



AHV staff sorting through all the donations

All wrapped up!

CHRISTMAS TOY APPEAL 2017

Now in its third year, AHV's Christmas Toy Appeal hit a new record; providing toys to over 600 children from more than 200 families.

The generosity of the local community was again overwhelming and AHV Housing Officers and Wellbeing staff were busy delivering gifts across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria to tenants and a number of Aboriginal Co-Operatives and organisations, in the weeks leading up to Christmas.

One of our youngest donors, Saskia, saw the Toy Appeal flyer in her letterbox and asked her mum if she could take it to school (Merri Creek Primary School) to see if her classmates would like to help. Her teacher got on board and encouraged Saskia to speak at the school assembly — which she did... TWICE! A few weeks later, Saskia and her teacher delivered over four boxes of toys,



after the whole school got on board! At only 6 years old, Saskia is well on her way to becoming a champion of social justice!

Fitzroy North Primary School has supported the Toy Appeal since it started, and collected an amazing amount of toys throughout December. We are so grateful for their continued support — another testament to the generosity of the North Fitzroy community.

Thank you to all our supporters, including: Clifton Hill Pharmacy, Curves Fitzroy North, Holden Street Neighbourhood House, Kawada Pty Ltd, Management Advantage Inc., Merri Creek Primary School, The Walt Disney Company Australia & New Zealand, Toot Toot Toys, Share The Dignity, John Sands and Fitzroy North Primary School for their support and donations. And, to our local volunteers — Jan, Heather, Timothy, Rena, Naomi and Abigail who helped with letter drops and sorting toys; we couldn't have done it without you!



Saskia and her brother dropping off donations

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned an article in this newsletter contains images of deceased persons which may cause sadness or distress.

Women of AHV

HIGHLIGHTING WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS



Preparations for this year's NAIDOC Week are underway, with the theme *'Because of her, we can!'* providing a chance for us all to reflect on the valuable contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in our community. Over AHV's journey there have been many strong women — tenants, community members and Elders — who have contributed to where we are today.

Among this esteemed group are women such as Myrtle Muir who worked to provide the foundations of AHV. Myrtle was elected an inaugural board member of the Aboriginal Housing Board of Victoria in 1981 until 2003, representing the Ballarat region. In 2000, Myrtle was presented with the Frances Penington Award for an outstanding contribution by a public or community-managed housing tenant to the community. By that time, Myrtle had fostered a total of 48 children through the years and helped many local families find a home. In recognition of Myrtle's hard work and dedication, AHV's boardroom is named in her honour.

"Helping Aboriginal families secure decent housing has been my main aim, and to see this happen has been a great achievement in itself." — Myrtle Muir

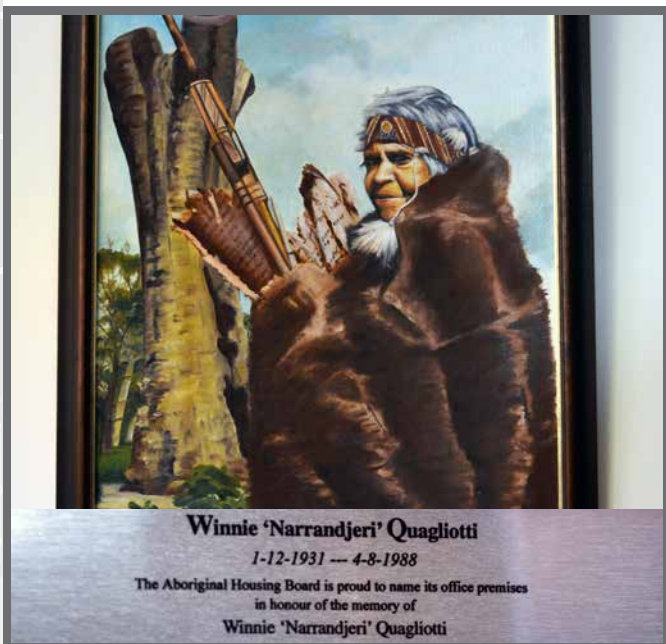
Myrtle's achievements paralleled those of Aunty Winnie Quagliotti and Aunty Patricia Ockwell, the former being another inaugural board member (Metropolitan — Dandenong region) and Chairperson from 1987 until her passing a year later. She was known for her warmth, vision and fair treatment of others, as well as her confident, direct approach to Aboriginal welfare and housing issues. A portrait of Aunty Winnie adorns the entry to AHV's Narrandjeri House building — named in her memory.



