



*RETIREMENT VILLAGE
RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION INC*

NEWSLETTER Number 105 - December 2014

All mail: PO Box 3176, North Turramurra 2074

Telephone enquiries:
1300 787 213

Web site:
www.rvra.org.au

President:
to be appointed

Email:
president@rvra.org.au

Secretary:
Dorothy Swanton
Email:
secretary@rvra.org.au

Subscriptions:
RVRA Membership
PO Box 3176
North Turramurra 2074

Phone: 1300 787 213

Email:
admin@rvra.org.au

Newsletter Editor:
David Pritchett

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In this newsletter you will find many tributes to our RVRA President Jan Pritchett, who passed away on September 20, 2014. Jan committed much of her retirement time to RVRA and to helping many residents in NSW retirement villages.

The RVRA will continue to honour Jan's commitment, as we look forward to planning our future directions. The committee is now looking to appoint a President, and to consolidate our activities, to find grants, and to build the membership of RVRA. As you know there are around 50,000 residents in retirement villages in NSW, and we have 6,000 members - just 12%. We look to our members and our committee to build our organisation to 25% as the first objective - 12,500 members. That would be a great honour for Jan.

As you will see later in the newsletter the RVRA is continuing its activities. The village at Tenambit was a commitment of Jan and Malcolm McKenzie, and that has almost been resolved in favour of the residents. Anglican Care are expected to soon complete purchase of the village, and resolve the issues, and continue to develop it.

RVRA is also working on the review of the Regulations, both internally and with other organisations. We are developing priorities and looking to study groups to make various recommendations.

Our committee is here to help residents, and to make presentations in villages to encourage people to join.

Jeff Kukura

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Tributes were paid by Judith Daley and John Cooper, both former Committee members, to:

Jan Pritchett, former President of RVRA, who died on 20 September 2014, and

Malcolm McKenzie, former Advocacy Chairman, who died on 3 July 2014.

John Cooper opened: Our task today is one of the most difficult that either of us have had to perform; however, we consider it an honour to voice a tribute to both **Jan Pritchett** and **Malcolm McKenzie**.

Several months ago Jan Pritchett advised me that the RVRA intended to present Life Membership to Malcolm McKenzie, and requested that I make the presentation. Unfortunately Malcolm passed away before this honour could be bestowed upon him.

Now we have the tragedy of Jan's death last Saturday. The RVRA Committee decided that it would be most appropriate to also recognise the great contribution that Jan Pritchett gave to the RVRA.

And so it is, that Judith and I will attempt to honour and pay tribute to two people who gave so much to forward the interests of retirement village residents.

Jan and Malcolm gave more to the RVRA and to NSW Retirement Village Residents in the past five years than any who have gone before them. They will be a hard act to follow. However the foundation that they have laid for future Committees and Executive Members has placed the RVRA in a strong position as an organisation that is well respected, by not only the membership, but by a majority of Operators, by the legal profession and by Government.

Tribute to Jan Pritchett by Judith Daley

You can shed tears because she has gone, or you can smile because she has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that she will come back, or you can open your eyes and see all that she has left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see her, or you can be full of the love you shared.

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday, or you can be happy for

tomorrow, because of yesterday.

You can remember her, and only that she is gone, or you can cherish her memory, and let it live on.

Those beautiful words by an unknown author, express so wonderfully how we should treat the passing of this wonderful woman.

Jan first became a member of the RVRA Committee in 2008. After one meeting she became the Minute Secretary. The following year she was elected as Secretary, a position she held for two years, and then for the past three years plus she has been President.

From the RVRA Newsletter you would be aware of the outstanding achievements that Jan made for this Association. I do want to point out that Jan gave her time unstintingly. She and her family would have been thrilled and delighted if she had only put in 40 hours of unpaid labour a week. It was often closer to 60 or 70 hours a week.

There were sometimes late night calls from a village resident, who was passionate about a particular issue that fell outside the parameters of the Retirement Village Act and Regulations. Jan didn't brush these people off by making that bald statement. She showed patience, generosity and understanding, and tried to find another avenue for these people to obtain some satisfactory action.

Jan was the editor of the RVRA newsletter. Even though the victories and worries for the Association were noted in that journal, her own part was frequently diminished.

