

June 2014 winter edition



*Older  
Tenant's  
Voice  
Since  
1988*

Housing for the Aged Action Group



HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.



*Housing -  
a right  
not a  
privilege!*



Hello again, HAAG members and friends  
Well, winter is here at last and where have the last few months gone? Here at HAAG, we have been very busy as usual, doing our usual daily tasks and in addition, planning and organising our Forum. I'm pleased to say that the Forum "Surviving or Thriving" on 5th June went beautifully thanks to our staff and volunteers. Ken Dyson chaired in his usual affable style. The Minister for Housing Hon. Wendy Lovell officially opened the Forum and brought us up to date on the progress of plans to refurbish existing Public Housing properties. (Unfortunately, there was no mention of any plans for any new Public Housing projects.)

April and Jeff presented a report on the "Home at Last" service to date and gave us our insight into the housing sector in general and their responses to the issues for older people at risk of homelessness.

Our two guest speakers were Dr Wendy Stone, Director AHURI Research Centre at Swinburne U.T. and Dr Maree Peterson, Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Institute for Social Science Research U.Q. Both brought us up to date on the research findings on:-

- a) the problems of the private rental market and the effect this will have on older renters (Dr. Stone) and
- b) preventing first time homelessness among older Australians (Dr. Peterson).

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, there was no time for questions from the floor. After our lunch break (which was as usual, very well catered for) it was time for Dalene Salisbury to launch HAAG's State Election Policy Platform. A brief interview with our greatly loved and sadly missed member Molly Hadfield on the perils of private rental was shown, followed by brief presentations from members of HAAG's working groups:

- |                |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|
| Kelvin O'Shea  | - | Private Rental Housing                  |
| Sally Stabback | - | Independent Living Units (N.F.P.)       |
| Max Penaluna   | - | Caravan, Residential Parks and Villages |

Many thanks Kelvin, Sally and Max for braving the microphone!

Then it was my pleasant duty to recognise the contribution made by two HAAG members, who, in giving media interviews, helped to raise the problems older people face in housing and HAAG's profile in the community. Two very surprised members Joan Lansbury and Alma Dri-Paterson, stepped up to receive our thanks for their efforts – a large reproduction of the front page of "The Age" for Joan and a Certificate of Commendation for Alma. Well done Joan and Alma.

Finally, Jeff asked the audience to put forward ideas for inclusion in our State Election Policy Statement, regarding the housing needs for older people. Thank you to all who assisted in this.

Last, but not least, another pleasant duty for me – handing out chocolates to all those who had spoken at or assisted in the presentation of the Forum.

On a personal note, I was recently treated to a surprise morning tea provided by Kaye and attended by the staff of HAAG. It was in honour of my birthday (never mind which one!). So yet another thank you to you all until next time.



Hello Everyone,

My name is Paola Posso. During the next three months I will be replacing Tegan Leeder, Housing Support Worker for Home at Last, while she is away doing her social work placement.

I recently completed a Master of Social Work at RMIT University and as part of this course I completed my placement here at HAAG. It was a great opportunity and a fantastic experience that helped me to develop as a social worker. I am really excited and happy to be part of the HAAG team for two main reasons. First, because I am very passionate about human services and am looking forward to putting my knowledge and social services skills in to practice, and second because it will be a pleasure to work with all of you again.

I hope to be very helpful for HAAG during this time!!!

Best wishes for all of you,  
Paola Posso

**Hi All,**

***I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Lisa Coonan and I am very fortunate to be coming on board as an Administrative Assistant two days per week with HAAG. I feel that it is a great privilege that I have been given this opportunity and look forward to contributing as an administrative support person.***

***I have had over 25 years administration experience predominately in the legal sector and in recent years in real estate. I have always had a keen interest in working in the community welfare sector hence completing Certificate III in Community Welfare Work.***

***On a volunteer basis I belong to a singing group that often performs at various aged care facilities, charity events etc. and this is something that I have great pleasure in doing particularly seeing the joy it brings to many a face in the audience when belting out a "golden oldie song". I am also very passionate about the elderly as I have an 88 year old mother that I care for. I am also the proud mother of three adopted "rescue" pets from various animal shelters. Oh and I'm a mum of a teenage son!***



