



# Village Voice

Your monthly Clarence Village community newsletter

FREE



Quality Manager Tonia Fitzcosta shows off the super-sized anniversary cake served up in the dining room to celebrate Dougherty Villa's 30th anniversary in February. Photo: Simon Hughes.

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## Celebrating 30 years of Dougherty Villa

At 30 years old, Dougherty Villa might seem like a spring chicken to its residents and staff, but what it lacks in birthdays, it more than makes up in the quality of care it has provided across those three decades.

Thousands of people have called Dougherty Villa home or their workplace since it opened its doors in 1993, and many more will continue to, ensuring its legacy of care, friendship, and support for Grafton's aging residents carries on for future generations.

More on the big event pages 6-7.



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# A note from the Village CEO



Recently Dougherty Villa celebrated its 30th birthday. Leading up to the celebration I found in the archives a copy of our founding Chairman Bill Dougherty OAM's notes relating to the origins. Bill (ever the persuasive orator) ended his address with a call to action, imploring the other board members to "accept the challenge and our responsibility" by making an application to build the hostel that is now Dougherty Villa.

As with many of my trips through the archive, I was left with the feeling that history does indeed rhyme and while the challenges may differ, our responsibility to look after seniors in our community is unchanged.

Over the course of this year and those to come we will be presented with challenges and trials. It's helpful at those times to return to the past and remind ourselves that our forebears faced and overcame the same issues – funding, staffing, community support – by simply doing their best and accepting their responsibility.

Kind regards,  
Duncan McKimm

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## Celebrating people and places

Milestones inhabit many of the pages this issue. They range from a few years to 100 but they all have significance and contribute to the Clarence Village story.

From the elders of the Dougherty Villa, to the Villa itself, and its staff, right across the Clarence Village footprint, everyone plays a role in shaping the community here.

It's great to have the Village Voice around to record some of these moments but they don't all have to be amazing milestones to make its pages.

Every day, people do great things here, quietly helpful things. It all combines to make Clarence Village the wonderful, caring place it is. And all of that is worth celebrating.

If you have a story or item you would like to see featured in these pages please get in touch.

*Lesley*

Email Lesley:  
[news@clarencevillage.com.au](mailto:news@clarencevillage.com.au)



LET'S  
CELEBRATE



My Aged Care specialist officer Rachelle Farmer gave an informative presentation on the aged care services available to Grafton residents at Joan Muir Community Centre in February.

## Connecting residents to aged care services

Two information mornings hosted by Clarence Village in February, attracted a large number of village residents and members of the public.

Held at the Joan Muir Community Centre and Clarence Gardens, Aged Care Specialist Officer Rachelle Farmer presented the informative morning which covered all aspects of the My Aged Care services available to Grafton residents looking to navigate the aged care journey.

The aged care specialist role is a relatively new one (a result of the 2021 Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety) and Grafton was one of the first places to have its own specialist on site.

Rachelle said up until then easily accessible avenues for people to find out about their aged care choices was lacking.

“Having the opportunity to sit down, face-to-face and bring a support person or family

member with them and find this information has been such a great thing. Now everybody can access to what they deserve and are entitled to.”

Rachelle spent the morning explaining all the options available from in-home assistance packages through to residential care.

“It really gives people peace of mind when you receive helpful advice. I’m here to make sure nobody misses out on anything that is available to them.”

Rachelle will be hosting another presentation at Clarence on Queen on Thursday March 16 at 10.30am.

To book a free appointment with Rachelle Farmer at the Grafton office of Services Australia call 1800 227 475 or reach out to Penny in the Village office who can help you make an appointment with Rachelle.

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# Our 100 Club may be small but it's big on legends



Dougherty Villa now has three members in its 100 Club. Leading the charge of this exclusive group is its President Doreen Sheehan, who at 105, is its most established member. Her birthday celebrations, and hairstyles, are the stuff of legends.

Doreen has since been joined by freshly minted member Levena Elkerton who had her membership recently endorsed by King Charles (see opposite), and George Smith, who will tick over to 101 this month and retain the title of the Villa's oldest gent in residence.

