

50 years
caring about people:
a commemoration





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we care about people

Foreword



For 50 years, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) has been caring about people. This book is a celebration of our Golden Jubilee year, containing highlights from our humble beginnings in the 1970s to the organisation we know today, delivering quality care to over 3,500 people across urban, regional and remote communities.

Founded as a not-for-profit organisation by the Knights of the Southern Cross in 1970, we opened our first retirement community in Marrickville in 1972 and residential care homes in Merrylands and Deniliquin soon after. The 1980s saw major reform across the entire aged care sector. We purchased a retirement village and residential care home in Bateau Bay and built our Kirrawee and Caringbah residential villages.

Embracing a new strategic model in the 1990s, we opened our Parkes Retirement Village and residential care home, launched our Home Care service, and rolled out Australia's first formal aged care Pastoral and Spiritual Care Program.

By the end of the 2000s, our organisation had more than doubled in size, following a

merger with Southern Cross Homes (ACT) Inc and the opening of retirement villages and residential care homes including Banora Point, Tweed Heads, Casino, Grafton, Corowa, Bombala, Cootamundra and Young.

A period of revitalisation and recognition for excellence followed in the 2010s through key partnerships and numerous redevelopment projects. We also opened Thornton Park in Penrith, providing residential care, retirement village and home care.

As we embark upon our sixth decade, I am honoured to be Chair of an organisation that has supported and cared for thousands of older Australians. I am also incredibly grateful to former Chairs, Board

Members, and Chief Executive Officers who have shown great character and determination in their leadership roles. Their significant contribution has brought us to where we are today. Our CEO, Helen Emmerson, continues to build on this legacy by raising the ageing agenda and making ageing everyone's business.

A very special thanks to Emily Easton, Research and Policy Officer, who provided the foundation for this book through "A Dawning of the Day" – a historical account of the Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT). Emily worked tirelessly for 18 months, sourcing an impressive array of material, including some of the newspaper clippings, photographs and testimonials you'll find in this book.

Please read on and join me in gratitude for the many individuals and communities who have worked with us in caring for older people. I hope you will see in these pages the lives of older people blossoming as they experience life to the full.

Lawrie Hallinan, Board Chair

Message from our CEO



This commemorative book celebrates the stories and events that have helped shaped Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)'s impactful 50-year history. While a great deal has changed in the past 50 years, our commitment to care has not.

As a not-for-profit, mission-based organisation, Southern Cross Care exists solely to care for and about people as they age. As a Registered Nurse, it is a privilege to be entrusted with the care of our residents and clients across our Retirement Villages, Home Care Services and Residential Care homes. I am incredibly proud and honoured to lead this wonderful organisation.

There is no doubt that the aged care industry has changed significantly in our rich 50-year history. Never before has the sector faced such challenging times. While Southern Cross Care is not immune to these challenges, we have always been guided by stable leadership and an unwavering dedication to our mission. As CEO, I am committed to seizing opportunities to continually improve the lives of our residents and clients.

With our Mission and Values as our compass and a robust strategic plan, we are in good stead for the next 50 years to enable older Australians to live their best life.

I want to dedicate this book to our past and current residents and clients, their families, our Board, and of course, our passionate, dedicated team of staff and volunteers. You inspire us every day. Thank you for helping us make a difference.

Helen Emmerson, CEO

50 years

caring about people: highlights



1970

We were founded by the Knights of the Southern Cross



1975

Our first residential care home opens in Merrylands



1981

We acquire a retirement village and residential care home in Bateau Bay



Kirrawee retirement village is built



1992

Parkes retirement village and residential care home opens



1999

We roll out Australia's first formal aged care pastoral and spiritual care program



2003

We merge with Southern Cross Care ACT



We acquire residential care homes in Casino and Grafton



2005

We open a retirement village and residential care home in Corowa



Our Parkes facility is redeveloped

We partner with Dementia Australia on dementia research projects



2012

We are a founding sponsor of Meaningful Ageing Australia



2017



2018

We open Thornton Park in Penrith, comprising a retirement village, residential care home and Home Care service



2020

Our newly-redeveloped North Turramurra Residential Care Home wins the prestigious UDIA NSW Award for Excellence in Aged Care

1970s

1980s

1990s

2000s

2010s

2020s

1976

Orana residential care home opens in Deniliquin



1972

Our first retirement village—Patrick Minahan Village—opens in Marrickville



1984

Caringbah retirement village is built



1996

Our Home Care service is launched



2006

We open retirement villages and residential care homes in Bombala, Cootamundra and Young



2000

We open retirement villages and residential care homes in Banora Point and Tweed Heads



2016

We win the Gareth Williamson Sustainability Award for Excellence



Our 10K Project wins awards at the Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards and the innovAGEING National Awards



2019

2021

We care for more than 3,500 residents and clients and operate in over 40 locations across NSW & ACT



A time of establishment

The Knights of the Southern Cross set about creating a new experience for older people, marked by choice and respect. Highlights include the opening of our first retirement village in Marrickville in 1972 and residential care homes in Merrylands (1975) and Deniliquin (1976).



1970s

1970

The founding of Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)



The story of Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) is the story of an organisation driven by its commitment to caring about people for over five decades.

The founding of Southern Cross Care was the direct result of the vision and work of the Knights of the Southern Cross, a group of men who belonged to a Catholic service-based group. Their first Executive meeting was held in March 1919 and the name ‘The Knights of the Southern Cross’ was soon adopted. The Archbishop of Sydney endorsed this new Catholic lay Order in August of that year.

The Knights of the Southern Cross was created partly to combat religious exclusion and promote the interests of all Australians through social justice action. The Knights took the stars of Australia’s national emblem as a symbol of their Christian mission and their organisation, which straddled different groups across society and was open to all. They also expressed their Christian values through their efforts in areas as diverse as Indigenous land rights, refugee policy, education and drought relief.

In 1970, a meeting took place in Sydney between six men who were all Knights of the Southern Cross. They wanted to change the future for older Australians in an era of compulsory retirement, in which ‘ageism’ was common and older age was often linked to dependence. Impelled by conscience and conviction, they set out to create a new experience for older people, marked by choice and respect. They established the organisation that we know today.

The Knights’ charitable vision, which first took shape fifty years ago, has become a reality. Our organisation has grown to become one of Australia’s leading aged care providers.

Our Heart Values

We're open and truthful in all situations – even when it's hard

We consider all points of view, and we listen to others carefully

We welcome and treat all people equally, without judgement

We highly value people's wishes, their dignity and their privacy

We don't go it alone – we talk to each other and we offer and accept help


Honesty

Empathy

Acceptance

Respect

Teamwork



Southern CrossCare 50 years caring about people

1972

Patrick Minahan Village

89A Livingstone Road, Marrickville NSW 2204

In 1972, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) offered a small 36-unit retirement village complex. Patrick Minahan Court provided units that were sponsored by The Knights of the Southern Cross. In 1972, a loaf of bread could cost you just 25 cents and donations were made for single residency at the village for just a few thousand dollars.

Located in one of the most popular residential districts in Western Sydney, Patrick Minahan Village still offers our residents independent living in a friendly and social community.

"All gave everything they could to keep this unique village an oasis in the midst of a busy suburb."

B (Anne) Lowe, Resident

"Peace and quiet linger in this shady corner of Marrickville."

Catholic Weekly, 27 July 1980



"I am very happy here – the security is wonderful and we have the guarantee of care if needed."

Janice Schubach, Resident



Milestones

- **1971:** Fr Linus O'Keefe is offered land, which is acquired in July.
- **1971–72:** Building stage 1 runs from August 1971 to January 1972. Building stage 2 runs from November 1971 to April 1972.
- **1972:** A 37-villa retirement complex officially opened in April. Knights from the regional Branch helped manage the village for over 10 years.
- **1984:** An adjacent property was bought to develop a function area for residents but was sold in early 1988.
- **2006:** One villa is converted into a Community Room.
- **2007:** Official Opening and Blessing of the Community Room in an ecumenical ceremony in December.
- **2020– :** Patrick Minahan Village provides comfortable retirement accommodation in an attractive garden setting.

1975

Cardinal Gilroy Village, John Woodward Residential Care and Western Sydney Home Care

45 Barcom Street, Merrylands NSW 2160

Generous, well-maintained grounds, trees and gardens rise to meet you as you enter our Cardinal Gilroy Village in Merrylands. The changes since the village's early days are startling. The gardens show their several decades of growth and development and the complex of buildings has been expanded and the facilities upgraded several times. That is all quite a change from the vacant land site of the early 1970s.

The Marist sisters approached Knights' member Paddy Devlin with a proposal to sell some of their land at Merrylands. Paddy took the enquiry to the Board and in December 1971, a deposit was paid for the land. A critical move had been made towards the creation of the first aged care village.