**Lisa Coonan**

## **Partnership & Service coordination, better outcomes**

### **A case study**

**Violence against women and children are one of the most serious social issues that our community is confronted with today. Violence against women has an enormous impact on the women who experience violence, as well as, the wider community. Domestic Violence is a daily reality for thousands of women in Australia. Latest research suggests that recorded offences of family violence climbed 30 per cent to 19,664 over the last 12 months to March which means so many women have suffered severe forms of physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse, at the hands of their partner in Victoria. Unfortunately, older women are not immune from this serious social issue, as older women also report violence at the hands of their long term partners/husbands.**

**This is a story of one of our Home At Last (HAL) Service/Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA) Program clients, Maria. Maria is 73 years of age, a refugee from the former Yugoslavia. Maria was referred to the HAL Service for urgent housing assistance in late March by the In Touch-Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence. Maria experienced domestic violence for more than 40 years and decided to leave her violent partner. She sought assistance from the Multicultural Centre against Family Violence. The Cultural support worker from In Touch provided Maria with cultural and emotional support. She also organised a lawyer for Maria from Senior's Rights Victoria, to get legal assistance for the protection order hearings and other related legal matters. Maria was provided with a crisis accommodation at a women's refuge. Although Domestic violence services are working very hard in ensuring that their services are accessible to older people, Maria stated that she found it very difficult to stay at a women's refuge due a fear of becoming isolated, a lack of sound English language skills, and the estrangement from her children and grand-children.**

**At the time of the assessment by the HAL Outreach worker, Maria, appeared to be quite distressed with having nowhere to go, which was causing her severe anxiety and stress. In particular, the worry of not being able to get an affordable and secure home, and the possibility of becoming homeless and going back to a violent situation. Maria further stated that women's refuge was not appropriate for her and she also wanted to remain living close to her children and grandchildren. The second option for Maria was a long term respite centre where Maria could stay while her housing application was being processed. Regional Aged Care Assessment Service conducted an urgent assessment of Maria and a respite bed was organised.**

**A HAL outreach worker completed a 'Homeless with Support housing application' (Seg 1) for Maria via the Department of Human Services, Office of Housing, which was approved in a very short period of time following some advocacy. Maria was offered a public housing property within one month.. Maria has recently moved to a one bed-room unit which was completely modified to suit her ageing needs. The HAL Outreach worker, in consultation with Maria, linked her up with available services in her immediate area. One of the services she will be accessing is the local council's Home & Community Care services which include community transport and social support services to attend social groups, so that she can meet new people to reduce her isolation. Last time the Outreach worker visited Maria, she stated that she was feeling very relieved and secure, that she has a place to live and she no longer has to put up with her husband's violence. Maria further remarked that she is looking forward to enjoying her older age years with her grand children and new friends she is planning to make.**

This case also highlighted for us, the services involved in Maria's case, the benefits of working in partnership with other services for both service users and service providers. Working in partnership with Senior's Rights Victoria and In Touch, Multicultural Centre against Family Violence, enabled us to provide Maria with more consistent, coordinated and a comprehensive service, in order to remove the barriers for Maria to progress towards assisting her to escape domestic violence. It also enabled us to develop a 'whole person' approach and as we were able to recognise and utilise the strengths and areas of expertise of the others services involved.

While we achieved a great outcome for Maria, we look forward to eliminating any form of violence against women and children, in their homes.

**Melis Cevik**  
HAL/ACHA Program Outreach Worker

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Hi my name is Nhuc (right) and I am the new student on placement from RMIT University. I am on a 70 days placement which means I will be working with HAAG up to October.

I am enjoying my time at HAAG so far and I have also learned a great deal about Older Australians and Homelessness.

Co-planning and co-facilitating the Forum was highly enjoyable and it was also a very rewarding experience. I am also working with the Community Education Team in assisting with the Mornington Peninsula Project, where my role is to research and compile a list of all the relevant community services under the Mornington Peninsula LGA.