Honourable 100 Club mention must go to the late Gwen Cromack who snuck in her 100th birthday on January 6th before waving us all goodbye on February 4. Vale Gwen, we will miss your smiling face.



*105-year-old Doreen Sheehan has fans in high places: CEO Duncan McKimm, former board chairman Geoff Shepherd, and Clarence Valley Mayor Ian Tiley, at the recent Dougherty Villa 30th birthday celebrations.*

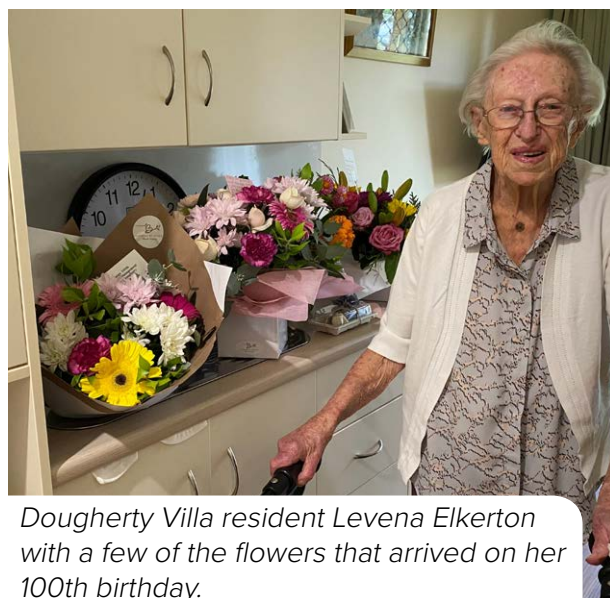
*George Smith practises on some 30th birthday cake ahead of his own 101st this month.*



*Rose Cottage resident Gwen Cromack cut her 100th birthday cake with some help from daughter Judy who hosted a small gathering for her mum at her home in January.*



*Levena shows off the letter she received from the King of England — one of the first residents to receive one from the newly appointed Charles III.*



*Dougherty Villa resident Levena Elkerton with a few of the flowers that arrived on her 100th birthday.*

## A birthday fit for a king's congratulations

Dougherty Villa resident and long-time Clarence Villager Levena Elkerton celebrated her 100th birthday on February 16.

The newly crowned centenarian received the attention she deserved, showered with well wishes and floral deliveries for the duration of the day.

"I was getting birthday wishes (from staff) before the sun came up," she said.

Overwhelmed by all the beautiful tributes her family has organised for the occasion, Levena's room was full of photographic displays and three albums of memories and birthday greetings from all the dignitaries including the Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and HRH King Charles.

Levena said she felt lucky to have reached 100 but said her good genes may also have played a role in that. "My mum lived to 100. She was two month's off 101 when she passed."

While a century of living means there's a lot to reflect upon, Levena said her time with the Girl Guides was a highlight for her.

"I was with them for 40 years and did a lot of

work with Shirley Adams."

Levena Lewis grew up on a remote Queensland sheep station and was schooled by correspondence. "No person to person, all paper."

Her parents sent her to live with her grandparents in Glen Innes so she could get a taste of "a proper school".

"Mum and dad then moved to Grafton so I joined them and that was that. I met my husband there and that's the end of the story."

Levena met Reginald 'Mick' Elkerton at tennis, her favourite sport.

She raised four children at their South Grafton home, a lot of that single-handedly after Mick passed away from cancer aged at 53. "I still had two children at school."

While that seems a lifetime ago, Levena's approach to making the most of difficult circumstances was evident from a young age.

"I badly wanted a piano when I was little but we lived on a station so I got a kerosene tin and with black and white chalk and made my own."

# Dougherty Villa celebrates thirty years: more than just a roof over residents' heads

An icon in the aged care landscape here in the Clarence Valley, Dougherty Villa celebrated its 30th anniversary in February with a special lunch gathering and cake-cutting.

Since opening in 1993 the Villa has moved with the times, expanding its footprint and services while remaining at the leading edge of contemporary aged care expectations.

It continues to provide the highest quality care in a safe and friendly environment where dignity and understanding is at the heart of everything it does.

