



Welcome to The Cottage Homes' inaugural newsletter – a perfect time to launch this very first edition, as just recently we ended a year of festivities celebrating the remarkable 150-year legacy of The Cottage Homes.

Throughout these years, Cottage Homes has been dedicated to providing safe and affordable housing, supporting older individuals to live independently. Today over 130 residents live in Cottage Homes' accommodation across seven sites within metropolitan Adelaide. Home designs range from heritage-listed cottages to modern late twentieth century units. Each location provides a welcoming

community and a place to call home for people who might otherwise be homeless.

In October 2021, I had the honour of taking on the role of Cottage Homes' first Executive Officer. Since then, I've had the privilege of engaging in a multitude of activities that have defined our 150th anniversary celebrations.

In March 2022, we took a significant leap forward,  
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**Above:** Gill Hearn, Charmaine Fullstom & Neil Rogers enjoy 150 Years' Ascot Park afternoon tea

## A WAY FORWARD

Addressing the housing and homeless crisis in Australia was the aim of the recent National Housing Conference where policy issues and political agendas were tackled. Critical to these is the supply of affordable rental accommodation. This affirms Cottage Homes' strategy to grow our number of units through acquisition and construction, enabling us to house more older people who need access to shelter. We look forward to keeping you informed of our progress.





## RESIDENT PROFILE

Prospect's longest resident, Val O'Connell (pictured), is full of stories about life at the historic 'Walloo Homes' established in 1900 and home to 14 people.

Val recalls her arrival in 2001, "I came from interstate to be close to my daughter and found a community offering friendship and support."

At that time caretakers were an important part of each site's community life fulfilling a range of roles in exchange for a reduced rent, from checking on people's well-being to reporting maintenance issues. Val, a former nurse, undertook the role for 5 years and was the second to last caretaker at Prospect before Knight Frank became the property managers with Terry Chamberlain being a committed contact over many years.

Today Val is extremely grateful for the home she enjoys and loves to potter with her thriving plants. [^](#)

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launching our new website and unveiling our first ever logo – an essential step in expanding awareness of Cottage Homes within our community.

Our patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, and Mr Bunten, extended their hospitality by hosting a reception at Government House in August 2022. With the company of over 80 guests, this gathering became a special occasion to celebrate the organisation's milestone.

This event marked the beginning of a busy season for us, as we organised celebrations at each of our sites, and established historical displays in Council libraries and community spaces across Adelaide. Among the many highlights of our 150-year celebrations was our participation in the SA History Festival in May 2023, when we hosted an event at Christ Church North Adelaide – the birthplace of Cottage Homes. We paid tribute to our visionary founders, generous donors, devoted caretakers, and compassionate volunteers who, for over 150 years, have nurtured this remarkable organisation. [^](#)



**Ben Sarre**  
Executive Officer

**"Cottage Homes has been dedicated to providing safe and affordable housing, supporting older individuals to live independently."**

## Our Volunteer Visitors HEART & SOUL OF COTTAGE HOMES

Back in 1947, something truly special began at Cottage Homes – our amazing tradition of Visitors. These volunteers, mostly women, decided to step up and make monthly visits to residents in each group of homes. Their goal? To bring some friendship, lend a listening ear, and help smooth out any bumps in the road. They were like the peacemakers, ensuring everyone got along and creating a cosy living space for all.

Fast forward to today, and our Visitors are just as essential, maybe even more so. Times have changed, and with it, their



## A TREASURED PIECE OF HISTORY

Nestled in the heart of Mitcham, Cottage Homes has witnessed history unfold for over a century. As we commence rejuvenation of this heritage property, let's take a step back to appreciate the deep roots that make Mitcham Cottage Homes an integral part of our history.

### A Gift from the Past

In 1895, the story began with a profound act of generosity. Mr William Finlayson donated a parcel of land on Hill Street, a gift that laid the foundation for Cottage Homes in this corner of Adelaide. The following year, the first set of cottages

emerged and in the early 1900s, generous donations poured in, enabling the construction of additional units, which became homes for many.

### Natural Disaster

In 1954 earthquake tremors shook the foundations of Mitcham, resulting in the demolition of all units, except for four and the meeting hall. In the aftermath of this disaster, five groups of units, totalling 20 homes, were erected. Together with the heritage building that miraculously withstood the earthquake, Mitcham rose once more.

### A Promise of Renewal

Today, Mitcham stands as a testament to the enduring strength and undying spirit of Cottage Homes. However, time has taken its toll, and it is now our privilege and responsibility to revitalise this site. Cottage Homes is committed to upgrading the sloped terrain, footpaths, steps, and retaining walls, ensuring the outdoor environment remains safe and accessible for our residents. In early 2023, all sites received new signage proudly displaying our logo, colour schemes, and individual picket fence designs.

Mitcham, along with Prospect, will have its meeting hall and shared kitchen upgraded. The modest renovations will make the spaces more user friendly for volunteers, residents and their guests, improving lighting, renewing furniture, floor coverings and cabinetry. The restoration of Mitcham is not just about renewing a physical space; it's about improving the well-being of our residents and ensuring that this community continues to thrive for generations to come. [^](#)

role has evolved. They've got to be tuned in to the needs and expectations of today's seniors to the extent of undertaking training and police checks to ensure the quality of their work.

Today, our Volunteers, both men and women who also form the Visitors' Committee, are assigned to specific sites within The Cottage Homes. Every month, they pay a friendly visit to residents who've asked for



Early volunteer Visitors

some company. But these visits are more than just a social call. They are the connection between the residents and the management. In this capacity,

they play a crucial role in bringing attention to the Board and property managers any issues residents may face.

One thing that's incredible about our Volunteers is their commitment. Some of them have been at it for decades!

As we celebrate this ongoing tradition, we're giving a big shoutout to these amazing folks who've been the heart and soul of Cottage Homes. [^](#)



## CELEBRATING 150 YEARS



**Above:** Dr Sarah Black, Dr Val Liddle, Barbara Ogden, Dr Silvana Rositano volunteer historians. **Below left:** Joan Baseby & Charlee, Glenelg. **Below right:** Elizabeth Bonny & Phil Hough, Parkside.



**Above:** Meredith Wyles farewelling former Chairperson Jock Berry. **Above right:** Mandy Brown & Perry Hamilton Smith, Mitcham. **Below left:** John Kemp & Paula Botten, Prospect. **Below right:** Greg Adams & Allan Woodman, Toorak Gardens




Founder, Rev Charles Marryat & family, 74 years' commitment to Cottage Homes.

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It's our aim to serve the community for decades to come and to do this we rely on the generosity of volunteers, donors and sponsors.

Since Reverend Marryat met with a group of committed South Australian settlers and built our first cottages in 1893, hundreds of people have given generously of their money, time and skills. Donations and bequests from individuals and businesses have been the life-blood of our organisation and no matter what size, go directly to improving our residents' facilities.

If you or your business would like to become a donor, volunteer or perhaps assist in specific projects, we'd love to hear from you. 

**Meredith Wyles**  
Board Chair

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