I am very grateful to be doing my placement at HAAG, as it is a great service that goes above and beyond to achieve the goals of their clients.



## ***HAAG IS ON RADIO 3CR - 'RAISE THE ROOF'***

***Every 4th Wednesday at 6pm:***

***Next show =  
24 July 2014***

If you would like to share something with us on our upcoming radio shows please contact the office and have a chat to Marc (our 3CR show co-ordinator)  
**9654 7389**

# HAAG Forum 2014

The Surviving or Thriving - Older Victorians at Risk of Homelessness Forum was held on Thursday 5th June 2014. The event was organised to provide information and discuss the current state of older persons housing and the needs of older people who are at risk of homelessness. A major focus of the day was the worrying trends showing the following: Significant increases in older people just surviving in the private rental market; no new affordable housing supply after the completion of Nation Building funds; poor connections between older persons housing needs and aged care services in the home; and only 1% of homelessness service funds directed to the needs of a vulnerable ageing population.

Over 200 HAAG members and representatives from community agencies came along on the day. The event began with a very moving Welcome to Country provided by Graham Briggs from the Wurundjeri-balluk & Wurundjeri-willam tribe of the Kulin Nation.

HAAG Chairperson Pauline Williamson provided an introduction for the day and introduced the keynote speakers and prepared the forum delegates for a day of learning and interaction.

This was followed by an opening address by the Minister for Housing, the Hon. Wendy Lovell. As well as reflecting on the legacy of Moly Hadfield, in whose name the Minister has dedicated an annual award for services to older people in public housing communities, the Minister spoke about the need for assistance to older people on low incomes and specifically called for a strategic approach to addressing the problem.

April Bragg and Jeff Fiedler, Co-Managers of Home at Last, presented a progress report on Home at Last and informed the audience that, over the first 20 months of the service, over 500 older people have been assisted to move out of precarious private rental housing and into long term, affordable housing. A further 500 are on the road to achieving a similar housing outcome and can expect a result within the next 3-6 months, based on average times to accommodate clients of the service.

Keynote speakers Dr. Wendy Stone from Swinburne University and Dr. Maree Petersen from the University of Queensland presented the latest research on private rental housing and the needs of older people.

Dr. Stone spoke about the increasing numbers of people reliant on the private rental market for their main long term form of housing. This has mainly been caused by a drop in the rate of public and social housing. Long-term renting was described by Wendy as precarious, under-regulated and associated with poor shelter & non-shelter outcomes as she described the market tensions between private landlords seeking to maximise investment outcomes and the needs of tenants looking for long term sustainable housing. There has been a significant shift in the tenure of renters over the past 10 years. In 2001 there were more people in public housing than private rental but in 2011 there were 6.7% public tenants and 7.2% private tenants. Other findings of her research were that households with main source of income being a pension or benefit are over-represented among long-term renters; a third of all long-term private renters are single person households; 30% of long-term renter households include dependent children (20% couple, 10% sole parent); close to half of all long-term renters are aged 30-44, with 30 per cent aged 45-64 years. Wendy also found that households with their main source of income being a pension or benefit are over-represented among long-term renters.

Dr Maree Petersen provided a more older persons' focused presentation with some of her most recent research involving an understanding of the housing and life circumstances of 561 clients of Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA) services as well as interviews with workers and managers in the ACHA field.

Maree's study identified three pathways into homelessness for older Australians:

1. People with a history of conventional housing.
2. People who live with ongoing housing disruption.
3. People with a transient housing history.

The focus of Maree's research was people in the first category, those with a conventional housing history who presented to ACHA with a range of critical housing incidents. The main reason she found for older people facing a housing crisis were: The impact of a breakdown in intergenerational housing arrangements and resulting homelessness risk for older people; the inability of Australia's housing, particularly the private rental market, to facilitate older people ageing in place; physical access issues were also a dominant reason for older people to be in housing crisis. Notice to Vacate (NTV) and lack of affordability were common critical housing incidents.

