



Meals on Wheels  
Southern Highlands

# Newsletter

Autumn 2022

## Thriving, not just surviving...

After everything we've all been through and continue to be faced with, it is amazing how people are becoming more determined to thrive and not just survive. The people of the Southern Highlands are without a doubt a resilient lot. Sure, we're still weathering the storms, literally, but it feels like we're turning a corner.

Hopefully, we now have some breathing space in regard to Covid. And that has brought a new focus for people, who want to 'get on' with their lives and enjoy life when and where they can. This edition celebrates how we're turning the corner. Communities are reconnecting, places are opening up, people feel they can plan ahead, the leaves are changing colour and the seasons continue. Just like us as a wonderful community.



## Thanks to BDCU – we'll have a 'blast'!

We are so pleased to announce that Meals on Wheels Southern Highlands has been successful in receiving a community grant from the wonderfully supportive BDCU Alliance Bank. They have granted us \$10,000 towards a replacement blast chiller. This piece of machinery is imperative for us to meet our required food safety regulations, it's incredibly vital to our service. As our Government funding is only limited to our administration costs, support provided by amazingly generous community minded organisations, such as BDCU, allows us to purchase big ticketed items, such as a blast chiller, which is so needed by our service. Thankyou Tanya and Matt and all at BDCU, we really appreciate your support. Happy to show you what a blast chiller actually looks like when we get it.



More  
than just  
a meal

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## Watch this Creative Space...

We are always pleased when we can partner with other organisations who can benefit our clients, volunteers and staff. Which is why we're very pleased to announce our partnership with the amazing Makers at Vinnies' Creative Space. Their mission is to use their creative talents to show care and kindness to others by designing and creating cards for specific individuals and groups of people. In this case, they're going to create cards we can give to the clients, volunteers and staff at Meals on Wheels Southern Highlands!

To get the ball rolling, they recently held two card making workshops with their creative volunteer Makers and facilitator Claudia. We now have 30 cards already in reserve. The Makers will now continue to keep creating.

### Here's a bit more about them...

*Creative Space is an inclusive community art space run by Vinnies and located in Bowral. It's inclusive because it is a place for everyone to feel welcome. It is fully accessible and art materials and workshops are by gold coin / donation. It's a safe place for adults to learn and share new skills and artforms; access free TAFE training and courses, build friendships and enjoy studio time.*

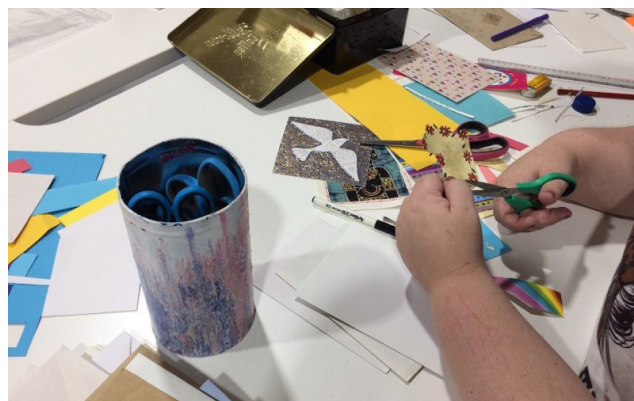
Creative Space celebrates diversity and values each person's individual gifts, ensuring equal access to the arts. Cards will be attributed to the Maker who created them on the back.

We love giving cards to our volunteers, clients and staff to acknowledge and celebrate their birthdays and say thanks for the wonderful things they do. We think this partnership is a fantastic combination, providing great purpose and meaning, community and connection.

To find out more about Creative Space call 0417 847 492 or look them up on social media.

### A little reminder about what we offer

At Meals on Wheels Southern Highlands we offer more than just a meal. We prepare, cook and plate all our food from our very own Moss Vale commercial kitchen. We offer small, main and large sized meals as well as desserts, soups, salads, sandwiches, our award-winning pies and even freshly baked biscuit boxes. It's not only the amazing food we deliver to your home across the Wingecarribee Shire Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays... it's the friendly chat and caring check in provided by our wonderful volunteers. Whether you're in Yerrinbool or Balmoral in the North, Burrawang or Robertson in the East, Wingello or Penrose in the South, or Canyonleigh in the West, call us and see how we can help. If you have a My Aged Care referral for Meals or an Aged Care Package (or if that last sentence was like a foreign language to you) we can still help, so please give us a call.



## Scott's story... from Berlin and New York, to the Southern Highlands



How long have you been volunteering with Meals on Wheels Southern Highlands?

Only about 5 wonderful months.