CEO Duncan McKimm reflected on the Villa's journey at the recent celebratory lunch explaining that when the idea for an aged care facility was first floated by the Clarence Village Board its chair Bill Dougherty said at the time 'If not us, who will do it?'

"And we're sitting in the results of that effort," Mr McKimm said. "Thirty years of hard work on behalf of the community, and by all of our staff, has seen us build this lovely home and we are very proud and privileged to have you all living in it."



Activities officer and barbecue master Greg Learmonth puts on a sizzling display at the Villa's 30th celebrations.



Villa resident Ramon Wilson gives Dougherty Villa's 30th celebrations the thumbs up.



Kevin Burns, big Greg and Warren Mossy tuck into some barbecue goodness.



*Village CEO Duncan McKimm addresses the lunchtime crowd during the Dougherty Villa 30th milestone celebrations.*



*Joan Smith and Shirley Tees at Dougherty Villa's 30th celebrations.*



*Villa residents Kevin Burns and Harry Layton are ready for a special lunch to celebrate Dougherty Villa turning 30.*



*Villa residents Ernie Really and Charlie Husking enjoy a celebratory sausage at the 30th.*



## High five for Sue's work anniversary

In amongst the 30th celebrations for Dougherty Villa, another cake and cheer out for staff member Sue Weale took place to acknowledge her five years of service to the organisation.

Sue started at the Villa in personal care but after two major knee surgeries she was no longer able to continue in the role.

But instead of having to leave the job she loved, management didn't want to lose Sue and were able to find her another role as a GSO cleaner, a job that still sees her stay in touch with residents.

A former Armaguard employee, Sue said she became interested in pursuing a career in

aged care after witnessing the difference it made in her own family.

"Seeing how our beautiful mother was looked after (by aged care staff), and thinking about the love and everything they give residents was just incredible, so I decided I wanted to do that too."



*Doreen Sheehan enjoys a chat with Quality Manager Tonia Fitzcosta at the 30th celebrations barbecue.*



*Villa resident and Elder Heather Monaghan with her daughter Sharon.*



# WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

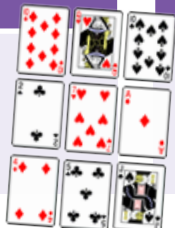
## Joan Muir Community Centre

Free activities every Tuesday from 10am - 11.30am

TUESDAY

14

Hoi



TUESDAY

21

No activity

TUESDAY

28



Irish theme high tea for St Patricks Day.

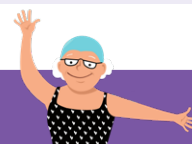
Wear something green.



### WALKING CLUB

Group walks every Thursday morning leaving Joan Muir Hall at 8.30am for a 30-minute walk.

### AQUA AEROBICS



Weekly class at South Grafton Pool every Wednesday 8am picking up from around the Village from 7.15am. Book your seat with Ros.

### MY AGED CARE SERVICES INFORMATION SESSION

CLARENCE ON QUEEN | THURSDAY 16 MARCH | 10am

Information Session My Aged Care Services with Rachele Farmer.



### CARD GAMES

Card games every Thursday from 1.30pm at Joan Muir Hall.



### EASTER RAFFLE



Lots of great prizes. \$2 a ticket or 3 for 5.  
Drawn Tuesday, April 4.

To RSVP or contact Ros: [rosh@clarencevillage.com.au](mailto:rosh@clarencevillage.com.au) or 0478 228 838  
Please get in touch with Ros if you would like a chat or visit.



*Tarnie Crapp joins the front of house admin team at Dougherty Villa, a new direction for her after working in personal care.*

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## From behind the scenes to front of house

Tarnie Crapp may already be a familiar face around Dougherty Villa’s internal circles but her latest role will be her most public to date.

Tarnie started at the Villa last May after studying for her Cert 4 while she took time off after having a baby.

The former Grafton High student already had a diploma in beauty therapy and did the odd cleaning job before undertaking the self-paced online course in aged care.

The desire to get into the field was fanned by family, her mum works in aged care in Coffs Harbour while her sister Georgia was already a member of the Dougherty Villa team.

While Tarnie loved looking after and getting to know the residents directly, the early starts were becoming “a little bit too much with bub.”

