

AROUND THE HOUSE

Tenant Christmas Party

Unity's "rescheduled" Tenant Christmas Party

It gives us great pleasure to announce that Unity's Tenant Christmas Party eventually went ahead and was a great success!

The original date for the event was December 16th however, due to a heatwave with temperatures forecast for 39 degrees, we had to make the unfortunate decision to postpone the event for the health and wellbeing of everyone involved, tenants, guests and staff. Our sincerest apologies for any inconvenience this has caused.

After much searching, we managed to secure a booking at the Adelaide West Uniting Church. Despite the fact that Christmas had been and gone and a weather forecast for wind and rain, we had fantastic attendance on the day from our wonderful tenants and their guests. Over 90 adults and 20 children came along to enjoy the free food & drinks, play some games, have their faces painted, watch the magic show, try their luck in our free

raffle with terrific prizes and mingle with others to have a chat. We received lots of positive feedback from people about the event and the venue.

One tenant said, "I really enjoyed the day, it was the best one you have put on, we come every year you know and we really liked that we could sit down inside". Another commented, "we loved the magician he was a lot of fun".

The day was an absolute success thanks to everyone who came along to support the event – we couldn't do this without you.

We would like to thank everyone who donated to the event to ensure the day was GRAND. We would also like to thank our amazing staff that came along to help out and make the day enjoyable for all.

We hope to see you at our next event!



Acknowledgment of Christmas Party Donations

With Thanks ...

Unity Housing would like to acknowledge the following businesses that generously donated prizes toward this year's tenant Christmas party including, family passes, movie tickets, gift cards, vouchers and sweets. Thank you to everyone for your generosity and support for this event.

Adelaide Zoo

Arndale Event Cinemas

Bounce Inc

Elizabeth Aquadome

Event Cinemas

Target

Haigh's Chocolates

Hungry Jacks

K-Mart

Stratco

Unity Housing would further like to acknowledge the generous contribution made toward the tenant Christmas party by the following businesses. We thank them for their ongoing support and we look forward to working with them again in 2016.

Beagle Locksmiths

Burns for Blinds

Custom Kitchens

and Home Improvements

Everything Electrical

J&R Plumbing

*Malthouse Home
Maintenance*

Murphy Plumbing

Robertson Glazing

*Southern Area Maintenance
Services*



Long lost family reunited thanks to Around the House



Kerry's daughter
Charlotte

Back in our Summer 2014 edition, we featured an article about our tenant Murray Ker and his extraordinary life adventures from serving in the British military and Botswana police to sailing the high seas, to name just a few.

Following this fascinating story, Unity received an email in September 2015 from a young lady living in Johannesburg, South Africa who had seen the article and believed that Murray may be her long lost Grandfather. Unity contacted Murray, explained the situation and passed on her contact information.

Through some researching on the internet and visiting social media sites it was established that this was in fact Murray's long lost Granddaughter, Kerry. Murray's daughter Debbie, who lives in South Africa, had been searching for Murray for 48 years. It wasn't until she saw the article and photo of Murray in our Around the house newsletter that she was finally able to start putting the pieces together.

When Murray was a soldier in the British Army he met a South African woman named Barbara. They fell in love, married and had three children, a daughter Debbie and two sons Graham and Andrew (now a professional golfer and part owner of an African Safari Park).

When Barbara and Murray divorced, he decided to leave and relocate back to Australia as South Africa wasn't his

home country and troubles were brewing between the Dutch and English residents. After this, Barbara remarried and changed the children's surname to her new married name which meant Murray was then unable to locate them.

Murray also has an Australian daughter, Ellen, who has now been keeping in contact with her new found brothers and sister. They communicate regularly via Skype, email and text.

Murray's family has now grown to 4 children, 7 grandchildren, 1 great-grandchild and another great-grandchild due in a couple of months.

When asked how he felt about reconnecting with his family Murray said, *"They occupy my world now, before they just existed"*. Murray said he found it *"really extraordinary"* when he found out that Debbie had been looking for him for so long and had never given up, even though her brothers assumed Murray must have passed away.

Kerry hopes to one day come to Australia with her husband and family to meet and spend time with Murray.