By February 1973, the first independent retirement living units had been built and residents moved in soon after. Building continued and, by August 1975, a 68-room aged care hostel – the John Woodward Hostel – was completed. Compared with today's standards, the hostel was basic but comfortable. Within a couple of years, a Community Centre with a hall and well-equipped kitchen had also been built.

The range of care options available at the Merrylands Village expanded even further in 1982 when the Kevin Ryan Nursing Home was opened. Then, ten years later,



an innovative Government-funded 'outreach' program made low-level hostel services available to approved residents. This turned out to be a great success. According to Margaret O'Sullivan, Assistant Nursing Director at St Vincent's Hospital who referred many clients to the program, "They have settled in so much better than I imagined, due to the wonderful spirit of friendliness and generosity that pervades the Village".

A strong sense of purpose is something else the community seems to share. A chapel fundraising appeal, launched in 1982, resulted in the completion of the Ecumenical Chapel in 1990.

"Now that I look back on moving to the Village, I realise that it was one of the best decisions I have ever made."

Joy Gleeson, Resident

In July 1996, our Home Care service expanded beyond the village to help twenty older people in the broader community. There are now more than three times that number receiving our Home Care services in this local area.

The original John Woodward Hostel was gradually rebuilt between 2001 and 2006 and the Kevin Ryan Nursing Home was closed as part of that project. The result was a new, modern 123-room service.

A number of the original retirement units have been completely refurbished and the redevelopment of more units and the Community Centre, the site of numerous lively group activities, is planned.

Milestones

- **1972:** Land acquired from the Marist Sisters. Construction of 100 retirement units begins.
- **1973:** Official Opening of Cardinal Gilroy Village by His Eminence Cardinal Sir James Freeman in June.
- **1975:** John Woodward Hostel opened. First residents admitted in September.
- **1978:** Village Centre opened by Bishop Clancy in July. Further land bought from the Marist Sisters.
- **1979–1980:** 90 retirement units built.
- **1982:** Kevin Ryan Nursing Home opened.
- **1985–86:** Final land and convent, acquired from the Marist Sisters. Construction of 30 retirement units.
- **1989–1990:** Final 46 units built. Village Centre opened in December.
- **1991–94:** First 8 of 14 hostel outreach places commissioned in 1991; final 6 established in 1994. Special care cottage (11 beds) for residents with dementia opened in November.
- **1996:** Introduction of Home Care in Western Sydney.
- **1998:** Silver Anniversary Celebrations. New Administration Centre built on the site of the Marist Sisters' former Convent.
- **2001–06:** John Woodward Hostel rebuilt, integrating Kevin Ryan Nursing Home.
- **2020– :** Plans to redevelop the Merrylands site are advancing.

1976

Orana Residential Care and Murray River Home Care

59 Napier Street and 98 End Street, Deniliquin NSW 2710

Situated just 300 m from the local shopping precinct, our Orana Residential Care home has a lovely garden setting, a range of onsite animals and is located adjacent to a park, church, library and lagoon. With buses close by, our residents keep in touch socially and enjoy the amenities that Deniliquin has to offer.

In the early 1970s, the closest aged care service to Deniliquin was a small hostel in Finley, a smaller town almost an hour's drive away. The Mayor of Deniliquin at the time, Kevin Renwick and two others began to investigate the possibility of delivering aged care locally.

The Bishop suggested that Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) step in, and the Board, aware of the level of need for aged care in the area agreed. A local committee was promptly formed, including two local Knight's members – John Leetham and Joe Phelan. The committee quickly decided on a site in the centre of town. Part of it was leased from the Lands Department and the rest was bought from the Catholic Church and a private owner. Regional Councils – well aware of the project's benefit to the community – later reimbursed the purchase costs.

A 30-room hostel named Orana, a local word meaning 'welcome', was completed and residents

"The help of Southern Cross has been invaluable: I've recommended them to a number of friends who have since become clients."

Paul Edwards, Home Care client

moved in from March 1976. A staff and storage room were also added, and then in September 1977, a 15-room extension was opened, built for \$1.1 million. This extension was the first phase in a major staged redevelopment, which cost well over \$4 million.

The community-led partnership was a great success, a credit especially to the local Management Committee and, in particular, John Leetham, one of the original Knights to join the committee. The residents' Activities Centre is named in his honour.

In 1998, the Government gave the Board approval to deliver care to older people in their own homes. This valuable program now flexibly caters for more than one hundred older people across the region.



Milestones

- **1971:** Committee formed to explore aged care options.
- **1974:** Partnership with the Orana Hostel project. Crown land leased.
- **1975:** Purchased rest of the site. Building commenced in March. Inaugural meeting of the Orana Management Committee held in August.
- **1976:** Opening of Orana Hostel by RJD Hunt MHR in May.
- **1991:** Building of new lounge and activity room.
- **1996:** Further land leased. Building commenced on 15-room extension in June.
- **1997:** Residents moved into new accommodation in April. Official Opening by Hon. Tim Fischer MHR in September.
- **1998:** Home Care launched in the region.
- **2001–07:** Staged redevelopment of Orana. Official opening in June 2004. Three extra places allocated April 2005 to total 50 rooms. Further Home Care allocations.
- **2008:** Additional land bought in Deniliquin and held for future development.
- **2014–17:** Continuing expansion of Home Care in the region.
- **2020– :** Flexible care and support options continue to be provided to older residents in the region.



care =
companionship

A time of testing

During a time of major reform across the entire aged care sector, we continue to expand our range of services. Highlights include the purchase of a retirement village and residential care home in Bateau Bay in 1981 and the building of our Kirrawee and Caringbah residential villages in 1981 and 1984 respectively.



1980s

1981

Reynolds Court Residential Care

7 Bias Avenue, Bateau Bay NSW 2261

Set on a beautifully designed property of green lawns, palm trees and lush shrubs, with views towards the town and valley below, Reynolds Court is a mere 10-minute walk away from Bateau Bay beach and local shops.

Today, Reynolds Court comprises a bustling 122-unit retirement village and 80 suite residential care home, making the site amongst the largest in the portfolio.

The origins of this popular site were far more humble – a modest 18 retirement units and 30-bed hostel developed by the Church in the late seventies. Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) took over the site in the early nineties and continued to develop and improve the site, first with the construction of 24 retirement units in 1982, a community centre in 1990, 80 more units in 1991 and a significant upgrade of the hostel in 1993.

The 90s and 2000s saw the acquisition of additional land and in 2003 the old hostel was replaced with a residential care home featuring all private single suites with private ensuite bathrooms and modern amenities.

In 2012, the establishment of a home care service with the purchase of Central Coast EasyCare Home



Care, completed the trifecta of care services in the Central Coast.

Resident Delores Kennedy said, “I have been living in my lovely unit – with a beautiful sunset view – for several years now and life is good. There are so many opportunities here to live a very full life. I love my book club, where I meet like-minded people ... then there are all the activities available – movies, cards, bus trips, luncheons etc., plus also the presence of our non-denominational Chapel – one can be as private or involved as desired. I have made some treasured friends here and the staff are available to help at all times. I now have assisted care for my shopping and



“Reynolds Court ticked all the boxes – excellent location, handy to shops and medical services, ongoing care plus comfortable units. Reynolds Court is my home ‘among the gum trees’.”

Eden Stapleton, Resident



house help – and of course, where would I (or the Village) be without the help of ‘Our Boys’ who maintain our Village so willingly and well. The best decision Johnny (my husband) and I ever made all those years ago was to come and live at Reynolds Court.”

Southern Cross Care continues to invest in the site and use it as a base for delivering services to the broader community.

Milestones

- **1969–70s:** Sydney Archdiocese bought land in Bias Ave. Two further parcels of Crown land secured by the Church.
- **1977–78:** Reynolds Court developed by the Catholic Church, comprising a 30-bed hostel and 18 retirement units.
- **1981:** Crown land leased in June and took over responsibility for Reynolds Court in November.
- **1982–83:** Land leased from Sydney Archdiocese in January. Building of first 24 retirement living units commenced, completed in December 1983.
- **1990–91:** Community Centre and 80 more units built.
- **1992:** Purchase of Crown lands finalised.
- **1993–97:** Upgraded hostel opened December 1993. Renovations to the Community Centre took place.
- **2000:** Further land purchased from Diocese of Broken Bay.
- **2001–02:** 10 residential places allocated in January. Opening and Blessing of Ecumenical Chapel in September. 40 more residential places in January 2002.
- **2003–05:** Reynolds Court Residential Care redeveloped..
- **2012:** Acquisition of Central Coast EasyCare Home Care program.
- **2020– :** Expansion of home-based support, with a range of aged services offered across the Central Coast region.

