

Edition 5

January - March 2026

Warrigal

Connection



Welcome from the **CEO**

Jenni Hutchins

Hello, and welcome to the first edition of The Warrigal Connection for 2026! A new year always brings a sense of possibility, and across Warrigal, that spirit is stronger than ever as we continue to grow, innovate, and strengthen the communities we're so proud to be part of.

In this edition, you'll read about the exciting milestones that these first few months of 2026 have brought for Warrigal, bringing joy, excitement, and innovation to our Warrigal community and beyond.

You'll learn about one of our most significant achievements, which has been the introduction of Australian-first predictive healthy monitoring technology, Care Companion. This radar-based health monitoring technology will assist in alerting our care teams about a resident's changing health condition, and ultimately improve care provided and quality of life across our residential care homes.

Connection and community have been at the heart of our events so far this year. We celebrated Harmony Day together, hosting a series of events across our care homes, and out in the broader community. In a Warrigal-first, we were delighted to host a large public Harmony Day celebration in Canberra, welcoming members of the local community to join us for a day of cultural performances, shared stories, and delicious food. It was a wonderful reminder of the power of inclusion in aged care, and the importance of coming together to celebrate what unites us.

We are also pleased to share that Warrigal Lake South, our newest Community Village, is nearing completion. This vibrant development will soon be ready to welcome residents into a thoughtfully designed community, featuring 65 brand-new villas that offer modern, low-maintenance living in a safe and supportive environment. It's been wonderful to see such a strong interest in our Warrigal Lake South Community Village, and I look forward to watching this community come to life in the months ahead.

As always, our focus remains on creating communities where our older people feel known, loved and connected. Our vision continues to guide everything we do, and it's only made possible through the support of our residents, customers, their families, staff, volunteers, and the wider community.

Thank you for being part of our Warrigal community, and I look forward to continuing to share more with you throughout 2026 and beyond.

Jenni Hutchins
Warrigal CEO





A special visit from **Hephner the Alpaca**

Visits from Hephner the Alpaca are always a highlight for our residents and staff at **Warrigal Goulburn**. Stopping by every 6 weeks, Hephner brings great joy to our residents who always love to say hello and give him a pat.

Dressed in his best, his recent visit to Warrigal Goulburn even made it on the news!

Click the play button below to watch the video.

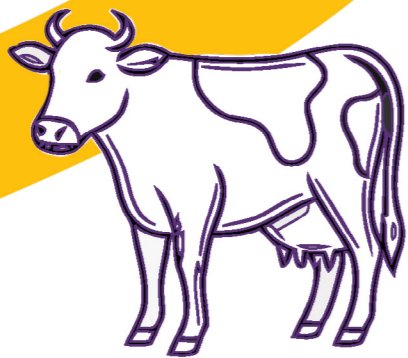
Who we are

For nearly 60 years, Warrigal has been dedicated to supporting older people with award-winning aged care services. We're a not-for-profit organisation providing residential aged care, community villages, home services, and social support across the Illawarra, Southern Highlands, Queanbeyan, and Canberra regions.

Warrigal was started by volunteers, and continues to be governed today by a dedicated Board of Directors and Executive team. They are the driving force that steers every level of our organisation, as together, we achieve our vision; a world where older people feel **known, loved,** and **connected**.



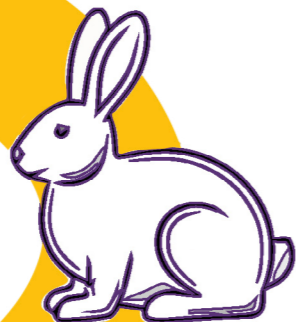
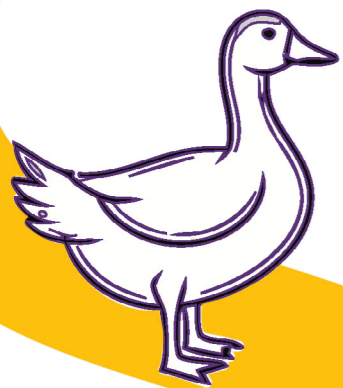
What's been happening at Warrigal?



Matilda's Farmyard visit Warrigal Mt Warrigal

Matilda's Farmyard Nursery recently visited our very excited residents at **Warrigal Mt Warrigal** - and what a fantastic visit it was!

Everyone had a lovely time out in the sunshine feeding, patting and cuddling the adorable animals, with the llama and calf being especially popular.



During a recent bus trip outing, our **Warrigal Social Illawarra** members received an exciting visit from a feathered friend – an incredible macaw, who was sure to brighten everyone's day!