### What made you want to volunteer?

It was when I read in the ABC that the volunteer network around Australia was looking for people to help out. Meals on Wheels was one of the organisations needing people, drivers in particular. I felt, I can do that! I'm a self-employed artist and I can give time to people. It's also a way of getting out and about and meeting people in the community, as I've only been in the Highlands for 4 years.

### Where have you come from?

Berlin, Germany

### Berlin...?! Ok and what were you doing in Berlin?

Being an artist, a sculptor. I lived there just short of four years. Then upon my return I met my future wife, Gina, she was living and working in Sydney and I was basing myself out of Canberra. In the early days we decided that we would settle down halfway between our current homes. Both of us have always liked the Highlands. Gina had

a close connection to the Southern Highlands with her parents having lived in numerous places around the Highlands over the years, including Bundanoon, Burradoo and currently Bowral.

### Do you think you can make this a long-term home?

As of September 2021 I broke my own record of having lived in one place longer than four years and I have no intentions of leaving. I love it! We have a beautiful little old weatherboard home that we've put a lot of work into making it ours. I have a studio for my sculptures and Gina, as she is a writer, has beautiful well lighted office. She writes for a national online arts magazine and more recently works in our new studio as a jeweller.

### So you're both creative?

Yes, and we both volunteer Mondays. I volunteer here and she volunteers at Ngungungula, the new regional art gallery.

### How did you meet?

We met online.

As you do. It used to be the pub!

Yes, it used to be the pub, but I was in Berlin and I'd made the decision to come back home. I thought what am I going home to? I have no foot print in Australia, and whilst my family are based in Adelaide, I have spent most my life along the eastern coast, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney. It was the first time I'd ever gone online to meet someone and Gina was the first woman I met. From then on we've just had the best relationship, growing together, getting married in the Southern Highlands and building friendships within the wonderful arts community here.

So you met online, then you obviously you had to do a face-to-face....

No... It took me three months to get back to Australia.

We connected via texting every day, sharing ideas, news and debriefing at the day's end. The only time Gina ever heard my voice was when I sang her happy birthday on a recorded message I sent her. Sure, we googled each other and saw pictures of one another, but the first time we actually met in person was at the Sydney airport. I'm not sure how it came about or if we even discussed it, but we made the decision not to chat audibly, it was always through texts. And it was through the poetics of writing we built a really strong relationship.

Sounds like a really good courtship actually, to get to know one another. In some ways old fashioned.

Yeah, an old pen pal relationship that allowed each other to ponder the words before sending them on. Then we met in person and that was pretty much it. I've been in love ever since and it just seems to get stronger every day.

Tell me about your artistic side.

I studied sculpture, visual arts at uni after high school. Completing that I went into the Jam Factory Centre for Craft and Design in Adelaide as an associate in the Glass Blowing studio for three years. After graduating I moved to Canberra to build the glass blowing studio at the ANU. Then around 2002, and for the next 7 years, I was using a very unique process of glass blowing that I had developed and that led to teaching many workshops throughout Europe, Asia and



the States, along with numerous solo exhibitions internationally including 5 exhibitions in New York.

## So your form of sculpture is glass blowing?

Yes, I travelled a lot with this specific kind of glass blowing, whilst making very large unique vessels. After moving to Berlin I decided to go back more to my non-functional processes that are studied in art school, though this time using wine bottles. I was cutting the wine bottles into 10 rings and tied them all together to build very large installations. Sometimes the sculptures reached up to 3, 4 metre high.



Now, in the Southern Highlands, we've set up a new studio going back to doing more functional work and yet still using the wine bottles. This new studio is primarily focused on recycling and up-cycling wine bottles.

## What sort of things do you make now?

We've just finished a commission for 4 Pillars Gin Distillery, making 500 mixing glasses from their bottles. When I visited their distillery down in Victoria, they explained how everything is used sustainably. They filter rainwater for making the gin, use solar power and they give all the botanicals used in making the gin to the piggery. I asked what they did with all the bottles and they said they go into the recycling. So I said, maybe we could do something a little more creative. And that's how it got the ball rolling and we haven't looked back. It's been a very busy time setting up a glass studio, designing a range of art glass

## Interested in becoming a Volunteer?

Contact Debbie on Tel: 4869 4032



pieces that come from recycled wine bottles and getting it all out into the shops. The community has adopted us and made us feel very welcomed. We have now extended our range of art glass to include bottles sourced locally from local wineries, distilleries and restaurants.

There are plenty of those around here!

Yes, there are! We just made a whole bunch of Christmas tree baubles and people can't believe they're made from wine bottles that we have sourced locally. They're actually round balls with colour, made directly from the bottle. We're not melting it down to a molten material, we're actually just reforming the bottle, reshaping the bottle. Gina has also been using these bottles for a range of jewellery including necklaces and earrings.