1981

Thomas Dunlea Court

88-90 Flora Street, Kirrawee NSW 2232



In June 1981, Thomas Dunlea Court in Kirrawee was officially opened, offering 10 retirement units. In May 1984, Fatima Court in the nearby southern Sydney suburb of Caringbah, was constructed, modelled on Thomas Dunlea Court.

Both Fatima Court and Thomas Dunlea Court are intimate retirement villages, offering 12 and 10 spacious, modern, self-contained units respectively. Their grounds are immaculate, offering residents access to beautiful green lawns and blooming flower beds.

"We have never regretted our decision to move here. The garden setting is appreciated and the location is excellent."

Derek and Barbara Thomas, Residents

Milestones

- **1971:** A Council-owned site identified by the local Knights of the Southern Cross Branch in May.
- **1973:** Land bought in July. Board faced rezoning challenges and funding changes.
- **1980:** Building contracts finalised and building commenced.
- **1981:** 10 retirement units completed by April; opened by Bishop Cremin in June. Regional Knights of the Southern Cross Branch pivotal in village management.
- **1989:** Carports built.
- **2020 – :** Thomas Dunlea Court continues to offer residents privacy and convenience.

1984

Fatima Court

127 Caringbah Road, Caringbah NSW 2229



"We are grateful for our good life here at Fatima Court."

Michelle Ruffels, Resident



Milestones

- **1982:** Development site bought from Catholic Church in May.
- **1983:** Building commenced on a 12-unit retirement complex in September.
- **1984:** First residents took up occupancy in May. Opening of Fatima Court in a Blessing Ceremony by Bishop Cremin in September.
- **2020 – :** Fatima Court continues to provide an affordable, quality-housing option for older people in the Sutherland Shire.



care =
respect

A time of renewal

A new strategic model is embraced, designed to empower each person in the context of their situation and preference. Highlights include the opening of our Parkes retirement village and residential care home opened in 1992, launch of our Home Care service in 1996 and roll-out of Australia's first formal aged care pastoral and spiritual care program in 1999.



1990s

1992

Southern Cross Village, Parkes

2-10 Middleton, Parkes NSW 2870

Parkes’ residents enjoy the vast open beauty of one of Australia’s favourite districts while reaping the benefits of a modern residential estate in a historical country town.

Today the village’s neat, modern buildings, lawns and gardens surround a sweeping driveway that creates an attractive welcome mat for everyone. The opening of the village in the early 1990s was a great achievement in itself and there has been impressive progress ever since.

The story of this village began in 1982, when the Parkes Branch of the Knights of the Southern Cross, led by local businessman Bernie Crowe, with Frank Baker and Bede Littles, approached the Board to buy land near the centre of town for development as an aged care village.

The Parkes community was enthusiastic and quickly got behind the proposal. On one day alone, volunteers raised over \$5,000. A Steering Committee that was formed in July 1990 drew members from across the community.

“Southern Cross Village is a success story in Parkes. The buildings are a feature of the Parkes landscape and the community is truly appreciative of the services offered. I commend the continuing building program and congratulate those people who work so diligently to provide facilities for our older folk.”

Robert Wilson, Former Mayor

“The Village has grown beyond all expectations and has become a landmark in Parkes: it is rightly regarded as the leading aged care facility in town.”

Peter Buckley, Village Management Board Chair



The Sisters of Mercy have worked in the Central West Region of NSW for more than a century and a chance conversation with Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the time, John Ireland, saw the beginning of a lasting relationship. This evolved into a formal partnership when the Sisters decided to sell their convent in Parkes. Soon after, Southern Cross Village became a reality.

The people of Parkes had a dream to deliver aged care, comparable with the best city services and can take pride in what the late Bernie Crowe once described as “a magnificent success, which emerged from such small beginnings”.



Milestones

- **1987–90:** Land was purchased.
- **1990:** A Steering Committee was formed, with the official project launched in October 1990.
- **1991:** 'Turning of the sod' in June. Work commenced in July.
- **1992:** Opening of a 30-bed hostel by His Excellency Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair AC.
- **1993–1997:** Construction of 19 retirement villas (further villas added over the following 10 years).
- **1999:** Parkes Home Care commenced with 16 packages.
- **2000:** Sisters of Mercy moved into their new accommodation.
- **2001:** Opening of the function and worship centre, Federation House.
- **2002:** 10th Anniversary celebrations in November.
- **2004:** Official opening of additional units by state Member for Dubbo, Tony McGrane OAM MLA.
- **2007:** Allocation of 10 of the 11 residential care places allocated by the Government in late 2004 (final place was allocated in 2011, with funding for a further 20 places in 2013).
- **2017– :** Completion of new residential aged service (62 suites) and 29 retirement villas.

1996

Home Care service

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) is known and trusted throughout NSW and the ACT, where we've been a part of the community for nearly 50 years.

As a leading provider of Home Care, our client base grew nearly 500 per cent between 2011 and 2019. Our service reaches across metropolitan Sydney and into regional locations – from Tweed Heads in the north to Albury on the NSW–Victorian border.

Immeasurable benefits for our clients and their families
Around 90 per cent of older people want to remain living in their own home and our Home Care services help to make that a reality. Paul Edwards (nicknamed 'Frog') is aged 74 and lives in Hay NSW with his wife. He has been a very valuable member of his community and a previous Hay Citizen of the Year recipient. He spent time in the Army Reserves during

Cyclone Tracy, was a regular plant operator and truck driver and even a gateman at the local rodeo.

"I love the personal caring service that Southern Cross Care provides me. I am not as mobile as I used to be, so they help me with my day to day needs including home maintenance. I was thankful for the service and it's great to get regular wellbeing visits from the team. I wanted my friends to find out about home care and all the benefits because many did not know it was available in regional areas, or about the types of services available. More importantly for them, in-home care can mean a better life at home and can keep them out of hospital," said Frog.

Our Home Care service also benefits clients' families. "The team at Southern Cross Care have been a godsend. They are patient, kind and understanding – each one of them." – Andrea, Family Member



"I love the personal caring service that Southern Cross Care provides me."

Paul 'Frog' Edwards
Home Care client

Home Care services

There are many ways in which our Home Care service helps to keep older people supported and living comfortably at home.

Help at home: For all the chores needed to keep your home clean, neat and tidy.

Allied health support: Access to specialised allied health and therapy services such as physiotherapy, podiatry, speech therapy and dietician.

Meal assistance: Shopping for ingredients, preparing and cooking delicious, nutritious meals and help with eating.

Social support & activities: We can provide company and emotional support, as well as drive you to outings.

Transport: Easily and safely get out and about with your helper driving and accompanying you.

Assistive technology: Do things on your own more easily, communicate better and stay safe.

Nursing care: Support while you recover from surgery or an injury.

Breaks for carers: If a family member is caring for you, respite care allows them to take a break and recharge.

Home maintenance and modifications: We can arrange for your home to be modified and maintained in good order.

Personal care: Help with routine and personal tasks.

Aids & equipment: Get equipment designed to keep you mobile and safe.

Wellbeing: A range of programs, therapies and services enable you to remain active and healthy.

Milestones

- **1996:** Home Care offered in the Merrylands and Plumpton areas.
- **1998:** Home Care was delivered in Sydney's south-east from June.
- **2012:** Acquisition of Central Coast EasyCare Home Care program.
- **2014:** Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) launched and Home Care introduced across Northern Sydney.
- **2014–15:** Home Care increased in scope, as Kildare was extensively renovated. Home Care service launched in Lake Macquarie.
- **2014–16:** Expansion of Home Care across Western Sydney.
- **2020– :** Nearly 400 clients supported across NSW.

1999

Pastoral and spiritual care

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) has a proud history of considering the whole person when engaging with those in our care.

Over the years, the hard work and dedication of our Pastoral and Spiritual Care staff, Leisure & Lifestyle teams and volunteers have ensured a coordinated, consistent and effective approach to supporting the wellbeing of our residents by offering quality programs and activities. We're committed to meeting the spiritual, emotional, cultural and social needs of our residents based on who they are and what's meaningful to them. We use the Aged Care Quality Standards to ensure our care is holistic and person-centred.

Making wishes come true

Beate Steller – our Spiritual Wellbeing Coordinator at the Nagle Southern Cross Care home in Sutherland – has always had a special connection with people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures. She is a Registered Nurse and Social Worker but, after caring for her own mother in ill health, wanted something more meaningful and to give back to our ageing community.

Edna is 97 and always loved to swim in the ocean. However, her mobility issues and COVID-19 meant she had not been swimming for over three years and

yearned to make a splash once again. Spirituality is essential for residents like Edna. It's about what makes life worth living for her and what she is most passionate about. We made Edna's wish come true with the help of a local beach wheelchair program.