Making the most of the recent sunshine, our members also enjoyed a lovely trip to Thirroul, sharing morning tea together whilst taking in the stunning ocean view.

Warrigal Social make a feathery new friend!



Warrigal Board Member Receives OAM Honour

We're proud to share that Roger Downs OAM, Warrigal's Deputy Chairman, was awarded with the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2026 Australia Day Honours!

This national recognition reflects Roger's decades of service to the Illawarra community, voluntarily providing legal counsel, governance guidance, and board oversight to charities and organisations across the region, supporting vulnerable individuals.

Roger's journey at Warrigal began 29 years ago, and we are so grateful for the difference he makes at Warrigal.

Click [here](#) to read the full story about Roger's incredible achievement.



Mount Terry goes Fishing

Our **Warrigal Mount Terry** residents enjoyed a very successful fishing trip in Windang.

Many being keen fishers in the past, this was an exciting outing for our residents, who together, made a total catch of eight fish!



Spreading the Love at Albion Park Rail!

Our **Warrigal Albion Park Rail** residents celebrated Valentine's Day with a range of fun activities, including wonderful live music, some impressive dance moves, and a lovely morning tea. Everyone then enjoyed a delicious lunch shared with their loved ones and fellow residents.

Our residents also created meaningful handmade gifts, designing Valentine's Day cards for their loved ones. It was certainly a day full of spreading joy!



Tai Chi with Doug!

Residents and villagers from across **Warrigal Shell Cove, Warrigal Warilla, Warrigal Lake Illawarra** and **Warrigal Albion Park Rail** have been participating in weekly tai chi classes guided by our very own Warrigal Customer Relations team member, Doug.

This 12-week program combines low-impact movement and mindfulness, offering benefits to both physical and emotional wellbeing, including balance and relaxation.

Doug leads the class by carefully explaining each movement and breathing exercise, drawing on his expertise as a tai chi instructor.



Warrigal trials Australian-first predictive health monitoring technology

In partnership with Ericom, **Warrigal Goulburn** has begun a 12-month trial of Care Companion, a radar-based health monitoring system. This is the first time this technology has been introduced to an Australian healthcare setting, and involves a small, ceiling-mounted sensor that tracks subtle changes in heart rate, breathing and movement - without using cameras or recording sound.

Rather than reacting after something has gone wrong, the system is designed to notice small changes early. It generates what's known as a Probability of Baseline Change (POBC) score, which can help care teams identify when something might be shifting in a resident's health and prompt a closer look.

International use of the technology has shown that shifts in these scores have been observed ahead of many hospital transfers and falls, and may even identify the early stages of infection days before symptoms appear. This technology offers another layer of insight to support the thoughtful, proactive clinical care that our team provide our residents.

At **Warrigal Goulburn**, more than 90 per cent of residents have chosen to take part. Behind the scenes, our staff are being supported to integrate the technology into their everyday routines, with training designed to make the insights both practical and useful. Over the coming months, the trial will be closely observed to understand its impact on resident safety, quality of care and day-to-day operations.

Warrigal is approaching the process with openness as well as care. Not every trial leads to long-term change, and that's part of the process. What matters is the willingness to explore thoughtfully and learn along the way.

As the trial unfolds, Warrigal plans to share what it learns—contributing to a broader conversation about how innovation, when approached responsibly, might help shape the future of aged care.





Location Spotlight **Warrigal Albion Park**

Welcome to our **Warrigal Albion Park Community Village**, a peaceful community tucked away on a quiet side street in a prime location. Featuring 16 garden villas in the bustling and historic suburb of Albion Park, this village offers serenity without sacrificing convenience or connectivity.

With a charming Community Village Hall and a covered BBQ area, residents at Warrigal Albion Park can enjoy regular activities, social gatherings, and quality time with family and friends.

Additionally, you'll enjoy easy access to local attractions, such as the stunning beaches of the South Coast, as well as a wide array of entertainment options, shopping facilities like Stockland Shellharbour, and restaurants, with excellent public transport available to ensure you can leave the car at home and explore the surrounding areas easily.

At our Warrigal Albion Park Community Village, you're not just finding a new home – you're joining a warm, connected community where comfort, security, and a true sense of belonging come together.

Don't miss the opportunity to enjoy the peaceful, vibrant lifestyle you've been dreaming of at Warrigal Albion Park! To express your interest, contact our Village Sales team by emailing villagesales@warrigal.com.au or by calling **1800 927 744 (Select Option 1)**.