Seems like an amazing life, very creative and now you're at Meals on Wheels volunteering.

I'd say I'm living a very fortunate life. To be a professional artist, travel the world, continue to have a roof over my head, food on the table.

I've always lived a life where I don't need a big fancy car, or a TV in every room. I have what I want and what I need, allowing me to give back to the community.

### **What do you enjoy about volunteering at Meals on Wheels?**

I'm an outdoors person and I like moving around, so to be out driving and delivering for Meals on Wheels is perfect. And I've met some amazing people! One of the people I drop off to is 93 years old. She's so sprightly and inspiring. Those are the things that make you smile for the rest of the day. There are a few that I have good little banter with, build that relation with. Others you're keeping your eye out for them, looking after them, making sure they've been ok through the days they haven't had any contact.

Do they know your creative side or are you just Scott the delivery guy?

Pretty much the later, Scott the delivery guy... to which I'm happy.

### **How long do you see yourself doing this?**

I'll just take it as it comes. I'm enjoying it and all the people at Meals on Wheels have been very accommodating to me. I live up in Mittagong and I'm doing the northern areas, which goes up all the way to Balmoral. There's a freedom to it.

### **If someone came to you and said they were thinking of volunteering, what advice would you give them?**

It's different for everyone and I suppose every position. For me this is just enjoyable to get out and about, meet people and build those kind of 10 minute relationships. I don't think volunteering is for any one person in particular. There are all forms of volunteering. Being coach of your kid's sport team, sorting donated clothes, delivering food etc. You just need to find the right place for you to volunteer.

Sounds like this is the right place for you.

Perfect! A perfect place.

The 10 minutes that you have is rewarding?

Totally! Like the 10 minutes turning into the half hour chat we're having right now!

After a fascinating 30 minute chat with Scott, he left to make his deliveries and no doubt enjoy a few 10 minute chats with his regulars.

If you'd like to know more about Scott's glass sculpting...

[www.studio-onefive.com](http://www.studio-onefive.com)

Instagram. @studioonefive

## DCJ funding for continuing Covid costs.

We've also been successful in receiving some additional funding via the Department of Communities and Justice. This will help towards the continuing additional Covid related costs we face day to day, such as additional protective equipment, food costs, fuel costs and staffing hours. Even though NSW is coming out of Covid restrictions, our organisation is still experiencing many changes and restrictions, which just keep coming at us. The ways our operation has to respond, are very costly. This funding from DCJ is timely and useful, and we much appreciate it.

## April's a big month – be prepared!

Whatever time of year and regardless of lessening restrictions, we're committed to protecting our vulnerable clients, our volunteers and staff. For this reason, we'll continue to use masks for at least the next month. During this time, we'll monitor any advice and local numbers.

Coming up in April there are a number of public holidays with Easter and Anzac Day. As usual we'll deliver meals due on the public holidays the week beforehand. That means, this year we'll deliver all the meals due for 11, 18 and 25 April on 11 April. So, remember to make some room in your fridge and freezer for your bigger than normal delivery on 11 April.

April will also see us transition to our Winter menu, as Winter is approaching and apparently Summer has been and gone. Sorry if you missed Summer this year. We did! If you have any special menu requests, please get in touch via our wonderful volunteer delivery drivers or by calling the office direct.

## No-Bake easter Egg Tart – A healthy treat at Easter time

### Ingredients

- 1 cup almond butter
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cup oats, dry
- 3/4 cup Greek yogurt, vanilla
- 3/4 cup strawberries
- 3/4 cup blueberries
- 1 medium banana
- 3/4 cup grapes, green

### Instructions

In a microwave safe bowl, add almond butter, honey, vanilla and salt. Microwave for 20 seconds, then stir until smooth.

Take 1 cup of the oats and place in a blender. Blend until the oats are finely chopped and resembles flour. Set aside.

Add the other cup of oats to the almond butter mixture and stir. Slowly add in a little of your homemade oat flour at a time until you get a mixture that you can form into a crust. Depending on your brand almond butter the amount of flour may vary.

Take small amounts of the mixture and form Easter egg shaped disks. Place onto parchment paper or foil for easy cleanup.

Once all the Easter eggs are formed, spread on a layer of greek yogurt. Top with sliced fruit to make your designs and enjoy!