After a hearty lunch the forum moved into HAAG members mode with a focus on the direct experience of older people. The focus of this part of the day was the launch of HAAG's state election platform and presentations were heard from HAAG working group members Kelvin O'Shea, Sally Stabback and Max Penaluna about their own housing experience in the private rental market, independent living units and residential parks and villages. This segment also included a two minute film interview from 2009 of Molly Hadfield talking about private rental housing and a dedication to Molly and election platform launch by long term HAAG member and former chairperson Dalene Salisbury. The state election platform will be widely distributed to politicians and housing agencies to lobby for significant improvement to older persons housing over the next four years.

The final segment of the day was an attempt to do a first in housing forums: Send an immediate email message to all Victorian members of parliament about the housing needs of older people. This involved a workshop session where delegates were encouraged to bring forward their main housing concerns and these were documented on the over head screen for all to see. However, as often happens in open forums, the wide variation and detail of issues raised, whilst all very important, were difficult to capture in a few points. It was agreed by the audience that HAAG would condense all the comments and send the email, with photo of the 200 strong crowd, to the politicians the next day.



## **HAAG's State Election Policy Platform**

**At HAAG's Surviving or Thriving? Forum held on June 5 2014 HAAG launched our State Election Policy Platform for 2014. Entitled A Plan towards Housing Justice for Older People in Victoria, HAAG's policy platform presents information on the key housing issues facing older people, especially those on pensions and low incomes.**

**HAAG's policy platform has been developed by our members, for our members and also represents the expressed views of many older people in housing need across the community. The platform also represents the hard work of our three key working groups in the following areas: Private rental housing, Independent Living Units and Caravan and Residential Parks and Villages. In addition the views of HAAG's membership were collected at our General Meeting held on Thursday 13th March 2014. We sincerely thank our members for their hard work in producing the document.**

**The key recommendations in the policy platform are:**

### **A plan, housing and services**

- 1. The Victorian Government must establish an Older Persons Housing Strategy to plan for solutions to the dynamic changes to older persons housing that are rapidly emerging. The Strategy will include factors such as affordable housing supply, support for specialist housing and homelessness support services, reforms in current housing as well as research and development of new housing models including service integrated housing.**
- 2. The Victorian Government must protect current levels of public housing stock and expand the supply of public housing for older people through joint capital investment with the Commonwealth Government and construction on identified surplus government land.**
- 3. The Victorian Government must work with HAAG and other specialist older persons housing agencies to develop and fund an Older Persons Homelessness Support Program that would ensure appropriate services for older people at risk of homelessness are available across the state.**

### **Older people in private rental housing**

- 4. The Victorian Government must ensure that older people have access to housing that provides security of tenure.**
- 5. The Victorian Government must ensure that older people are able to rent accommodation that is affordable on the aged pension.**
- 6. The Victorian government must introduce legislation that ensures new housing complies with universal design principles. Further, all landlords must allow modifications recommended by aged care services for older people in rental accommodation.**
- 7. The Victorian Government must introduce minimum housing standards into the Residential Tenancies Act.**

### **Older people in Independent Living Units**

- 8. The Victorian Government must ensure retirement housing legislation appropriately reflects the diversity of the retirement village sector by including proper protection for not-for-profit retirement village residents.**
- 9. The Victorian Government must ensure there are clear dispute resolution procedures prescribed within legislation that outline the path a retirement village resident must take to have an issue resolved, including appropriate and affordable access to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).**
- 10. The Victorian Government must ensure the legislation governing the Independent Living Unit and retirement village sector is streamlined to provide clear, protective rights espe-**



cially for more vulnerable residents.

11. The Victorian Government must introduce effective management standards in retirement housing law to ensure consistency across the retirement village sector.

#### Older people in caravan, residential parks and villages

12. The Victorian Government must ensure that security of tenure is embedded in residential parks legislation as it is the key consideration towards improving the rights of residents in parks and villages.

13. The Victorian Government must prescribe effective management standards within parks and villages to ensure consistency across the sector.

14. The Victorian Government must improve protections for residents in relation to utility charges. Prescribed avenues are required to challenge and investigate charges, such as the accessibility of the Ombudsman scheme for residents and improved powers for Consumer Affairs Victoria to act in such matters.