Beate was right beside Edna as she made her way to Cronulla Beach. "To be with Edna as she took the plunge and be in her happy place again was something special. These moments in life are precious. Her smiling face fills me with joy because I know we have just made a difference in her life," said Beate.

Food for Thought

Donna, a Pastoral Carer at our Corowa home, is involved with many activities in the Special Memories Unit. One of her favourite activities is the lengthy process of making tomato relish with the residents. Many people have spent a lot of time in their lives cooking, so being involved in preparing food can be a link to fond memories of creating their favourite dishes or mealtimes with family.

"You could see the satisfaction on their faces when all the cutting up of the onions and tomatoes or writing the labels or sealing the jars with the rubber band. It was priceless to see the joy that they all had at the end when they saw their accomplishment," said Donna. Donna said her motto in life is 'I choose joy', a motto that guides her in her work to create moments that will bring a bit more joy into the lives of her residents.



"To be with Edna as she took the plunge and be in her happy place again was something special."

Beate Steller, Pastoral Carer



care =
choice

A time of expansion

By the end of this decade, the organisation had more than doubled in size, delivering quality services across urban and regional and remote communities. Highlights include the merger with Southern Cross Homes (ACT) Inc and the opening of retirement villages and residential care homes in Banora Point and Tweed Heads (2000), Casino and Grafton (2003), Corowa (2005), and Bombala, Cootamundra and Young (2006).



2000s

2000

St Joseph's and St Martha's Residential Care

1–9 Blundell Boulevard, Tweed Heads South NSW 2486 and 3–7 Leisure Drive, Banora Point, NSW 2486

The spectacular conclusion to one of the most successful Olympics Games in modern history, on 1 October 2000, was also a landmark day in the stunning Tweed River region of Northern NSW. It was a day that marked ‘a change for the better’ for the local Catholic Parish as its beloved aged services embraced a new future.

When Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) acquired the Parish-run aged care program, it built on a record of high-standard service. St Joseph's Hostel had been established 20 years earlier as the brainchild of Father Tony Hoade, priest of the local St Joseph's Parish. The 35-room aged care hostel was formally opened in November 1980.

In the neighbouring suburb, Banora Point, St Martha's Hostel had originally been a motel, designed as accommodation for the Club opposite (it even included a swimming pool). In the late 1980s, Parish Priest Fr Jim Griffin arranged for the Catholic Church to purchase the site and develop the motel units into a 23-bed hostel. The service was named St Martha's, after Sister Martha Casserley PBVM, who was Supervisor at St Joseph's Hostel for many years.

St Martha's Hostel was extended in 1994 and nine retirement villas were built down the road. Federal

Member of Parliament, Larry Anthony, opened the new 40-bed hostel on 8 December 1996.

In late December 1999, Parish Priest Father Michael Nilon approached the Southern Cross Board. St Joseph's and St Martha's Hostels and Villas were well run and maintained but the Parish Council members felt they did not have the skills needed to meet the changing demands of aged care, nor the capital to rebuild St Joseph's Hostel.

Southern Cross Care had been suggested as a possible new owner by Parish Aged Care Committee member and local Knights' Branch Chair, William Pinkstone. The Board agreed to buy the complete aged services program and Bill Pinkstone has recalled the ‘grace and responsiveness’ with which the Board worked with the Parish Council.

St Joseph's Residential Care is now a 101-suite residential care home, redeveloped by local Ballina builder Woollam Constructions, at a cost of more than \$21 million. It sits alongside 13 retirement villas, which have also been completely refurbished. Additional land has been bought, offering scope for further development. St Martha's has also been renovated and home care delivered in the area.



“It feels just like home.”

Elwyn Foster, St Joseph's resident

“I am happy here – the staff are good and the food is exceptional. The rooms are all on one level and open onto a beautiful garden.”

Pat Kerr, St Martha's resident

Milestones

- **1980:** Opening of St Joseph's Hostel in November in a Blessing Ceremony led by Bishop Satterthwaite of Lismore.
- **1980s:** Six retirement villas built adjacent to the hostel.
- **1987:** St Joseph's Hostel extended (10 rooms added). The hostel accommodated a total of 44 residents and office space.
- **1988–89:** St Martha's Hostel established (23 rooms).
- **1993:** Seven more villas built on the St Joseph's site.
- **1994–96:** Nine villas built at Banora Point. Renovation and extension of St Martha's Hostel.
- **2000:** St Joseph's and St Martha's purchased from the Diocese of Lismore.
- **2007–09:** St Joseph's Hostel redeveloped (additional 26 places).
- **2011–13:** 30 more places allocated to St Joseph's. Building commenced in March 2013.
- **2014:** St Joseph's became operational as a 100-place service.
- **2015:** Refurbishment of St Joseph's Villas. Purchase of land near St Joseph's.
- **2020– :** Older residents of the region benefit from flexible aged care services.

2003

St Michael's Residential Care

62 Centre Street, Casino, NSW 2470

St Michael's is a personalised residential care home with premium services and a friendly country atmosphere, centrally located in the town with its own peaceful inner courtyard. It's also home to some friendly pets, including chickens and rabbits and pets are welcome to come and visit.

Today's three-level building with more than 70 suites, well-tended gardens and generous common spaces is in dramatic contrast to the simple but valued hostel of the early days. However, there is a consistent thread running through those years – the warm country heart of the Casino community.

St Michael's has been an integral part of life in the Northern NSW town of Casino for more than six decades. The Catholic Church established an aged care service on the earlier Friendly Society Hospital site as long ago as 1957.

In 1971 the Church transferred title and responsibility for the aged service to the Grafton Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. By this stage, St Michael's had almost doubled in size.

The Sisters of Mercy built on both the pioneering spirit of the Daughters of Charity and their heart for the vulnerable by embarking on an ambitious development program. Under the charge of Sister Angela Buckley

"I worked at St Michael's for over 20 years and loved every day. Our residents give back so much to us as staff. I always felt blessed to work in such a great environment."

Ann Mortimer, former staff member

RSM, a new 30-bed hostel was opened in 1976, the former hospital building was converted into a 38-bed nursing home and a small number of retirement villas were built on the site in 1975.

In addition, two adjacent free-standing houses were bought in the mid-1980s and early 1990s: the former accommodated staff Sisters and the latter long-term respite residents. Later, these properties became an administrations precinct and the base for a home care service.

Home care services and a National Respite for Carers program were rolled out in 1999 and 2000. The Sisters of Mercy, and particularly Director Sister Fran Kuhn RSM, are to be commended for the skill with which they operated a respected, financially sound aged service program across Casino and Grafton.

However, by 2002 St Michael's was ageing and the Sisters felt that the time had come to channel their talents into other ministries. Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) was well respected and John Ireland, the CEO at the time, had visited St Michael's many years earlier to contribute advice on aged care reforms. Negotiations soon got underway, and in April 2003, Southern Cross Care acquired the Mercy Sisters' aged service program.

Between 2010 and 2012, Southern Cross Care redeveloped St Michael's, building a three-level, 73-suite residential care service at a cost of more than \$15 million. Home-based support, such a central part of the Mercy care program, has since been expanded and now offers choice and quality care to more than one hundred clients across the region. Adjacent land has also been acquired, providing scope for further development.



Milestones

- **1957:** Opening of St Michael's.
- **1971:** The Sisters of Mercy acquire responsibility for St Michael's.
- **1975:** Retirement villas completed.
- **1976:** Opening of the new hostel.
- **1978:** St Michael's nursing home completed.
- **2002:** The Sisters of Mercy, Grafton, look to transfer their aged care services to Southern Cross Care.
- **2003:** Assumed responsibility for the Mercy Aged Care program.
- **2010:** Redevelopment of St Michael's commenced.
- **2011:** Retirement villas demolished; Stage 1 completed in August.
- **2012:** Stage 2 completed in August; 5 extra suites (October).
- **2013:** Opening of St Michael's by Sister Juliana Dwyer RSM on behalf of the Sisters of Mercy. Purchased adjacent land.
- **2020– :** St Michael's celebrates each older person and their place in our community.

2003

St Catherine's Residential Care

126 North Street, Grafton NSW 2460

St Catherine's Villa, in the Northern NSW town of Grafton, was opened on 11 June 1978 by Most Reverend JS Satterthwaite, the Bishop of Lismore with the words: "Retirement need not be a 'no man's land'; life doesn't just have to stop. It can be a most challenging and enriching period in one's life. I hope St Catherine's will be marked by an atmosphere of generosity, tranquillity and happiness".

St Catherine's Villa began life as a 20-room hostel for older Sisters of Mercy who required care. Previously these Sisters had lived in the Congregation's Convent but over time it became clear that purpose-built accommodation was needed. Bob Mitchell and Jim Dunworth, founding members of the Southern Cross (NSW) Board and Building Committee, managed the building process and St Catherine's Villa was ready to accept its first residents in August 1977. The staff Sisters lived onsite and formed a community with those in care.