Andrew wants Murray to come for a holiday to South Africa to stay with him at the Safari park and reunite with his long lost family.

We hope that Murray and his family manage to reunite in the near future and we wish them well.



Murray's daughter Debbie and her children Gareth and Kerry

from 2014 Summer edition

**THE VOYAGE
OF THE CHRISTELA:**
THE **AMAZING ADVENTURES**
OF **MURRAY KER**



We would like to thank Troy from Unity's Boarding House for sharing his reflections with the wider Unity community.

Poem 127

By Troy Sorgini

Same as an elderly gent
seeking inner peace
as a young child
fighting his mind
in youth.
I realise a sense of happiness.
Experience counts for
values and morals
life's monumental
achievements
visions
reinventing a life of love
peace
and
unity.
I grant absolute fellowships
to conquer
my thoughts of anguish
frustration and despair
freedom to reflect.
I definitely value
friendship
a cause for humanity
to strive for humanity
peace to all.

Amy's Ride



"Amy's Ride showed me that I could do something that I didn't think I would be able to do. I enjoyed the challenge, even though I was scared out of my wits."
Beverly.

For the second year in a row, a group of six keen tenant cyclists got up at dawn and travelled down South to participate in the 30km Amy's Ride Challenge starting in O'Halloran Hill and finishing in McLaren Vale. Amy's Ride SA honours the memory of Amy Gillett, a South Australian elite cyclist who was tragically killed when hit by a motorist while training with the six member National Road Cycling Team in Germany.

For this year's event, the conditions were perfect for a Sunday ride with any pre-ride nerves helping to get everyone off to a cracking start. At the finish line there was a great sense of achievement amongst the group with many taking great pride in finishing the ride. Congratulations to everyone who trained hard and participated in Amy's Ride.

Tenant Feedback Initiates Service Improvement

Unity recently received an email containing formal feedback (a complaint) about approved maintenance work and a follow up phone call that had been accidentally overlooked, resulting in the job never being completed.

The complaint was investigated, followed up promptly and the tenant received a verbal apology and the work was completed immediately. Unity Management then followed up the matter with the relevant staff and an item was added to the team meeting agenda to ensure that following up on maintenance work remains a focus and a priority for the organisation.

The tenant was very happy with how promptly their complaint had been followed up and as a result sent a further email complimenting the

prompt investigation and response provided. This process shows that if a mistake is made or something doesn't seem right, or in this case something which had been agreed to was not followed up, **the complaints process can often result in service improvements and improved tenant satisfaction.**

Unity has a feedback process which can be found on the website here: <http://unityhousing.org.au/for-tenants/feedback> or you can call your regional office or housing officer.

Each regional office also has a feedback/suggestion box placed at the entrance where you can place your personal feedback or suggestions.

Bees & Wasps



Get the latest buzz on bees and wasps

Summer is a popular time for bees and wasps to invade our homes so if you have a European wasp nest on your property, please call your local Council. Councils track outbreaks of European wasp infestations across Adelaide.

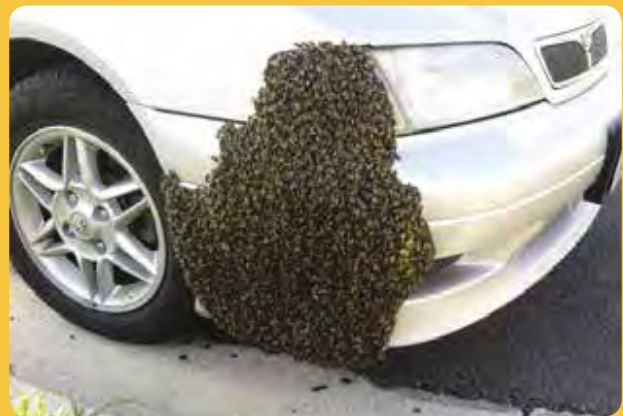
The EUROPEAN wasp is most easily identifiable by:-

- *Its black and yellow body*
- *Its yellow legs; and*
- *Its TRIANGULAR markings on the abdomen.*

Bees also swarm during the spring and summer months as they look for a new home. There is nothing to fear if they are left alone, do not attempt to move them on. Most of the time a swarm will move onto another location by themselves. **If they do stay around for more than 24 hours, please contact your Housing Officer.**

DO NOT aggravate a European Wasp as it may STING.