Aunty Pat was an AHV board member from 1989–1993 (Westernport) and served as Chairperson from 1996–2004. A proud Wurundjeri woman, Aunty Pat joined the Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative in 1977, assisting Aboriginal people in the areas of health, housing, employment, education and general welfare. Aunty Pat also worked diligently to help young offenders to get their lives back on track, and was successful in establishing an arrangement whereby they could serve the final 28 days of their sentence in hostels where she worked. In this way, Aunty Pat could directly support these young people to make the transition back into community life, and to find work.

The AHV we have today could not have been possible without the work of Myrtle, Winnie and Pat, together with so many strong and empowering Aboriginal women.

This year, we are set to hit another significant milestone, with the third and final tranche of title transfers of properties from the Victorian Government to AHV. This concludes a major step toward self-determination and delivers on the long held aspirations of the founding Elders of AHV. We look forward to celebrating the final tranche and our continued journey towards self determination.



NAIDOC WEEK

NAIDOC Week runs from 8–15 July and AHV will be hosting their annual Family Day event at Collingwood Children's Farm on 11 July. Keep your eye on our Facebook page and the next edition of Mia Mia for more details and other events in your area.

More Than A Landlord

SUMMERTIME FUN

Hundreds of AHV tenants in the northern suburbs have joined in the fun of the More Than A Landlord project's two major summer events: Creeds Farm Family Christmas Gathering and Funfields Family Day Out.

The Family Christmas Gathering was held on Saturday 16 December and was attended by over 100 people, including a very special man in red who rode in on a CFA fire truck! Tenants and their families enjoyed a buffet lunch, craft workshops, balloon twisting, face painting and Christmas carols.

The other successful community event was our Funfields Family Day Out; held on Friday 19 January. It was a scorcher of a day at 41 degrees, so there was plenty of water, fruit, water rides and shelter to keep everyone cool and hydrated. It was a record turnout this year with 160 attendees joining in the fun and enjoying a BBQ lunch.

Both events form part of our More Than a Landlord project, currently in its pilot stage and open to AHV tenants in the northern suburbs. The program offers AHV tenants the chance to work with a Life Coach, to set and achieve personal goals. Tenants who live in the northern suburbs can get involved by calling Sam or Alex on 9403 2100 or emailing wellbeing@ahvic.org.au.



We encourage all AHV tenants to get in touch with their Housing Officer if they are experiencing issues impacting their family or tenancy. There are organisations and other resources we may be able to refer you to, so please get in touch.

And the winners are...

GARDENING COMPETITION

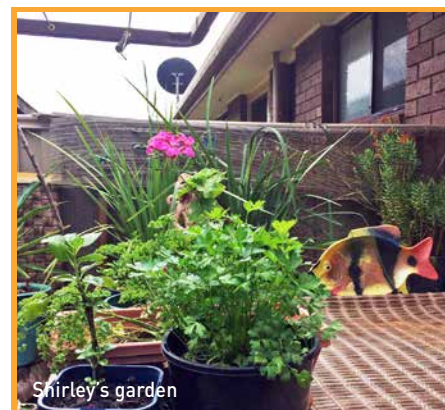
As Summer draws to a close, so does our 'Spring to Summer' Gardening Competition. A big thank you to tenants who participated this year and congratulations to our three winners — Robyn, Tracey and Shirley — for all the hard work they put in to their gardens.

It's clear that each of our winners take great pride in their gardens, and their hard work is evident in the pictures below.

Throughout the hot sunny days of January the gardens have maintained their beauty with stunning geraniums, radiant roses and a vast selection of vegetables.

All winners will receive a gift voucher from Bunnings to help them to maintain and grow their beautiful gardens.

Congratulations to everyone, and keep an eye out later in the year for details on the next gardening competition for your chance to win.



Calling AHV's young household members

AHV ANNUAL REPORT COVER – ARTWORK COMPETITION

We would like to invite AHV household members, between 5 and 18 years of age, to submit their own artwork for the chance to win a gift voucher and feature on the cover of AHV's Annual Report for 2017/18.

This year, NAIDOC Week will celebrate the invaluable contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have made — and continue to make — to our communities, our families, our rich history and to our nation.

We encourage AHV's young household members to think about this year's NAIDOC theme, '*Because of her, we can!*' when creating your artwork. Think about the women in your life who influence you, any activities you might do together or moments you have shared that hold a special place in your heart.

Through the artworks submitted, we can celebrate the strength of all the strong women in your lives and our community.

See the enclosed Entry Form for full details or jump on the website for more information.

SISTERS DAY OUT

The Sisters Day Out workshops (run by FVLPS) aim to prevent family violence by providing a culturally welcoming and safe space for Koori women to come together and participate in a range of activities. Activities place an emphasis on self-care and well-being, along with an information session about family violence prevention presented by FVPLS Victoria staff, raising awareness of family violence and its underlying cause and impacts.

Check out the dates for their upcoming events, and keep up to date on their website www.fvpls.org.