Eventually St Catherine's services were extended to the wider community, with the first female non-religious residents accepted at the end of 1985 (male residents were accepted a few years later).

"Working at St Catherine's been a really rewarding experience. St Catherine's has seen a lot of changes – all progressive and positive for the lifestyles of our residents and their families."

Vicki Bowling, Deputy Manager

In the early 1990s, a new rear wing was built and several years after that staff quarters were converted into resident rooms. Under the able leadership of Sister Fran Kuhn RSM, this renovation program culminated in 2001 with the addition of McAuley Cottage: a 10-suite wing for residents with dementia. When St Catherine's Villa was transferred to Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) in April 2003, it was an accredited 46-room residential care service in a strong financial position. A series of upgrades took place in 2005 and 2006, with 17 more suites built in 2011. 2021 saw the first stage of a further 20-suite extension.



Milestones

- **1977:** First residents moved into St Catherine's Villa in August.
- **1978:** Official Opening and Blessing of St Catherine's by The Most Reverend JS Satterthwaite, Bishop of Lismore in June.
- **2002:** Board approves 'merger' with Mercy Aged Care Services Inc.
- **2003:** Sisters of Mercy transfer St Catherine's to Southern Cross in April.
- **2005–2006:** Southern Cross undertakes upgrades between September 2005 and February 2006.
- **2009–2011:** Allocation of additional 2017 Government funded places; July 2009 and February 2011. Building commenced in January 2011 at a cost of more than \$4.5m and the extension became operational in October 2011.
- **2020– :** A planned 20-suite extension will help to meet regional demand for aged care.

2003

The merger with Southern Cross Homes (ACT)

In 2003 Southern Cross Homes (ACT) and Southern Cross Homes (NSW) merged to form Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT).

Southern Cross Homes (ACT) had built 44 retirement villas in prime Canberra locations and had long hoped to develop a residential care service. Planning had begun in 1994 but proposals were abandoned within a matter of years when the Federal Government withdrew routine capital funding for residential care services. Without a Government grant, the ACT Board could not hope to proceed as planned. Instead, they drafted a scheme comprising retirement living and a small 10-bed assisted living service.

Nevertheless, several Board members never lost sight of their dream of developing a residential care service. In pursuit of this Chair John Pola had a meeting with the CEO of Southern Cross Homes (NSW) at the time, John Ireland, to discuss the merits of various proposals. In September 2001 the ACT Board voted to merge with Southern Cross (NSW).

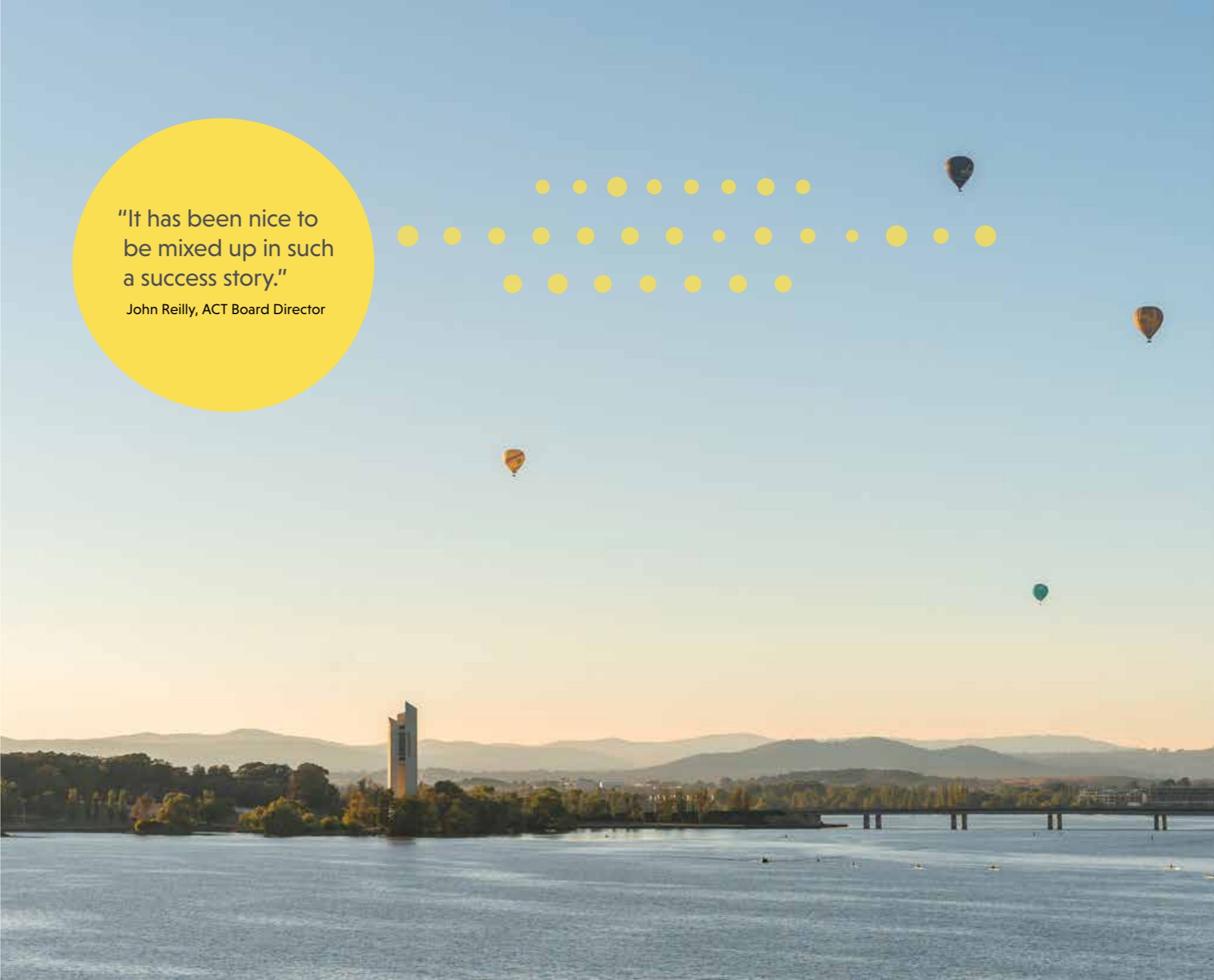
Negotiations continued over the following 18 months, led by a sub-committee of Southern Cross (ACT) Directors (John Pola, John Skene, Kevin Conlan and Peter Birtles). Finally, on 1 March 2003, the two organisations combined, with the imprimatur of the Catholic Church. In November 2003, Southern Cross Homes (NSW) was renamed Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)

John Skene reflected on the merger: “It was not an easy time for the Board but I can only say that I am proud to have been associated with such an effective organisation.” The completion of residential care services in Garran and Campbell celebrated the commitment of the Southern Cross (ACT) Board. Long-time ACT Board Director John Reilly remarked, ‘It has been nice to be mixed up in such a success story.’

By June 2008 Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) became the 13th largest charitable provider of Government-funded aged care in Australia, with a net surplus of \$13.7 million. On 27 June 2008, Southern Cross Care was registered as a company under the *Corporations Act 2001*: a symbolic moment that recognised both the Knights’ original vision and a readiness to embrace the future.

“It has been nice to be mixed up in such a success story.”

John Reilly, ACT Board Director



2005

Karinya Retirement Village and Karinya Residential Care

125 Guy Street, Corowa NSW 2646

Located in a beautiful parkland setting and perfectly positioned for local shops and services, our Karinya Retirement Village and Karinya Residential Care Home offer residents a relaxed and tranquil lifestyle, with a range of comprehensive services and the reassurance of round-the-clock care.

Opened in 1965, the original Karinya House was built on the grounds of Corowa District Hospital on land once used as an orchard but now leased from the Greater Murray Area Health Service.

Nearly forty years later, the local Board of Karinya House recognised the limitations of the building and care service. The future of Karinya House lay in a new service on a different site, the current 4.5-hectare site bounded by a public reserve. However, to take on such a project, the Board needed an experienced development partner with the capacity to contribute more than \$4 million.

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) proved to be the best choice as a partner. It had financial credentials, an open governance style and a commitment to local involvement. Karinya Board Chair Geoff Lewis acknowledged that the organisation “... has

an excellent philosophy of care, using a business strategy that is outstanding in its philanthropy ... Its mission is based on Christian principles but it is independent of the Catholic Church: it has the management systems we need and the finance to make it all possible”.

In late 2002 the Karinya Board agreed to transfer the business to Southern Cross Care, and since 2003, we have invested more than \$14 million in the community. Members of the Karinya House Board were invited to form a Management Committee and their hard work has been a crucial contribution.