Removing a European wasp or bee nest does not fall under Unity's responsibility and you will need to contact your local council. If you have a nest that is in a chimney, wall cavity or porch area, you will need to call Unity who can arrange for a pest controller to investigate.



**KEEP
CALM
AND
STAY
CONNECTED**

To ensure Unity is able to contact you, especially in an emergency, we need to make sure our tenant records are up to date. For this reason, if you change your phone number or get a new email address, please let your Housing Officer know your new contact details as soon as possible.

You may find that texting or email is a more convenient way for us to keep in touch with you. If you do have a preferred method for us to contact you, please let us know.



Unity's Community Connect Program hosted over 60 guests to the Box Factory for a Community Quiz Night in October.

It was a great opportunity for the local community to get together in the spirit of healthy competition. The winning table generously donated their huge prize hamper to the Tenant Christmas Party prize pool. The Box Factory Craft Group raffled an epic patchwork quilt they made together and raised over \$400 which was put towards materials for their next project.

We would like to thank all of the tenants, neighbours, community groups and staff who attended. We would also like to extend a special thank you to the following people and organisations for their generous donations and support for what turned out to be a great night:

- *Adelaide City Council*
- *Hutt Street Precinct Association*
- *St Luke's Community Store*
- *South East Community Residents Association (SECRA)*
- *The Box Factory Craft Group*
- *The Hutt Street Centre*
- *Unity Staff and particularly;*
- *Celia Boyle, our amazing Quiz Master*

"It was heaps of fun, definitely a good bonding experience where I got to know other Unity tenants and other people that live in the area" **Helen**

"Awesome night, we had a top time. Thanks must go to those who donated prizes..." **Kingsley**



Everyone has the right to feel safe and live in an environment free from violence. Renting laws changed on 10 December 2015 to provide more options to help victims escape domestic violence.

Victims may now be able to:

- *stay at the rented home and have the perpetrator leave; or*
- *leave the rented premises and be removed from the lease.*

Staying will mean applying to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) to have the perpetrator removed from the lease.

Leaving will mean applying to SACAT to either end your part in the agreement or terminate the agreement altogether.

To speak to someone about possible support options in relation to domestic violence, please contact the Domestic Violence & Aboriginal Family Violence Gateway Service on FREECALL 1800 800 098 (24 hours a day).

If you are fearful of, or are being subjected to domestic abuse, you should contact your local police station to discuss appropriate responses or apply to the Court for an intervention order.



Call 131 444 for police patrol assistance, or call 000 in the case of an emergency.

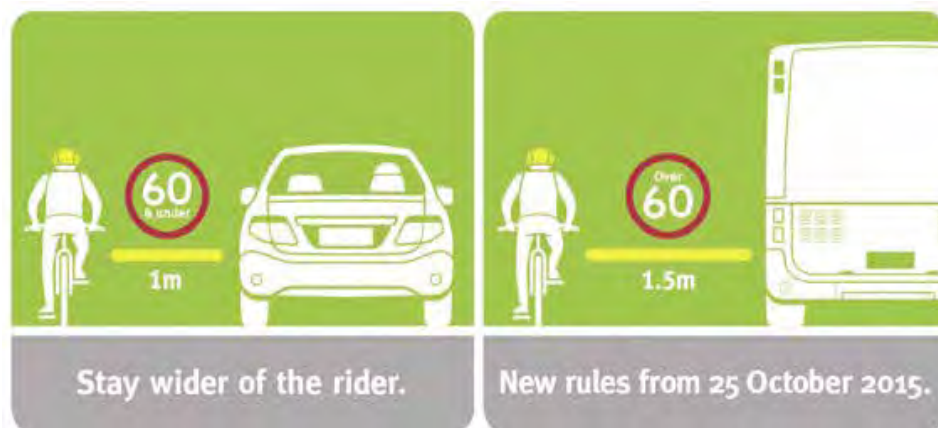
Changes to bike laws

Are you aware of the changes to the road rules in South Australia from 25th October, 2015?