## A beautiful message to everyone from Andrea Mikic

Hello everyone,

My name is Andrea Mikic and I am a Bachelor of Social Work student studying online through Charles Sturt University. I feel very grateful to be doing my social work placement at Meals on Wheels Southern Highlands. I am a Southern Highland local (well nearly local, I have been living in our beautiful Highland community since 1996). I am very passionate and committed to our Southern Highlands community having brought up our sons here. My parents also live in the Southern Highlands and now I care for them. For me, I wouldn't live anywhere else, the Southern Highlands captured my heart a very long time ago.

It is so wonderful for me to meet and work with the wonderful clients, volunteers and staff at Meals on Wheels Southern Highlands. I am gradually doing all the volunteer meal runs, so if I have not met you yet, I will! I am looking forward to meeting you all. I love to cook, garden and walk with my husband. We especially love walking and exploring the numerous bush tracks around the Highlands, it is where we escape for an hour or two to recharge, exercise and unwind.

I am so grateful to be doing my placement at MOW where I can see the delicious, nutritious and fresh meals, that are tailor made, being prepared for each of our clients. I know firsthand how essential it is to maintain our health, particularly as we age. I also know that cooking for one is no fun, especially when we have been used to cooking for two, or even a family. As a carer and as social work student, knowing that our clients receive the meals they choose which are fresh, nutritious, healthy and

tasty and made right here by the wonderful MOW cooks and volunteers, brings me so much peace of mind. What is even better is knowing that meals are delivered by our caring and generous volunteers who check in and connect with all our clients. We all need community and connection and that is exactly what everyone involved in MOW is doing, creating and sustaining health, connection and community.

Looking forward to meeting you all on my travels.

Best wishes and thank you all for your support.

Andrea



## Catering – off to a great start

We've had some very interesting catering jobs over the last few months including, school functions, a Chamber of Commerce event, training courses, swimming carnivals and more. Our flexibility and ability to tailor catering to individual events and groups is something we are really proud of. Give us a call to see if we can assist with your next event, whatever that might be. Challenges happily received!



## Elder Abuse

from [humanrights.gov.au/elder abuse](https://humanrights.gov.au/elder-abuse)

Elder abuse has been defined by the World Health Organisation as 'a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person'.

Elder abuse can take various forms, including: financial, physical, psychological, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect. No older person should be subjected to any form of abuse.

If you are concerned about elder abuse, you may want information, or the opportunity to talk to someone about your concerns, and know the options for getting help.

**1800 ELDERHelp (1800 353 374)** is the National Elder Abuse phone line. 1800ELDERHelp automatically redirects callers seeking information or advice on elder abuse to their state or territory phone line service. If you require assistance in an emergency or life-threatening situation, contact 000 immediately.

## Seniors Week – from Wingecarribee Shire Council Website

Wingecarribee Shire Council is in the final stages of launching this year's event calendar for the 2022 Seniors Festival "Reconnect", from 25th March – 3rd April.

Tickets will be available to book through our website from Friday the 4th March 2022 at 9.00am.

## All of our events this year are free!

We have over 60 events listed in the calendar from daily tours at Ngunungulla Gallery, art classes with local artists John Brain and Desahanti, Explore Native Bush tucker Food and Plants at Guula Ngurra National Park, write your memoir classes with The Grants Guy, learn to play the Ukulele, information / workshop sessions "Order and Law Southern Highlands", Stitch It for Dementia, Quest For Life - The Four Keys to Resilience and Peace presented by Petrea King, Theatre production Family Matters - a collection of short plays by Bowral resident Brian Haydon, just to name a few!

Moss Vale Aquatic Centre are offering free pool entry during the Seniors Festival (does not include gym or fitness classes).

## Board News

We celebrated 25+ years of the wonderful Margaret Mogg volunteering for Meals on Wheels, thank you for all that you have done and continue to do for our great service.



It is with some regret we announce that Amanda Jones has decided to step down from our board due to work and family commitments. We would like to thank Amanda for her contribution and dedication over the past 4 years and wish her well in her future endeavours. Amanda will still be very much a part of the Meals on Wheels family in other supporting roles, and we look forward to her continued support.

As a result, we are seeking expressions of interest from our volunteers and the wider community for a position on our board.





## Message from the Manager

Well I think that was Summer. I don't recall much sun but the leaves are starting to turn and Autumn is upon us. I would like to acknowledge all our staff, clients and volunteers for their adaptability and flexibility with all things Covid, topped off with having to deal with weather challenges. Even though the world threw everything at you all, you have continued to deliver meals and make sure that all orders have been fulfilled. This has been no mean feat and I really want to take a moment once again to acknowledge the dedication of staff and volunteers. We've said it before and we'll keep saying it... we could not do what we do without you all.