15. The Victorian Government must outline clear lines of accountability, and appropriateness within building and design, as well as clear lines of liability when it comes to structural and site issues, within residential parks and villages.

#### Better housing and support options

16. The Victorian Government must develop pilot housing developments for older people that offer a range of accommodation options based on the diversity of needs of individuals and communities with a particular focus on expanding the range and availability of service integrated housing.

If you would like more details about our policy platform, have any feedback or would like a hard copy, then please contact our office on 03 9654 7389. It will soon be sent to all Victorian Members of Parliament and other key community organisations who may consider adopting our policies.



Long time management committee member Dalene Salisbury launches HAAG's policy platform

Joan Lansbury and Alma Dri-Paterson receiving their special awards for media presentations. Joan appeared on the cover of *The Age* and Alma was interviewed on national television.



## **Home at Last (HAL) Service – Housing Support Service**

**It has been another busy quarter for the housing support and every month we are seeing an increasing number of older people seeking housing assistance. Whilst our housing support workers are faced with extremely busy days, and often those days are heartbreaking when we hear the circumstances people find themselves struggling with, we are buoyed by the fact we are achieving long term and sustainable housing outcomes for people.**

**At our recent Surviving or Thriving forum, a number of our members talked about how securing long term, affordable public or social housing was life changing for them. One of our members, Alma Dri, accompanied by Jenny Smith from the Council of Homeless Persons, recently did a national television interview on the housing crisis faced by older people. Alma bravely told her story of how she became homeless for the first time and emphasised the fear and uncertainty she felt about her future during that time. Alma also strongly expressed the sense of helplessness she experienced in not knowing how, or where, to get help to get out of the situation she had so unexpectedly found herself in. Fortunately for Alma her story of homelessness had a happy ending and she spoke about the security and joy she now has in her life after she was assisted by the HAL service into long term housing in a new social housing apartment building.**

**As soon as Alma had finished telling her story the HAL service phones rang hot and we were inundated with phone calls from older people who told us they were in the same situation as Alma and needed help to get out of the circumstances they were in. Specifically we received over 100 interstate calls from people looking for a HAL service in their area in the hope they too could access long term housing. This was an amazing response from an interview that only ran for a couple of minutes, and on a mid-morning entertainment show, and it provides a good snapshot into the need not only to build more long term housing, but the type of service support older people need to access such housing.**

**Sadly though for the majority of callers we spoke to the HAL service is the only one-stop shop model of housing information and support for older people in Australia. The HAL service is a Victoria-wide initiative funded by the Department of Human Services as an Innovation Action Project (IAP), trialling early intervention and homelessness prevention strategies for older people. As an IAP the service has been independently evaluated for the past 24 months and is about to enter the final stage of evaluation. Since its inception the HAL service, in partnership with a range of agencies, has been effective in providing help to thousands of older Victorians and we hope the evaluation findings will convince the Victorian Government to continue funding it, but also influence the Commonwealth Government to fund and expand the model across Australia.**

**Alma and Jenny's television interview can be viewed on the HAAG website. A longer version of Alma's story can be viewed in the film section also on the HAAG website. [www.older tenants.org.au](http://www.older tenants.org.au)**

### Snap shot of quarterly housing data – January – March 2014

<b>New People</b>	
People needing housing support	223
People seeking housing options information only	51
Secondary consultations	76
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>350</b>
<b>Main Reason for Seeking Assistance</b>	
Housing affordability stress	75
Housing crisis (e.g. recently evicted)	62
Inadequate or inappropriate housing	60
Financial difficulties	41
Relationship/family breakdown	21
Family violence	6
Lack of family/ community support	6
Time out from family/other situation	2
Medical issues	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>Housing Support Statistics</b>	
<b>HAL Internal Program Referrals</b>	
HAL Assistance with Care & Housing for the Aged (ACHA) Program	109
HAL Tenancy Advice Service	27
HAL Retirement Housing Service	7
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>HAL External Referrals</b>	
ACHA Programs	51
Community Connections Programs	31
Housing Support (other e.g. local Government)	7
SAAP Services	4
SHASP Services	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>241</b>