Warrigal Lake South's **Fresh New Look!**

With quarter 2 fast approaching, we've given our **Warrigal Lake South** web page a fresh new look! With an overview of the village's location, easy access to the villa floor plans and mood boards, insights from one of our community village residents and answers to all your burning questions, the page covers it all!

Explore the page for yourself, and **subscribe** to the Warrigal Lake South newsletter to be the first to know of our exciting new updates!

<https://www.warrigal.com.au/lake-south/>

We're looking forward to welcoming you.

Explore the future of our brand new Warrigal Lake South Community Village.

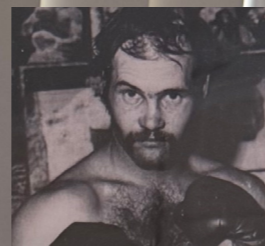
An Interview with Dennis

Earlier last month, we had the pleasure of interviewing **Dennis Talbot**, an Australian boxing legend and current resident at Warrigal Mt Warrigal.

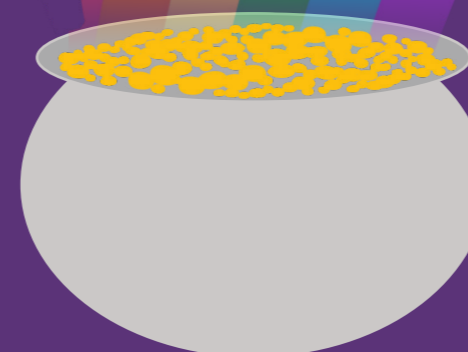
Dennis was kind enough to share his story with us, including his early life, training schedule and competitions, and some of his greatest achievements during his career.

Click [here](#) to watch Dennis' interview, and learn more about his experience at the 1972 Olympic Games!

“ I'd travel all over Australia fighting before I started going overseas... Germany, Tahiti, American Samoa & New Zealand. I fell in love with Tahiti. ”



St Patrick's Day across Warrigal



Wearing their best green clothing, rocking some fantastic accessories, and surrounded by festive decorations, our residents and staff across our **Warrigal Residential Care Homes** enjoyed some wonderful St Patrick's Day celebrations!

Our residents and staff had a fantastic time enjoying Irish treats, music, and games throughout the day.

Earn & Return at Warrigal Central

Our Support Services Team at **Warrigal Central** have been participating in the Return and Earn initiative, recycling plastic bottles and cans to save them from entering landfill.

Using the funds raised through this initiative, an interactive pet cat was purchased, offering companionship and joy to our residents in our memory support unit at **Warrigal Coniston**.

Recently, Lily, one of our wonderful volunteers who also assists with the Return and Earn initiative, delivered this special companion to the excited residents at Coniston.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this initiative, supporting our residents in a meaningful way, all whilst protecting our planet.

Earth Hour Trivia at Warrigal Central!

Our team at Warrigal Central celebrated Earth Hour last month with a fun, sustainability-inspired trivia session!

Employees were asked to switch off the lights and switch on their brain power, forming teams of four and answering questions.

Our staff had lots of fun, while shining a (very energy-efficient) spotlight on protecting our planet.



Know Me Dementia Program

Recently, 16 of our student volunteers completed Wave 3 of the Know Me Dementia Program.

Running at **Warrigal Hughes, Stirling, Calwell** and **Queanbeyan**, the volunteers are paired with a resident living with dementia, connecting with them through regular visits, reminiscence activities, and digital storytelling.

At the end of the 16-week program, the volunteers put together a video sharing the resident's story, assisting our staff members in understanding these residents on a deeper level.



From offering companionship and comfort to exchanging stories with our residents, the impact of these volunteers is truly incredible, each forming a genuine relationship built on empathy and compassion.

Congratulations and thank you to each of the amazing student volunteers who have completed Wave 3 of the program. We look forward to beginning Wave 4 soon, continuing to make our older people feel known, loved, and connected.



What is Support at Home?

Support at Home is a new Australian Government program that launched on 1 November 2025. It replaced the current Home Care Packages (HCP) and Short-Term Restorative Care Program, with the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) transitioning no earlier than July 2027.

The program represents a \$4.3 billion investment aimed at providing more flexible, transparent, and comprehensive support for older Australians living at home.

What is the Support at Home Program?

Support at Home is a response to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. The new program is designed to give older Australians better access to services, equipment, and home modifications, so they can live independently for longer. By 2035, the Support at Home program aims to help around 1.4 million older people stay independent in their homes, supporting 300,000 more participants over the next decade.

How can I find out more?