Additionally Jan supervised the office administrator and ensured her work was carried out. She participated in the sometimes very mundane tasks of the mail-out, which was just time consuming and not very challenging, but it was work that had to be done, so she just got in and did it.

Jan represented the RVRA:

- on the Minister's Retirement Village Advisory Council;
- at meetings with The Council of the Ageing (COTA); and
- with The Aged Care Rights Service (TARS).

She was by my side every step of the way when I prepared a submission to the NSW Upper House Law and Justice Committee, on the need for amendments to the legislation. We stood side by side answering questions from that Committee about that submission.

Jan frequently went to meetings to represent the RVRA. Sometimes these were a one off event, and sometimes there were quarterly meetings. She was often asked to be a guest speaker at these meetings.

Jan and Malcolm visited retirement villages throughout the State. They oversighted the preparation of handouts about changes to the RV Act or the Regulations, and then explained what those changes meant. Sometimes these discussions were by video conferences.

Jan represented the RVRA:

- on the NSW Civil and Administrative Forum, which used to be the CTTT, and
- on the Retirement Living Council NSW Committee.

She was an invited speaker at the Retirement Living Forum, and she was the NSW rep on the ARVAC.

Some of these committees and meetings discussed fairly contentious issues, such as what could be done when operators would not comply with CTTT or NCAT rulings, or the issue of operators concentrating on the bottom line rather than the wellbeing of residents. So it wasn't all tea and bikkies.

And while all this was going on Jan was also a wife, a mother and a grandmother. She loved her immediate family very dearly. She lived her life to the fullest.

It is typical of Jan that she wanted to donate as many of her organs as possible, so Jan has continued giving in death as in life, as up to 40 people will benefit from her donations.

Vale Jan Pritchett It has been a privilege and an honour to have worked with you, and to have been your friend.

Tribute to Malcolm McKenzie by John Cooper.

I would like to commence this tribute to Malcolm with a short poem by an unknown author:

*God looked around his garden
And found an empty space
He then looked down upon the earth
And saw Malcolm's tired face
He put his arms around him
And lifted him to rest
God's garden must be beautiful
He always takes the best
He knew that he was suffering
He knew he was in pain
He knew that he would never,
Get well on earth again
He saw the road was getting rough
And the hills were hard to climb
So he closed his weary eyelids
Then whispered "Peace be thine"
It broke our hearts to lose him
But he didn't go alone
For part of us went with him
The day God called Malcolm home.*

I first met Malcolm at the RVRA 2008 AGM, and our association continued up to the time of his passing.

Malcolm became Secretary early in 2008, mid committee year. He was Secretary again in 2008 - 2009.

He became President in 2009, and was in that position for 2 years. In the early years he was active in the legislative changes taking place in the Retirement Village Act and Regulation, which was enacted in 2010. This entailed attending RVRA Study Groups, discussions with the other stakeholders, and meetings with both Government and Opposition Members.

He was very involved in the seminars held by the RVRA around NSW in 2010 and 2011, to explain the changes in the new legislation.

He returned to being Secretary in 2011 for a further year. It was 2012 when he first took the position as Advocacy Chairman, and then half way through the year he again accepted the position as Secretary. He remained in those two positions until his death.

TRIBUTES continued

As well as this, Malcolm:

- served on the Minister's Retirement Village Advisory Council,
- attended the CTTT and NCAT Forums,
- attended the COTA Consumer Forums, and
- was on the Minister's expert committee which developed the new Standard Contract.

He attended meetings with the operator groups and individual operators, and was asked to speak at operator functions. He attended meetings with COTA and TARS, and was instrumental in the RVRA achieving the financial grant we enjoy at present. He assisted with several submissions to the Tribunal, and advocated for several villages successfully in Tribunal hearings. He visited many villages over that time, and assisted hundreds of residents.

Malcolm was not only a colleague, but a friend. I greatly admired his dedication and commitment towards advancing the interests of all retirement village Residents.

With the news of Malcolm's passing, the RVRA received well over 100 written messages, as well as many cards and phone calls, each expressing in their own way their sorrow and sadness for the loss of this great man. There are messages from Operators, a former Minister for Fair Trading, Solicitors, Village Managers, former colleagues who served with him on the RVRA Committee and many, many residents.

