

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
10/08/2017



PENSIONER PROVIDES 'COMFORT AND SMILE' TO STRUGGLING OLDER RENTERS.

MELBOURNE: Eighty year old Retirement Village resident June Walkeden knows its tough paying bills on a pension, so she spends her free time hand making quilts to keep older people who have been at risk of homelessness warm.

Over 5 years, June has made approximately 80 quilts that have been lovingly donated to older people housed by the Home at Last service.

About 15 years ago June came into some difficulties living in her Retirement Village in Reservoir. She called an older persons housing information and support service, Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG). HAAG's Retirement Housing Information Service was able to help June solve the problems she was having, and she decided to become a member of the Organisation.

HAAG is a not-for-profit community group who works with older people to achieve housing justice, and social change and have been assisting people like June for 30 years.

When June saw one of HAAG's films on homelessness she realised how much other people were struggling. *"There was one lass, renting for 15 years and the landlords marriage had split up. That could have happened to anyone. Well, HAAG found her a home and she said that the best part was she could take her dog."*

So June decided there was something she could do, and she started making quilts for the clients of HAAGs Home At Last service. *"It takes a long time." says June 'I sew them together by machine and then finish them by hand. It takes about a week to make each quilt'.*

HAAG's Home At Last service – funded by the State and Federal Governments- provides Housing Information and Outreach Support for over 55's seeking affordable, secure housing. One of HAL's Outreach workers, Melis Cevik provides these quilts to her clients.

Melis says *"our clients are so overwhelmed with such a personalised gift. One client said that they 'represent comfort and smile'. Another of my clients, Charlie, refused the idea of using the quilts as a bed spread; he said that he wanted the quilt in his lounge room so he can see it all day while watching his gum tree out in his back yard."*

June has since recruited others in her village to help make the quilts. She says that when sewing the quilts she feels warm with the quilt on her lap. It brings her joy to think that the person who gets the quilt will feel as cozy and warm as she does when she's making them. *"And maybe they won't even need to use the heater".*

If you'd like to become a member of HAAG call 03 9654 7389