The first residents moved into Karinya Residential Care in December 2004 and, on 14 May 2005, what the local paper described as a ‘first class construction’ was officially opened.



“I feel very safe and happy in the friendly and relaxed Village environment.”

Janet Parkinson, resident

Between 2005 and 2008, 28 retirement villas were built and later a multipurpose Function Centre and Workshop. The latter was funded in part by a generous local bequest from the Estate of Mary Ann Cofield. The Community Centre was opened on 19 October 2008 and has become a focal point of life in Karinya Village.

The next major milestone was the acquisition of Easdown Village, a small retirement complex opposite Karinya Village and owned by the Royal Freemasons. Karinya Residential Care was extended in 2013, with a new 24-suite wing opened in October that year.

Milestones

- **1960:** Corowa Home Investigations Committee established.
- **1964:** Building commenced.
- **1965:** Karinya House was opened by local MP, David Fairbairn MHR.
- **2002:** Karinya House Board ratifies transfer of the business.
- **2003:** Management agreement with Karinya House took effect. Building commenced in July.
- **2004:** New Karinya Residential Care building finished. Residents relocated from old building in December.
- **2005:** Transfer of licences to Southern Cross Care in March. Official opening of Karinya Apartments in May.
- **2005–08:** 28 retirement living units built between February 2005 and November 2008. Easdown Village (12 villas) was bought from Royal Freemasons in May 2008. Village Centre built. Officially opened in October 2008.
- **2012–13:** Karinya Residential Care extended by 24 suites. Officially opened in October 2013.
- **2020– :** Southern Cross Care preserves a legacy of quality local aged care.

2006

Currawarna Residential Care

1 Joseph Street, Bombala NSW 2632

Currawarna was founded in response to a need for aged care in Bombala and the surrounding community, approximately two hours south of Canberra. Since it first opened, it has continued to meet that need.

The history of Currawarna Residential Care goes back to 1975 when community members met to discuss plans to build an aged care hostel. Two Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) Board members were present at that meeting. Enthusiasm for an aged care project was high, and several years later, the Board of Currawarna Hostel held its first meeting in May 1979.

The local word Currawarna means ‘place of pines’ – a name proposed at one of the earliest meetings of the Board in 1979. Community members had donated 175 trees to ‘beautify the area around the home’. McNally & Hickey Architects had been involved in the building of the Southern Cross Care retirement village at Albury and they became project architects for the construction of Currawarna. The 30-bed Currawarna Hostel was completed and ready to accept residents from August 1979 and was formally opened in October that year to the delight of the Bombala community.



A 10-bed extension was completed in the late 1990s but it was 2005 before the Government approved construction of the final stage of the Currawarna Board’s plan to expand, allocating capital funding of \$1 million. It was a major achievement for Currawarna to secure this Government grant but the \$1million only went partway to financing a project forecast to cost more than \$3.2 million.

John Ireland, CEO of Southern Cross Care at the time, had a meeting in 2005 with representatives from various Catholic aged care services across NSW’s South-West. These Catholic Church-owned, community-run services were highly regarded but their Boards were finding it challenging to keep pace with industry change in each case. All four aged care homes also needed rebuilding in the short term.



“Support, far exceeding the Committee’s expectations, has come from the Bombala District community ... the result must surely be Bombala’s finest effort yet.”

Bombala Times



For the Board of Currawarna Hostel, the meeting was decisive, and soon after, the Currawarna Board told the Archbishop that it wished to join Southern Cross Care.

Funds were provided for redevelopment and construcion commenced in 2008. The first stage of construction was completed with 20 new resident suites built, and 10 redeveloped, at a cost of more than \$4.1 million. Currawarna Residential Care, as it is now known, was completed in August 2012.

Milestones

- **1979:** Currawarna Hostel accepted its first residents in August. Official Opening by Federal Member for Eden-Monaro, Murray Sainsbury, in October.
- **1997–2000:** Additional 10 places built.
- **2005:** Currawarna Board obtained Government funding approval for a further 10 places in February and a capital grant in August. Church approved transfer to Southern Cross Care, on recommendation of the Currawarna Board, in July.
- **2006:** Assumed management of Currawarna from March.
- **2007:** Start of building on Stage 1 in June.
- **2008:** Handover of Stage 1 in July – 10 new places operational. Transfer of licences and business in September.
- **2012:** Start of Stage 2 in January. Completion of Stage 2 in August.
- **2020– :** Currawarna continues to provide residents with choice and quality care.

2006

Cootamundra Residential Care and Village

14 Scott Street, Cootamundra NSW 2590

Our Cootamundra Retirement Village, located in the NSW Riverina, has been a vital community asset for more than four decades.

Parish Priest, Father Dominic Egan, was responsible for mobilising the community to develop an aged care hostel and the Catholic Church gifted land. The hostel – opened in 1976 – was designed to support independence in an ideal location considered “... handy to health facilities and town, yet in an almost rural environment”.

The hostel grew from a 38-room hostel to a 55-room residential care service. In addition, a free-standing 8-suite wing for residents with dementia was formally opened in April 1993, financed in part by the estate of local resident Bill McGree and named McGree House in his honour.

Just over a decade later came another bequest and the new 14-suite McClintock Wing was completed in 2005. This project was the first stage of a long-term redevelopment program; however, a partnership with Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) enabled Cootamundra Retirement Village to be entirely rebuilt by 2010.

Regional firm NW Bland & Sons, which had constructed the McClintock wing, was contracted to redevelop the village, including the conversion of McGree House into a workshop and function space.

Our Cootamundra Residential Care home was opened in 2010 by former Village Board Director Edward (Ted) O'Connor – a founding Board Member and Acting Chair for 15 years. The invitation to open the aged care service is one of his most precious memories; he has always been proud of this ‘true community project’. By July 2014, nine retirement villas had also been built, at a total cost of nearly \$2 million.

Building on a 30-year record of quality care, we share the vision of the Cootamundra community as we continue to strive to improve the lives of older people.



“The Village is not an old people's home in the accepted sense of the word ... many residents assist with activities around the building including meal preparation, maintenance and gardening. Everyone is on first name terms and the village is an amazingly happy place.”

Cootamundra local news article

Milestones

- **1975:** Cootamundra Retirement Village Board established in March.
- **1976:** Village officially opened in May. The building had cost more than \$620,000.
- **1984:** Commencement of respite care.
- **1993:** Opening of McGree House by Jim Snow, MHR for Eden–Monaro, in April.
- **2005:** Opening of McClintock Wing in May.
- **2006:** Village transferred from the Archdiocese of Canberra–Goulburn to Southern Cross Care in February.
- **2008:** Building commenced in September.
- **2010:** Building completed in September. Opening by E O'Connor in November in an Ecumenical Blessing Ceremony.
- **2012:** Four retirement villas completed. Opening by Phil Davies and then CEO, Paul McMahon in November.
- **2014:** Next five villas completed in July with upgrade of dementia care wing.
- **2020– :** Cootamundra Residential Care and Village continue to offer quality accommodation and care.

2006

Young Village and Young Residential Care

Demondrille Street, Young NSW 2594

The first Catholic aged care service in regional Australia was opened in Young in 1921. The Church owned Mount St Joseph’s and it was run by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart and later by the Sisters of Mercy. By the mid-1960s, this 117-room home could not meet demand for aged care and its facilities desperately needed refurbishment.

Mother Superior, Sister Dorothy Hamilton RSM, called together interested locals to investigate the prospect of making more beds available in the form of a new hostel.

Minister for Social Services, Bill Wentworth MHR, visited Mount St Joseph’s in 1968 and what he saw led him to champion the drafting of the Aged Persons Hostels Act 1972. This new law provided non-profit organisations operating aged care homes built before 1954 (when Federal Government funding commenced) with a grant to develop an additional two for every one existing room. Government funds could be channelled into building on an alternative site and so the Catholic Church could spread the funding to which Mount St Joseph was entitled (for 234 rooms) across the Canberra/Goulburn Archdiocese. This led to the construction of an aged

care hostel in Young and other locations including Cootamundra, Galong and Canberra. In time, Government grants under the Aged Persons Hostels Act could also be reassigned to other providers. The Catholic Committee for the Aged oversaw the distribution of the 1700 beds allocated to the Catholic Church in NSW.

Research suggested that Young needed 100 of the 234 new beds the funding provided. In August 1973 a Young Retirement Village Board was established to see through the plans of Sister Dorothy Hamilton RSM, and others, to build an aged care hostel. John Hamblin was appointed Chair: a position he ably held until 2006. Work commenced on Young Retirement Village in August 1974 and the hostel was completed within two years.

The Village Board never wavered in its commitment to quality and it managed a program of upgrades, which maintained a high standard of living. A community space, the Catherine McAuley Centre, was opened in July 1993. Investigations began into the prospect of developing retirement housing and Catherine View Gardens, a complex of 28 self-care villas, was built.