In Closing

Ladies and Gentlemen, today we have paid tribute to two great stalwarts of RVRA. I trust that the example they have given, and therefore set, will be carried into the future in token of their great work.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE CLOSED OVER CHRISTMAS

The admin office will close on Friday 19 December 2014 and re-open on Monday 5 January 2015.

Neither the 1300 787 213 phone nor the administration email will be attended during this time.

SECRETARY'S REPORT



In the last newsletter, Jan Pritchett wrote about the committee's struggles to come to terms with the loss of Malcolm McKenzie. Now we have to add to this the overwhelming situation of having to carry on without Jan. Between them they led the Committee and the RVRA for almost seven years, and the loss of their combined knowledge, dedication and experience will be felt for a very long time.

I sincerely thank members who sent cards, letters and email messages of condolence and praise. After Malcolm's passing, Jan combined all the email messages into one document for his family, and it has been a privilege to do the same for Jan.

The AGM was held on September 25th, as originally planned, with Jan and Malcolm both being honoured with special awards in recognition of their years of work on behalf of village residents throughout NSW. A full report of the AGM is included in this newsletter.

Committee members have continued to make visits to villages across the State. In September we visited Willandra Village at Cromer and the Masonic Village at Basin View. More recently two villages were visited on the same day, one at Peninsula Gardens at Bayview and the other at Orana Gardens in Dubbo. New members have joined following these visits, and this is a service we plan to continue, as we must grow if we are to maintain our place on the retirement scene.

There is finally some good news for the residents of the village in Tenambit, with Anglican Care expected to take over as their new operator on November 21st.

We congratulate Peter Hill for helping to bring this to a successful conclusion. Both Jan and Malcolm worked hard and long to achieve a resolution, and they would have been thrilled at the outcome.

Work is proceeding on our submission to the Department of Fair Trading in relation to the revision of the Regulations. Meetings are continuing with the Retirement Living Council (the operators) to find ways in which we can all co-operate and come up with solutions which will be acceptable to everyone.

Membership continues to rise, but we do need to find ways to increase our numbers if we are to maintain any influence with politicians, government agencies and operator groups.

Both Peter Hill and David Pritchett challenged us over this, at the AGM, and suggested that if each member enrolled one new member every year, we could really influence decisions.

Soon it will be the end of what has been a tumultuous and devastating year, and the committee is determined to maintain the standards and level of activity set by Jan and Malcolm. While we re-organize, we ask for your patience and your support as we move forward.

We wish everyone a peaceful, happy and relaxed Christmas, and we look forward to a busy and productive year ahead.

Dorothy Swanton

MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE

On the front page of this newsletter, Jeff Kukura has shown us the importance of increasing our membership. At the AGM in September, Peter Hill suggested that one way of doing this would be for **every** member to enrol **one** new member.

We are now inviting you to do just that, and that is why you will find **a membership form** inserted into your copy of the newsletter.

We would like to encourage every member to take up this challenge - just think what we could achieve with 6,000 new members, and if we managed to do it every year, then the RVRA would indeed become a force to be reckoned with.

Once again the RVRA has shown a surplus for the year. This year the surplus was \$31,295.00, an increase of \$9778.00.

Membership

Membership this year continues to rise showing an increase of \$10,521.00, although it is very difficult to compare periods because, as happened this year, many members paid promptly before the end of this financial year.

Grant

Our accounts this year show the full effect of the \$25,000 Government Grant, received through TARS.

The Grant is made to assist the Association with Assistance, Advocacy and Education for members and was this year fully expended. The Grant is ongoing and will allow the Association to extend our activities in the areas as defined under the Memorandum of Understanding with TARS.

Expenses

Expenses this year continued to be well controlled with the only large variation being Expos and promotions. It was our intention to try to reach as many new members as possible so more emphasis was placed upon this activity. The highlight was our trip to Murray Gardens at Albury for a special two day promotion which was very well received. The Grant was made by TARS for just this sort of promotion and it was considered to be most worthwhile.

There was a considerable increase in postage costs for delivery of our newsletter, mainly due to a Federal postage increase.

Legal Costs

We continue to extend our legal assistance wherever possible and have been fortunate to receive \$2500.00 in donations to our Legal Support Fund this year. Our legal assistance this year shows an increase of \$6460, and reflects our desire to extend assistance as and where possible.