Speaking of our wonderful volunteers I have some brilliant news. One of our driver volunteers, David Henning, has now joined our board of management. David brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in the food industry. With over 5 years volunteering with us, sometimes in the kitchen and a lot of time delivering, he has firsthand experience of our service and our clients. David, we thank you for taking this position and welcome you to the team. We now have two regular active delivery volunteers on our board, which brings great insight and relevant experience to the discussion. Julie Hamilton has been on the board since 2013 and volunteering in a delivery role for over 13 years. They will both be acting as volunteering representatives on the board. So if you have anything to suggest or raise, they would be more than happy to hear from you.

I am very excited about the upcoming planning day. The last few years have been very intense for everyone. Instead of being able to plan for the future, we've all had to deal with a succession of sometimes devastating challenges. I feel we are coming through this difficult time and the planning day will help us focus on taking stock, consolidating our learnings and embracing positive changes for the future. We'll discuss funding adjustments, findings from the Royal Commission into Aged Care quality and safety and all the other opportunities and challenges that may or may not come our way.

I have copied some tips for an article on Forbes.com that talks about staying positive in a pandemic, but I think some of the tips are relevant for normal everyday life. It's important to be mindful of how we are dealing with situations



**David Henning**



**Julie Hamilton**



**More  
than just  
a meal**

that crop up around us, not just the pandemic. Remaining grateful and positive is, I believe, imperative to not just surviving but thriving through what life has for us each and every day. If you find yourself being challenged by current situations please let us know, or contact any of the amazing support services out there. You are not alone at this time. You just need to reach out and we, or another organisation you contact, will be there for you.

## **Easy tips to stay positive in difficult times...**

Forbes.com William Arrunda Senior Contributor USA Based.

### **Limit your intake.**

You could watch 24-hour news channels, listen to dire warnings on the radio, or visit countless websites and be bombarded with the angst of the moment. Instead, choose a single news source and decide how much limited time you'll spend with it each day. Then stick to your plan.

### **Look to the past.**

Get hope from your past resilience. You have likely endured other unforeseen major life disrupters like 9/11, major hurricanes, or the financial meltdown of 2008. You made it through! And you are stronger because of it. Know that you will get through this. Remind yourself of your resilience on a regular basis.

### **Watch a funny video.**

Thanks to the huge popularity of YouTube, there are thousands of videos that can help you take your mind off current events, if only for three minutes at a time. Start to bookmark the funniest among them so you can return for a repeat viewing whenever things feel gloomy.

### **Look after your neighbours.**

You may be at low risk of severe consequences from the virus, but it may not be the same for your neighbours whose immune systems are compromised. The act of checking in on them (keeping six feet apart, of course) will not only make them feel good, it will make you feel good and remind you that there are others for whom this predicament is even more stressful.

### **Support your favourite local business.**

Maybe you're heeding the social distancing advice and aren't eager to sit in a crowded restaurant right now. And others feel the same way. Those empty seats aren't helping that restaurant owner to pay her staff or keep the restaurant in business. Buy a gift card to help the business owner now, and prepay for a wonderful meal you can have to celebrate when this pandemic is behind us.



## Send gifts in the mail.

It may not be wise to drop in on your loved ones with some fresh-baked goodies, so send them a card or gift in the mail. Unexpected treats can be a huge pick-me-up in times of stress. This is especially valuable to the elderly who are living in nursing homes. Many facilities have closed their doors to all visitors, making residents feel even more isolated and vulnerable.

## Take advantage of found time.

I'm a public speaker and my speaking gigs are cancelling left and right. It's stressful. I could wallow in that for days. But that wouldn't be productive. These cancellations give me an opportunity to focus on some things I've had no time for and to accelerate my progress on other product offerings. It's liberating, and that's what I've decided to focus on. If your company has implemented a Work From Home policy, how will you use the time you previously spent on commuting?

## Practice random acts of kindness.

Leave an envelope with a little gift for the Amazon Fresh delivery person who drops off your supplies outside your door. Or have a coffee delivered to your doorman. Your kindness doesn't require a monetary outlay. Write an unsolicited book review for a friend of yours who is an author. Comment on a colleague's LinkedIn post. Send a snail-mail note of appreciation to a friend or colleague. Many in the entire country of Italy broke out in song and applause to honour their healthcare workers. Thank the custodians in your building or workplace for their efforts to keep things safe. Think of those who could benefit from your thoughtfulness and generosity. Then act.

Take a daily inventory. Close your day, every day, with a positive acknowledgement of something you accomplished, learned or are grateful for. It will help dilute some of the negativity you've absorbed and remind you that not everything that's happening right now is bad or depressing.

Kind Regards



Debbie Smith