### HAL Housing Outcomes

Tenure Type	Property offers	People Housed
Public Housing	36	22
Social Housing	3	1
Independent Living Units	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>24</b>

*Tenure Type/Wait Time	< 1 Month	1-3 Months	3-6 Months	< 6 Months
Public Housing	9	8	4	1
Social Housing	1			
Independent Living Unit	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

*\*From application to offer – For housed clients only*

Tenure before HAL service re-housing	People	
Private Rental	8	
Staying with family/friends	7	
Homeless	1	
Rooming House	5	
Support Residential Care/Temp	1	
Caravan Park	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	

  

Rent Affordability Outcomes	25%	30%
People whose rent payments reduced	23	1

**Hello, I'm Naomi Gebert – the newest intake and referral worker in the housing support team. I've been here as a worker now for almost 3 months, and before that as a student for over 5 months. So at this point I can hardly remember what life was like before HAAG. I'm really enjoying taking on more responsibility in the agency, and working more closely with clients than I did in my student placement. It's also been a time of figuring out how to apply all the skills and knowledge I gained from my bachelor of social work, which I completed at the end of 2013.**

**I grow in my appreciation of the other staff and the workplace environment at HAAG every day!**



**Naomi Gebert**

**If you have problems with your phone and need a technician who will charge pensioner rates then call Paul. He is endorsed by HAAG as he is a nice guy and does good work.**

**Paul Vanderheide  
m: 0421 149 445  
e : paul@vandercom.com.au**

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**Vale Doug Jordan**

HAAG is deeply saddened at the passing of our long term comrade and supporter, Doug Jordan.

Doug, who co-presented the City Limits radio program on 3CR for 14 years, died on the 19th May 2014. Doug was diagnosed with cancer last year, and in February this year was informed it had spread and he had only months to live. So determined was Doug to live as normally as possible, even holding his own wake to farewell friends,

Doug presented City Limits right up until the Wednesday before he died. Doug had been a community activist for many years, a member of many left groups and a confirmed unionist. Doug was particularly passionate about housing justice and campaigned throughout his life for more and better public housing, we particular thank Doug for the many HAAG struggles and campaigns he supported us in over the years. Doug was an inspirational man and his loss will be greatly felt by HAAG, and throughout the left generally. HAAG would like to express its deepest condolences to his family and many, many friends.

**Vale Jo Bremner**

We heard from HAAG member Pauline Cross the sad news that Jo Bremner, a long time member of HAAG in its early day, passed away recently at the age of 102. Jo would have been fondly remembered by all of our original members including Molly Hadfield. Condolences to Jo's family and friends.

***It is that time of year again - time to renew  
your HAAG membership.***

***Inserted in this newsletter is a 2014-2015 membership  
form to fill out and a HAAG self addressed envelope to  
send it back in.***

***We look forward to your continued support into the next  
financial year!***

***Also remember if you would like to be involved in any of HAAG's  
working groups:***

***CARPAV***

***ILU***

***Private renters***

***then give us a call on 9654 7389 or email [haag@oldertenants.org.au](mailto:haag@oldertenants.org.au)***

## **Need a caring woman to listen to you and help you work out your options?**

**WIRE stands for Women's Information and Referral Exchange Inc. and is a small not-for-profit organisation that is run for women by women. Since 1984, WIRE Women's Information has been empowering thousands of Victorian women and providing them with free and confidential support, information and referrals on any issues statewide. We take time to listen to and support women like you via**

- **Telephone Support Service 1300 134 130 Mondays to Fridays 9am to 5pm**
- **Women's Information Centre 372 Spencer Street, West Melbourne (5 minutes from Flagstaff station) Mondays to Fridays 9.30am to 4.30pm**
- **Online Livechat support [www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)**
- **Email support service [inforequests@wire.org.au](mailto:inforequests@wire.org.au)**

### **Why women contact WIRE**

**Last year more than 12,000 women contacted WIRE for information, support and referrals. Women of all ages and from all walks of life in Victoria contact us about matters such as family relationships and legal issues; domestic violence; housing and homelessness; emotional well-being; mental health—**anxiety, fear, stress and depression**; and job search, study options and community volunteering.**