Recommendation

The accounts as presented show a true view of the financial position of the Association as at 30th June 2014, and I recommend the approval of the meeting for the adoption of these accounts.

Max McGregor

LEGAL OPINION



Peter Hill is Honorary Solicitor for the RVRA Committee

Peter Hill kindly provides advice to the RVRA Management Committee.

If individual members of the RVRA want to approach him for advice, that will need to be on a fee paying basis.

Any issues that affect residents generally, should be raised firstly with the Secretary.

It is with much sadness that I write this article, with the recent passing of Jan Pritchett. Jan was a great leader, enormously giving of her time, and passionate about helping residents in any way she could. But I feel confident that she would want everyone to maintain their commitment, and build on the foundation that she and others have laid over the past 5 years.

One of Jan's legacies was the initiation of the Estate Planning Seminars, run by my Firm, across NSW to provide information to members and residents about Wills, Powers of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship appointments. I have completed a large number of these across NSW, and the attendance has been encouraging. If your village would like to hold a seminar, then please let us know. We hope to round these up by the end of the year, and we still have quite a few to hold.

A number of common questions have arisen at these seminars. I am often asked about residents changing their solicitors after they retire, having completed a Will and other appointments some years earlier, and wishing to locate a solicitor closer to where they are living in a village. I have stressed the importance of tracking down your original documents, as often practices are sold or solicitors retire. You need the original in most situations, as a copy (certainly an uncertified one) will not suffice.

Other questions that have arisen, in the course of my talks, concern the appointment of a guardian to make decisions about health matters. This is a separate appointment, and increasingly we see elderly persons directing their guardian to enable them, as far as possible, to live independently, as long as they can. It may be necessary to buy in services

and support to allow this to occur. Many villages of course offer these services, and many external businesses also cater with home help and the like. This can mean the difference between a resident staying in the village, rather than moving out and relocating to a nursing home or higher levels of care.

Another common question has related to how loved ones know when to exercise their power as an attorney, to assist their elderly mother, father or relative. Often this happens very seamlessly because of regular contact with the person, but sometimes, other residents in the village assist informally, where they can. But situations do arise where things happen suddenly, or the relative does not live nearby, and sees the elderly person irregularly. I believe that it is important for a close friend in the village to, at least, have a family contact. Most operators require this in the information they retain concerning the resident. It makes it important to have appointments in place to cater for the need, because it does create a lot of challenges if there are no appointments to deal with incapacity issues.

On a final note it has been most pleasing in the past week to see the resolution of the Tenambit Village insolvency problems, as well as those relating to The Woniara, resolved in a positive way. Both villages have been acquired by new operators, with positive results for residents. I feel privileged to have been involved in these cases. It has been a long battle, and much to the credit of Jan and various leaders in those villages themselves, in lobbying and assisting residents, and having the courage to see these difficult issues through. The only sadness I have is that Jan passed shortly before these matters were successfully resolved.

Thank you for your continued support, and rest assured I will continue to advance the cause of residents where I can.

I know you will all share with me in our collective thoughts and prayers being with David Pritchett and his family at this time, as we all reflect on the massive contribution Jan made to the RVRA.

Thanks again, **PETER HILL**
Solicitor & Practice Manager
Hill & Co Lawyers

Held at the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney
On Thursday September 25, 2014

Opening of Meeting:

The Meeting was opened by the Vice-President, Keith Lewis, at 10.30am, with 81 Members present.

A welcome was extended to Russell Westacott (CEO TARS), Peter Hill (Honorary Solicitor RVRA Committee), Lynne Slevin and Kirsten Shteinman.

The Vice-President proposed that the election of the executive and Committee be deferred until after agenda item 10.1. This was agreed to on a show of hands.

Apologies for Non-Attendance:

There were 9 apologies recorded and accepted for non-attendance including Committee member John Mugford, who is overseas.