“Southern Cross has added significant expertise, experience and resources, which have enhanced the care outcomes and lifestyles for residents.”

John Crawford, July 2006



In 2004, the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra–Goulburn decided to withdraw from aged care.

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) assumed responsibility for Young Retirement Village in February 2006 and Young Residential Care was built between 2008 and 2010 at a cost of more than \$15 million.

The subsequent years have seen the completion of seven new spacious retirement villas.

Milestones

- **1973:** Young Retirement Village Advisory Board formed.
- **1974:** Construction commenced.
- **1976–77:** First residents in June 1976. Official opening of Young Retirement Village in April 1977.
- **1992–93:** Catherine McAuley Centre built and opened by the NSW Governor.
- **1995–96:** Additional construction, with the first four villas opened in April 1996.
- **2006:** Southern Cross Care takes over Young Retirement Village.
- **2008:** Redevelopment commenced in June.
- **2009–10:** Stage 1 completed in August 2009. Stage 2 completed in May 2010, with the opening in July by Lyn Thorpe, NSW Senior Citizen of the Year.
- **2011–13:** Construction of three self-care villas completed in 2011, with four more in 2013.
- **2020– :** Continued support for older people in the community.



care =
listening

A time of revitalisation

Home care is expanded and numerous redevelopment projects are undertaken, resulting in industry recognition. In 2012, we are a founding sponsor of Meaningful Ageing Australia Ltd and in 2016, are recognised for excellence in sustainability. Our retirement village and residential care home in Parkes is redeveloped in 2017 and, a year later, we open Thornton Park, with all three services provided: residential care, retirement village and home care.



2010s

2012

Founding sponsor of Meaningful Ageing Australia Ltd



Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) is a founding sponsor and member of Meaningful Ageing Australia Ltd.

Meaningful Ageing Australia Ltd is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee supporting organisations and groups from all backgrounds to respond to the emotional and spiritual needs of older people, their significant others and their carers.

As a leader in the aged care sector, we are one of twenty-two organisations that provided support and seed funding in 2012 to establish Pastoral and Spiritual Care of Older People (PASCOP). In 2016, the name was changed to Meaningful Ageing Australia.

As a member organisation, we regularly use the various resources available and have recently used their orientation to spiritual care as an educational tool for our staff.

A perfect example of this in action can be seen when Pat, an 87-year-old resident realised that she was too frail to attend her grandson's wedding. Pat was understandably devastated.

Seeing how upset she was, Beate Steller, a spiritual care practitioner at Southern Cross Care, decided to bring the wedding to Pat. Through compassionate conversations with Pat and her family, and the support of appropriate technology, Beate was able to create an event that enabled Pat to 'virtually' attend her grandson's wedding.



2016

Excellence in Sustainability



Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) is committed to being a well-managed and sustainable organisation.

Caring for and about people – our residents, our clients and our staff – is integral to what we do. We also care about the environment, which is why we are always looking for ways to minimise our impact on it.

Wherever possible we make sure our activities promote environmentally responsible and sustainable practices to build a better future for our community and the environment. Examples of this include the installation of Solar Photovoltaic (PV) panels, LED lighting and Liquid Food Composters (LFC) at many of our residential care homes.

We are a Silver Partner under the Sustainability Advantage program coordinated by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (formerly NSW Office of Environment and Heritage).

We have also previously been awarded the Aged and Community Services Gareth Williamson Sustainability Award for our achievements. This award was the result of an agreement made with the Relivit company. Southern Cross Care agreed that incontinence waste from four of its homes would

be sent to a special recycling plant where it would be sterilised and its plastics used for construction materials and outdoor furniture.

The Managing Director of Relivit, Gareth Williamson, commented at the time that, “Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) has demonstrated its green credentials”. The recycling arrangement meant the largest waste stream could be diverted away from landfill and so reduce carbon emissions.

Key targets

Resource efficiency: Achieve 10% reduction of our total consumption of resource use by 2021 across the board.

Waste management: Reduce overall waste from landfill by 10% by 2021.

Fuel efficiency: Increase our motor vehicle fuel efficiency by 10% by 2021.

Procurement: Achieve 15% reduction on overall paper purchasing by 2021.

New builds: Incorporate Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) principles into all new builds and major refurbishment projects.

Supply chain: Improve the sustainability credentials and ethics of our supply chain.

Corporate social responsibility and values: Become (and maintain) a family and community friendly organisation.

“Southern Cross Care has demonstrated its green credentials.”

Gareth Williamson
Managing Director, Relivit

2017

Parkes Residential Care redevelopment

2-10 Middleton Street, Parkes NSW 2870

In 2017, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) completed construction of a new residential care service in Parkes comprising 62 suites and 29 independent retirement living villas, at a cost of more than \$30 million. New technologies and contemporary design principles have been applied in this redevelopment. The residential care home showcases the latest telecommunications, access controls and assistive devices, along with top of the range fixtures and furniture.



2017

Partnership with Dementia Australia

To continuously improve the care we provide, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) has partnered with Dementia Training Australia (DTA) – an association of experts in dementia care and workforce training.

DTA strives to improve the care and wellbeing of people with dementia and of the staff providing their care.

Together we are creating training programs that:

- * Optimise residents' sense of wellbeing and quality of living
- * Increase staff knowledge and skills for appropriate responses to residents with complex behaviours associated with dementia
- * Develop meaningful environments for residents by using the key environmental design principles for people with dementia.

There are an estimated 500,000 Australians living with dementia. Unless there is a medical breakthrough, the number of people with dementia is expected to increase and some

estimates suggest the number will double by 2058. People with dementia account for 52 per cent of all residents in aged care homes and we are committed to providing the best care and support to meet the needs of those in our care.

The Australian Government funds DTA and leadership is provided by University of Wollongong, Dementia Australia, La Trobe University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Western Australia and University of Tasmania (Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre).

Caring for residents with dementia

Our Marian Residential Care home in North Parramatta specialises exclusively in caring for older people with mental health issues. It is being transformed into four cottages to provide a family home-like environment. Each cottage will have a domestic kitchen, laundry and garden,

as well as living, tv and dining rooms, reading nooks, quiet spaces and its own front door. Together, we're creating a sense of security, belonging, achievement, continuity, purpose and significance for our residents in their home.



2018

Thornton Park Residential Care

72–78 Empire Circuit, Penrith NSW 2750

In 2019 Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) completed an integrated aged care community, Thornton Park, at a cost of more than \$63 million. The centre includes a retirement village, residential care home and home care service.

The high quality of the building design and a commitment to sustainability and innovative practice saw Southern Cross Care Thornton Park become a finalist in the Urban Development Institute (UDIA) NSW Award for ‘Excellence in Aged Care’ in 2019.

Situated in the heart of Penrith, Thornton Park retirement is a perfect choice for anyone with connections in the Nepean region and the Blue Mountains.



Resident John said he’s glad he moved to Thornton Park before the secret got out, while Jenny and Marilyn are happy to spread the news so that others can share their enjoyment.

John

“I walked into the apartment, looked out the window at the gumtrees and thought, ‘This is it. I could definitely live here,’” said John, of the day that he first visited Thornton Park and decided to move in.

“Every Thursday evening, I do the Men’s Walk and Talk – you just turn up and have a walk around the river, about six and a half kilometres in total and we walk the two bridges, which is really beautiful,” he said.

“One of the blokes asked me ‘What do you think of Thornton Park Retirement Village?’ and I said ‘Mate, it’s the best kept secret in Penrith.’”

Those who choose Thornton Park as their home are not only connected with like-minded people, they are surrounded by nature.

Jenny

“After living in my house for 39 years, I thought I might have missed it. But, since moving to Thornton Park, I haven’t missed it, not even for a second,” said Jenny. “It was the best decision I could have made.”

“The moment I discovered Thornton Park I was impressed with what I saw,” she said.

A common theme when Thornton Park residents reflect on their decision to move is how many people knew it was the right place for them as soon as they visited.

Marilyn

“I knew I’d made the right decision when I realised the furniture from my four-bedroom home fit into my apartment,” said Marilyn. “It’s so spacious; it’s like the place was made for me.”

Marilyn also had a longstanding friend already living in the village. “We’ve been friends for over 50 years and it’s wonderful to be able to call her a neighbour,” she said, noting that this connection hasn’t stopped her making loads of new friendships. “The friends I’ve made since moving in have been integral to that sense of feeling at home,” she said.

Marilyn notes the safety and security that comes from secure access and underground parking, a 24-hour emergency call system and lift access to all levels. She also appreciates the shared facilities including a café, library, media room and rooftop garden.

2019 10K Project wins awards

The 10K Project is a program which, in partnership with the Groundswell Project and Western Sydney University, connects a Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) residential care home with local resources and community networks within a 10-kilometre radius, to build partnerships and connections.