Under new road rule changes, cyclists of all ages are now allowed to ride on the footpaths, however they are still required to ride in a bike lane where one is provided (more details can be found on the sa.gov.au website). There will still be some footpaths which are considered unsuitable for shared use and

it is still an offence for a cyclist to ride where a sign prohibits bicycle riding.

Motorists are now required to leave a gap of at least 1 metre when passing cyclists in zones of under 60 km/h. When the speed limit is over 60 km/h, drivers must leave a gap of 1 ½ metres. Cars can also cross double lines to overtake cyclists if it is safe to do so. The fine for failing to keep a safe distance is over \$350 and two demerit points.



Winners are Grinners

Unity is proud to announce that we were awarded the Australasian Housing Institute Leading Housing Project Award at the recent biannual Australasian Housing Conference in Perth.

The Award was for our Northern Housing project which was developed to reduce housing stress in regional South Australia by providing 102 new homes. The properties are built in 14 different locations and 11 regional towns spanning from Saddleworth & Port Pirie through to Whyalla.

Congratulations to the team for achieving this amazing result and providing affordable housing outcomes to people living in regional areas. Great job!!



Woodworking Group

For most of last year many Unity Boarding House tenants were involved in a community woodworking shed at the Glandore Community Centre. The woodworking shed gave people the opportunity to use a variety of machinery as well as work on group or solo projects. Some of the projects that the tenants worked on included making cutting boards, coffee tables, coasters, and a bookshelf to name a few. They also learnt a variety of new skills such as French polishing and finishing.



Woodworking is definitely a patience game and at times progress was slow going with lots of sanding needing to be done, however there was a real sense of achievement amongst the group once projects were finished. It was also especially great to see those involved using their creative side with some showing a real flair in working with wood. Most of the tenants who participated



commented that they really enjoyed doing something with their hands and learnt a lot from being involved.

When asked, what has being involved in the woodwork group meant to you, Anthony replied, *"I loved being involved in the woodworking shed, it was a great experience. I especially liked meeting new people and working in a group with others, as well as learning about wood"*.

Being involved in the project has resulted in some positive changes for people. One tenant in particular who eventually became a regular at the woodworking project had previously shown an interest in being involved with community connect activities, however this was the first time she had actually participated. It had been taking that first step that was difficult, however this all changed when she finally decided to come along to the woodworking shed.

Since her first session she has attended regularly and has been an extremely

positive and enthusiastic member of the group. During her time at the shed, she has worked on numerous projects from simple to quite complex items. Although she hadn't previously done much woodworking she really excelled and showed great flair. She also provided encouragement to other group members with their projects as well as being very helpful in discussions about future planning. It has been really great to see the joy that she gets from being involved and participating in a group activity.

She said that she has *"really enjoyed getting out of her room and socialising as well as working with her hands"*.

The woodworking shed will also be continuing again this year for a 3 month period from February 1st. This year the group will once again be working on a variety of projects, as well as learning about furniture restoration.



CENTRAL

Opening hours
Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm

81 Osmond Terrace,
Norwood 5067

Phone: (08) 8237 8777

Fax: (08) 8237 8700

admin@unityhousing.org.au

Emergency after hours
maintenance: 8237 8799

SOUTH

Opening hours
Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm

1/506 Brighton Road,
Brighton 5048

Phone: (08) 8198 1666

Fax: (08) 8296 7705

south@unityhousing.org.au

Emergency after hours
maintenance: 8237 8799

NORTH

Opening hours
Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm

179B Philip Hwy,
Elizabeth South 5112

PO Box 1195
Elizabeth Vale 5112

Phone: (08) 8287 8600

Fax: (08) 8287 6155

north@unityhousing.org.au

Emergency after hours
maintenance: 8237 8799

PORT AUGUSTA

Opening hours
Mon and Thurs
by appointment only

36 Stirling Road,
Port Augusta SA 5700

PO Box 322,
Port Augusta SA 5700

Phone: (08) 8642 6412

l.edwards@unityhousing.org.au

THE TERRACE

BOARDING HOUSE

Opening hours
Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm

South Terrace,
Adelaide 5000

Phone: (08) 8232 5459

Fax: (08) 8232 4582

theterrace@unityhousing.org.au