Confirmation of Minutes of AGM held on Thursday 19th September, 2013: It was moved by Bev Lewis (IRT Campbelltown) and seconded by Roy Walker (Living Choice, Glenhaven) that the minutes of the previous meeting be confirmed. *Passed unanimously*

President's Report on the Association's activities during 2013-2014: The Vice-President referred to Jan Pritchett's report, written prior to her recent death. Dorothy Swanton (Warrigal, Bundanoon) proposed the report be accepted as read. This was seconded by Bryan McGrath (Henry Kendall Gardens) *Passed unanimously*

Secretary's Report: The Secretary referred to her report which included membership and advocacy activity for the past year. As there were no questions from the floor, she proposed the report be taken as read. Seconded by Jeff Kukura (Forresters Beach) *Passed unanimously*

Financial Report: The Treasurer outlined the financial position of the Association and explained that the apparent increased surplus was due to early payment of fees for the coming year. He moved his report and the Audited Financial Report with attachments be received and adopted. Seconded by Roy Walker (Living Choice, Glenhaven). *Passed unanimously*

Address by Guest Speaker:

The Minister for Fair Trading, the Hon. Matthew Mason-Cox was introduced by the Vice-President and addressed the meeting. He expressed his condolences to RVRA members and to the families of Jan Pritchett and Malcolm McKenzie. At the conclusion of his talk he invited questions from the floor. Jeff Kukura (Forresters Beach) proposed a vote of thanks.

Address by Peter Hill:

Peter Hill (*Honorary* Solicitor for RVRA Committee) expressed his admiration of the work in support of village residents throughout NSW, the ACT and Queensland by both Malcolm McKenzie and Jan Pritchett. Their loss to the organization is immeasurable and continuing their work will be the best memorial the RVRA can make. He then answered questions from members. Keith Lewis (IRT Campbelltown) proposed a vote of thanks.

Motion for Special Recognition by the Association: Following moving eulogies for Jan Pritchett and Malcolm McKenzie, former Committee member John Cooper moved the following motion, which was seconded by Keith Lewis:

Jan Pritchett and Malcolm McKenzie be granted special Recognition Awards by the RVRA for their outstanding work and contribution to the Association and to retirement village residents throughout NSW. *Passed unanimously*

Certificates of Appreciation were presented by Judith Daley and John Cooper to:

- Kirsten Shteinman, who is Malcolm McKenzie's daughter, and
- David Pritchett, and Lynne Slevin, her daughter, on behalf of Jan Pritchett

General Business: Several issues were raised by members. The Vice-President advised the meeting that these issues will be addressed by the Committee, including a suggestion that concerned members be invited to address the Committee directly at some future meeting.

Election of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and 8 Committee Members:

The Returning Officer, past Committee member John Wheeler, announced that in accordance with the Association's Constitution, nominations had been received for all positions. However circumstances had changed following the death of Jan Pritchett, who had nominated for the position of President. Under the terms of the Constitution there was now no nomination for this position. The Returning Officer called for nominations from the floor for the position of President. As none was forthcoming, under the Constitution he ruled the position is now deemed to be a casual vacancy, and a suitable candidate is to be sought by the incoming committee.

Nominations had been received for all other executive positions, and for all general committee vacancies, and he declared that the **RVRA Management Committee for 2014-2015** is:

Office Bearers:

President:	to be appointed	
Secretary:	Dorothy Swanton	Warrigal Village, Bundanoon
Treasurer:	Max McGregor	Living Choice, Glenhaven
Vice-President:	Jeff Kukura	Forresters Beach Village

Regional Committee Members:

Bill Leadbetter	Henry Kendall Gardens
Keith Clarke	The Grange, Berry
Jim Keleher	Tarragal Glen
Annette McAndrew	Settlers Ridge, Gillieston Heights

Sydney Committee Members:

John Mugford	Constitution Hill, Northmead
Lorraine Beattie	Frank Vickery Village, Sylvania
Tom Gait	The Woniora, Wahroonga
Ena Heddema	The Woniora, Wahroonga

David Pritchett spoke briefly to the meeting. He stressed the need for increased membership and member involvement to continue the important work of both Jan and Malcolm into the future.

Close of Meeting The Vice-President closed the meeting at 12.06pm, and thanked all for their attendance.

RVRA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2014 – 2015



Jeff Kelaher,
Bill Leadbetter,
Dorothy Swanton,
Lorraine Beattie,
Jeff Kukura,
Max McGregor,
Ena Heddema, and
Tom Gait.

Absent from group:
Keith Clarke,
Annette McAndrew, and
John Mugford