I live here in Sydney with my childhood friend. I'm learning to balance and navigate this part of my life with grace. My community here is small but incredibly supportive.

What do you love doing?

In my leisure time, I love immersing myself in spiritual and wisdom books. My all-time favourite is the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, and I live by its core teaching: "*Karmanyevadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana*"—*focus on your duties and actions, not on the results*. I am a vegetarian and have a deep interest in holistic healing and helping others with mental stress. Reading feeds my soul, and exploring new places nourishes my spirit.

Ideal holiday destination

My ideal holiday is any place that allows me to celebrate a special occasion in a new, unexplored location. I love the feeling of a fresh environment and the energy of new beginnings.

Who would you love to meet?

I would love to have a conversation with a truly enlightened spiritual master or a great philosopher to deepen my understanding of life and consciousness.

Life's biggest inspiration?

The unwavering belief that you have the power to choose your reaction to any situation. The quote, "*Enjoy the moment, life doesn't come with a replay button. Don't regret the past, don't worry about the future, live full joy in the present,*" is what inspires me every day.

Something no one would guess about you

Despite my corporate and aged care roles, I am a certified tattoo artist at heart! I used to run my own shop, and I still carry that artistic, creative soul with me.

Three words to describe you?

Resilient. Spiritual. Empathetic.

Reflections **SPRING'S GENTLE PROMISE**

As spring arrives across Australia, wattles glow and warm light lengthen the days. At ABH we notice the same quiet turning: winter's heaviness eases and hope stirs again.

Scripture speaks first: **"See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come."** (Song of Songs 2:11-12)

Gerard Manley Hopkins caught the same wonder: *"Nothing is so beautiful as Spring—
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush..."*

Every new shoot and birdsong declares that God is still at work. Creation declares His mighty grace. The later years are not barren; they too can blossom. In this season of renewal, we rest in the One who makes all things new, trusting that even now His love surrounds us and an eternal spring awaits.

We look forward to sharing the love and joy of Spring's new beginnings with our residents and families.

Danny Suleiman, Chaplain



Spiritual care **CALENDAR**

OCTOBER

Sunday Services

11 18 25 9:30am Volunteer

04 9:30am online

Catholic Mass

06 13 10:00am

Devotional Service

07 14 21 28 10:00am

NOVEMBER

Sunday Services

08 22 9:30am Volunteer

01 15 29 9:30am online

Catholic Mass

10 17 10:00am

Devotional Service

04 11 18 25 10:00am

Orthodox Mass

12 11:00am

Remembrance Day Service

11 11:00am

PASTORAL SUPPORT

Upon request.

Ashfield Baptist Homes 📞 02 9797 3600 📍 31 Clissold Street, Ashfield NSW 2131

📱 @ashfieldbh 📷 @ashfieldbaptisthomes

Home Care: Bethel Home Care

✉️ bethelhomecare@abh.org.au

🌐 www.bethelhomecare.org.au

Residential: Bethel Lodge

✉️ info@abh.org.au

🌐 www.abh.org.au

Retirement Living: The Cunningham

✉️ sales@thecunningham.org.au

🌐 www.thecunningham.org.au

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.