**Our Women's Information Centre requires no appointments and women are free to drop by to use the free Wifi, internet and computer access to check their emails, surf the internet, and write/print/scan documents on any of the 6 computers available. There are no time limits and no need to book, with friendly staff to assist you. Women can also speak to one of our Women's Support and Information Workers to get face-to-face support and referrals with any concerns they may have.**

### **Free Programs for Women**

**WIRE runs many free programs for women including**

- **Job Coaching sessions for professional support with your job search or career pathway (Mondays)**
- **Basic Computer Classes (Tuesdays/ Wednesdays)**
- **AMICA Women's Lunch Club (Tuesdays/ Wednesdays/ Thursdays)**
- **Legal Clinics on family law and/or property law (Thursdays/ Fridays)**
- **Information seminars on different women's topics (monthly) such as July's free seminars on Shopping Rights and Tenants' Rights**

**Want to find out more? Check out our program calendar, call Shannon, Moira or Jessica on (03) 9348 9416 (Option 2) or email [inforequests@wire.org.au](mailto:inforequests@wire.org.au) to book in your free place!**

### **Cath's story\***

**When Cath rang WIRE, she was struggling to find both a home and a job, and was feeling isolated and alone as she was also new to the area. She had been forced to vacate her rental property recently after an issue with her landlord, and found that the semi-rural area she lived in had very limited employment opportunities and few services available to support her.**

**The WIRE Phone Worker Cath spoke with validated her experiences of isolation and her having to manage on her own. Cath also received information about local services that may offer her material aid, as well as practical public housing information including the number of her local**

transitional housing service. Cath was grateful for this information, but mostly for the opportunity to speak with someone at length about the ways that her circumstances were impacting her.

\*Real names are not used for privacy and confidentiality reasons.

### Mary's story\*

Mary had moved from country Victoria to Melbourne to escape family violence. Middle-aged with little work experience, she needed to find work to support herself. When Mary first started to come to our Women's Information Centre six months ago, she was very distressed and depressed, and felt overwhelmed by everything in her life. Mary did not want to face her husband in court and was going to give up all her financial and property rights—she just wanted it to be all over.

Initially, we supported Mary by having conversations with her about what was happening in her life and how she was feeling. When she began to feel stronger, Mary enrolled in our Computer Class for beginners, and also started attending Job Coaching sessions.

Mary is now enrolled in a Certificate III Course and is very optimistic about her life and job prospects. She has also decided that she is going to start the legal process to get a fair division of the family property, instead of walking away with nothing.

\*Real names are not used for privacy and confidentiality reasons.



Some weeks back Gabriel rang to say she was marching in the Bust the Budget rally on Sunday 18th May. Gabriel's group meets socially in a pub after each rally and they typically have a swear tin.

Gabriel and her group raised \$111.30 during the afternoon drinks with all of the cussing and swearing undertaken at the expense of 'Abbott' 'Budget' Hockey' etc.



When Gabriel delivered the tin to the HAAG office there was so much entertainment provided as the HAAGles grouped for a photo, donning haag t-shirts, putting on celebratory poses, that she donated a further \$10.00 for the fun of it all. The contents of the swear tin amount to a grand total of \$121.30.

Thank you for thinking of us Gabriel!

**HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.**

1st Floor, 247-251 Flinders Lane,  
Melbourne 3000.

ADMIN: 9654 7389

Home At Last: 1300 765 178

SURFACE

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Lane,  
Melbourne, 3000**

**Admin: 9654 7389  
Intake: 1300 765 178  
(cost of a local call)**

**Email: [haag@oldertenants.org.au](mailto:haag@oldertenants.org.au)**

**There are four main aspects  
to our service:**

**Housing options**

**Private renters assistance and tenancy advice  
Outreach care and housing support  
Retirement housing advice and support**

**Interested tenants and residents are encouraged to join  
Housing for the Aged Action Group  
Pensioners No Charge**



**HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.**