The essence of the 10K Project is that the community engagement works in both directions. Residents of aged care homes are put in touch with people and organisations in the local community that help to expand their interests. These might be groups involved in craft activities, art galleries, a shared enjoyment of reading, gardening or many others. Conversely, business owners, club members and other community members are encouraged to visit the aged care homes and share some social time with the residents they have come to know.

“The 10K Project is a program that we’re very proud to see being recognised for its innovative approach to ageing. This is a wellbeing program that focuses on ‘relationship building’, rather than existing activities.

It works against social isolation and creates greater community engagement and involvement,” said Southern Cross Care CEO, Helen Emmerson.

“No matter how old someone is, there’s a strong need and will for having meaning and positive connections in our life. I feel there is a need to challenge the concept of ageing and how people view old age. We need to show that ageing is a natural part of life that we can go through together, not something we hide away. It’s inspiring to see the innovation from providers to improve the delivery of aged care services and solutions.”

The 10K Project won the award for ‘Innovation of the Year – Community Care Model’ at the Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards in 2019. In the same year the program won the ‘Enhancing Consumer Experience Award’ at Australia’s inaugural innovAGEING National Awards.

The innovAGEING National Awards celebrate the achievements of organisations that have encouraged the aged care industry to become more consumer-centred.



“No matter how old someone is, there’s a strong need and will for having meaning and positive connections in our life.”

Helen Emmerson
CEO, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)



care =
teamwork

A time of innovation

As we embark upon our sixth decade, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) continues to seek out ways in which we can better serve our clients and their families, always underpinned by our values of honesty, empathy, acceptance, respect and trust. And whatever the coming years may bring, we will always stay true to our purpose: caring about people.



2020s

2020

North Turramurra Residential Care

402 Bobbin Head Road, North Turramurra NSW 2074

Nestled within natural surrounds, our stunning, new, state-of-the-art North Turramurra Residential Care home has 113 suites and offers premium services in a stylish, yet homely environment.

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) first became involved in the Turramurra site when Nazareth House Hostel was purchased, including the adjacent nursing home, from the Sisters of Nazareth in 2002. The change of ownership brought ongoing improvements and an expansion of services but it also meant a continuation of the dedication the Sisters had always shown to their work.

The Sisters of Nazareth first visited the heritage-listed Huon House, set in six acres of land in the northern Sydney suburb of Turramurra, in 1959. The two-storey building became the Sisters' Convent from May 1961 and in 1964, an aged care hostel.

A Chapel, built beside the main building, was opened by Cardinal Gilroy on 8 May 1966. Former staff member Carroll Brady has described this striking circular structure as "a fine building, which has been the spiritual centre around which Nazareth House has functioned".

A nursing home had always been part of the plan and in 1981, the Sisters opened a 25-bed nursing home made possible by a Government grant. At the end of the

decade, the Broken Bay Diocesan Clergy Retirement Fund also financed the development of six additional hostel suites to accommodate retired priests.

The Sisters played a key role in staffing Nazareth House Hostel and Nursing Home until 2001, when they approached former Southern Cross Care CEO John Ireland with an option to buy the hostel and nursing home. The sale would generate funds to finance the Sisters' other ministries and renovate their aged care service in Tamworth.

Southern Cross Care bought Nazareth House Hostel and Nursing Home in April 2002. The Hostel had 88 places and the Nursing Home 25 beds. These services were combined in 2007 to create Turramurra Residential Care.

In 2018 Southern Cross Care commenced the redevelopment of the Turramurra complex at a cost of more than \$42 million. The new service, completed in 2019, preserves historic Huon Park and the Chapel.

High quality building design contributed to winning the Urban Development Institute (UDIA) NSW Award for 'Excellence in Aged Care' in 2020, for the redevelopment of Turramurra Residential Care.



"It is a wonderful place to live. Lovely carers, nurses and management. I couldn't ask for a better place."

Michael, resident

Milestones

- **1959–61:** The Sisters of Nazareth establish a community in Turramurra (Convent formally opened in August '61).
- **1963:** Nazareth House hostel foundation stone laid in July.
- **1964:** Nazareth House hostel opened in July.
- **1966:** Chapel built by Brice Mutton & Sons officially opened in May.
- **1981:** Nazareth House Nursing Home opened.
- **1990:** Priests' quarters opened.
- **2002:** Acquired the Nazareth House Hostel and Nursing Home.
- **2014:** Home Care program launched in Northern Sydney.
- **2018:** Rebuilding of the Turramurra complex commenced.
- **2019:** The new service was completed. Redevelopment has seen residents continue to enjoy the highest standards of service.
- **2020:** Southern Cross Care won the Urban Development Institute NSW Award for 'Excellence in Aged Care' for the Turramurra redevelopment.

2021

Our Golden Jubilee year

Many things have changed since the early 1970s but a complete commitment to care remains central to our work. We now care for more than 3,500 residents and clients and operate in more than 40 locations across NSW and ACT.

Back in the 1970s, the average Australian could expect to live to age 71. Now, in our Golden Jubilee year, the average life expectancy is nearly 84 years. So that's an 'old age bonus' of almost 13 years.

As well as living longer, we're generally healthier too, thanks to medical advances, more effective disease control, better nutrition and more informed lifestyle choices. Living longer means we must think carefully about how we wish to spend those extra years. We now also have more options about how we live our older years.

Fifty years ago, there wasn't much choice in aged care. If you needed support – perhaps you couldn't cook for yourself, or you didn't want to live alone – you may have moved into a hostel. Today, we are much more fortunate and there are more choices available. For example, Home Care offers support

A 'Florentine' Effusion

An acrostic poem by
John Woodward residents, Merrylands

Noble is the calling of
the health care worker

Unruffled is her
temper all the time

Reliable? Totally! Not
one of them a shirker,

Soft-spoken ... Gosh! It's
tough to find a rhyme!

Eternally patient,
caring and kind ...
I'm obliged to wind up –
or I'll lose my mind.



in your own home. Retirement villages provide safe, supported, independent community living. If more round-the-clock care is needed, there's also Residential Care. We made a deliberate decision to offer all three types of care at high levels, providing choice to as many people as we can.

Staying connected

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our volunteers have adapted to maintain their connections with residents. →

2021

Our Golden Jubilee year (continued)

“They’ve done this through personal letters, phone calls and video chats. They also sent flowers and dropped personal shopping requests off at the front door for Dianne to distribute. Some of our residents don’t have families close by, so these volunteers can also form very close relationships and keep residents connected to the things that really matter,” said Beate Steller, a spiritual care practitioner at Southern Cross Care.

Caring is a privilege

Amelia is the Deputy Facility Manager at Southern Cross Care in Caves Beach. She worked at the care home when it opened in 2010 and has since developed a special bond with many residents. For Amelia, caring is not a job; it’s a privilege.

“Find a job you enjoy doing and you’ll never have to work a day in your life.” It’s a famous quote and its meaning is not lost on Amelia, who’s studying for her Bachelor of Nursing at The University of Newcastle. Nursing is her passion and it’s what gets her out of bed each day. She also acknowledges there have been some significant changes in the way we care for our older Australians.

“11 years ago, there were no Registered Nurses onsite after hours. A carer would sleep on the premises and a buzzer would alert them to any urgent medical needs, which could mean a hospital visit. Today, we have Registered Nurses 24/7 at this care home and the

We believe that ageing is everyone's business and a society that is more caring and supportive of its older people is a better society for all.

emphasis is on better quality care. We all need to put the resident at the centre of this care,” said Amelia.

These are testing times for all in aged care. With the rise in dementia and the ever-present threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, vigilance and constant improvement are always necessary. Guided by the Aged Care Quality Standards, our team is passionate about making a positive difference in the lives of older people.

We believe that ageing is everyone’s business and a society that is more caring and supportive of its older people is a better society for all. With a five-decade foundation to build on, we’re prepared for whatever the next 50 years bring.

50 years
caring
about people





care =
belonging

Care with us: help make a difference



Donations and Bequests

We appreciate all bequests and donations and sincerely thank those people and their families who have named us as a beneficiary.

Join our team

We love what we do and the communities we provide care and support services for. We offer a broad range of careers in retirement living, home care, residential care and corporate roles.

Volunteering

Whether it's in one of our care homes or a retirement village, many older people have lost family and friends and loneliness and isolation can be very real for many. Becoming one of our volunteers can enhance the lives of people in countless ways.

Tell your friends

Recommendations and referrals are important, so telling your family and friends about our great work and sharing your experiences is another way we can help more people. You can also follow us on social media.

For more information on any of our services, or to enquire about ways in which you can support our organisation, phone 1800 632 314 or email enquiries@sccliving.org.au