You can find out more by exploring our website resource [here](#), or by speaking to our friendly team by calling **1800 927 744** or by emailing warrigal@warrigal.com.au.



Our team celebrated International Women's Day

Last month, members from our Board and Executive team, along with staff from across Warrigal, attended the Illawarra Women's Day luncheon in the Illawarra, celebrating the inspiring women in our community.

Being proud sponsors of this event, our Acting CEO Suze Mandicos, had the honour of presenting the Beryl Lewis Scholarship for Older Women to Lynelle Johnson. As the founder of Australia's only electric marine engine manufacturer, Lynelle makes impactful change through her sustainable innovation and commitment to the community.

Established by UN Women Australia, this year's International Women's Day theme, 'Balance the Scales', emphasises the need for more inclusive communities where women have the freedom to shape their own lives and use their own voice, moving towards gender equality.

Today and every day, we celebrate the remarkable contributions of the women who live and work not only at Warrigal, but within the wider community.



50 years of the Warrigal Auxiliary

In March, we celebrated an outstanding milestone – 50 years of service from our Warrigal Auxiliary!

An Auxiliary is a group of volunteers that exist to support an organisation, primarily through their selfless volunteering contributions and fundraising programs.

The Warrigal Care Auxiliary was established in March 1976, when 15 local women met with a shared desire to support older people through fundraising and community connection. What began as a small group of committed volunteers, has grown into a strong and enduring Auxiliary that continues to serve Warrigal residents and the local community with passion, generosity, and pride.

Over the 50 years our Auxiliary has been operating for, they've raised and donated over \$1.7 million – an incredible effort that has improved the lives of countless older people, allowing for the purchasing of equipment, furnishings, six buses, and funding the building of our Warrigal Op Shop – just to name a few. This support has directly enhanced the day-to-day lives of residents across Warrigal.

To read the full story and view the gallery from the event, click [here](#).



We celebrated **HARMONY WEEK** for older people

In March, we celebrated Harmony Week with a special event for older people in Canberra, and what a fabulous day it was!

We were proud to partner with MCCI Multicultural Communities, bringing together members from the community, our Warrigal Executive team, residents, and staff for a memorable morning celebrating multiculturalism and diversity at Warrigal and within the community.

During the event, attendees enjoyed delicious multicultural food, engaging presentations from guest speakers including discussions on the importance of diversity and inclusivity in aged care, and a fantastic Q&A with one of our valued Warrigal Hughes Community Village residents, Mary. Adding to the exciting morning were beautiful performances celebrating Aboriginal culture, performed by Wiradjuri Echoes, Fijian culture, performed by our Warrigal PALM (Pacific Australia Labour Mobility) staff, and Irish culture, performed by The Gregory Academy.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our celebration of Harmony Week, contributing to the cheerful atmosphere and meaningful conversations on the importance of multiculturalism within the aged care sector.



Look who turned 100!

This quarter, we celebrated the 100th birthday of three wonderful Warrigal residents, Petronella, Ruth and Julianna! Each had a special celebration, surrounded by their loved ones, fellow residents and staff, and of course... birthday cake!



Ruth, 100
Warrigal Shell Cove

Ruth celebrated an incredible milestone – her 100th birthday! Ruth received a wonderful birthday surprise from her entire family who came to visit and celebrate her special day. Staff and fellow residents at **Warrigal Shell Cove** also joined in for the celebrations, gifting Ruth a beautiful bunch of flowers.

Happy 100th birthday Ruth, we hope you had an amazing day!

Petronella, 100
Warrigal Wollongong

Our beloved **Warrigal Wollongong** resident, Petronella, known as Nel, turned 100!

Nel marked this incredible milestone surrounded by her family, friends and fellow residents who joined for a lovely birthday celebration, complete with a beautiful cake and a special interview on the news.

Known for making a good cup of tea and always making sure the Monopoly board was set up properly when on family holidays, Nel said that it felt unbelievable to be turning 100.



Julianna, 100
Warrigal Multicultural Village

Julianna, one of our beloved **Warrigal Multicultural Village** residents, turned 100!

To celebrate this remarkable milestone, Julianna was surrounded by her family – which spans over 4 generations, including her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Fellow residents and staff joined in for the celebrations, adding to the memorable day and filling the home with joy and warmth.



Warrigal Locations



Warrigal



Help shape the next edition!

We'd love your feedback on what you'd like to see in the next edition of The Warrigal Connection. Have a story to share or topics you'd love us to cover? Let us know by emailing communityrelations@warrigal.com.au



A world where older people feel **known**, **loved**, and **connected**.



Warrigal