“I started in cares and then meds and then

when the reception job came up it had the perfect hours. I still do cares some weekends but otherwise I’m here Monday to Friday during office hours.”

Tarnie started behind the front counter in February and while there is a lot to learn on the job she is already way ahead thanks to her background.

“I already know all the residents so it will be nice to get to know all their families too.”

Now she is enjoying more home life with her daughter, Tarnie said she was looking forward to being around Dougherty Villa for quite a while.

“I think I’ll be here for life. I tend to stay with jobs until places close. I’ve never actually had to quit a job.”

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# March set to sizzle

It's been a quiet start to the year maintenance-wise at the Village but hopefully after some short breaks the team is all refreshed and ready to take on a bunch of new projects.

## Election promise

The NSW election is looming (see pages 12-13) so we're getting into the spirit of it by having a democracy sausage sizzle and fundraiser on Saturday, March 25 at Joan Muir Hall.

Sausage sandwiches will be available for purchase so please choose to vote at the Joan Muir Hall, enjoy a sausage afterwards, and help raise money for Grafton Community Bus.

## Outstanding response

Rachelle from Services Australia conducted information sessions for the residents of Clarence Village and the wider Grafton community to let them know what services are available to them and the personal assistance she can also offer (see story page 3).

The feedback we have received about Rachelle's presentation was outstanding. We will be holding another information session later in the year, however if you are still wanting to make an appointment with Rachelle, you can either go into Grafton's Centrelink office or phone the Village office and Penny will email through your details for Rachelle to get in contact with you in due course.

## Baby boom

It's been such a busy time with babies for the Clarence Village Maintenance crew.

Ros, Rob, Pez and Annie, Tracey, Darrel and Margaret are all expecting grandchildren set to arrive from June to August.

## School exchange

Clarence Village is looking to engage with the high school students again this year, hopefully to have them visit us here at Clarence Village and return the favour by visiting the school and partaking in some of their activities.

## Switching over

We have commenced the changeover and installation of eco-friendly hot water systems throughout Clarence Village. Clarence on Queen and City Centre Apartments have already switched over, with the rest of the village stages to commence installation from the beginning of April with estimated completion by the end of that month.

Larger hot water systems for less cost to the residents, a win-win for everyone.

## Bucket list bonanza

Ros has started collecting ideas for bucket list goals — keep your eyes peeled for an upcoming trip to the Big Banana at Coffs Harbour.

## Bus money

Clarence Village is planning lots of different fundraising ideas for the Community Buses this year. If you have any ideas about how we can raise money, please don't hesitate to contact the office on 6642 5991.

# Meet the candidates - NSW State Election: don't forget to vote on March 25

The Village Voice asked four candidates running for the NSW seat of Clarence (representing the major parties and high profile Independent) what they would stand for with regards to aged care if elected as the Member for Clarence:



**Richie Williamson**  
The Nationals

Being a local born and bred I have a solid understanding of Clarence Village and the wonderful services they provide. While I was Mayor for some time I was also patron of your organisation.

The NSW Nationals (if elected as the next Government) are committed to better health care, including a \$264 million new Grafton Base Hospital. We are the only party that has secured funds and is committed to build the hospital.

The \$250 Regional Seniors travel card helps with the cost of transport. It is only for seniors and only in regional NSW. Again, the Nationals are the only party committed to the card. The Nationals are driving down the cost of living with more than 70 rebates for seniors. Should I be elected on March 25 I will continue to carry on the work done by Chris Gulaptis over the past 12 years in making sure we get our fair share.

If elected I will be advocating on these Aged Care issues:

- that the NSW Government through the National Cabinet process, urge the Australian Government to implement a mandatory staffing mix ratio in aged care facilities, including on site registered nurses, personal care workers and allied health professionals, based on the needs of residents to ensure their safety and dignity at all times.
- to enhance the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008, currently subject to review, to ensure the availability of registered nurses on site at all times to safely manage, procure and administer medications as required by residents, particularly with respect to end-of-life and palliative care, in all residential aged care facilities in the state.
- to work to address sexual assault in nursing homes by advocating for a national register that will enable providers to check if staff have been implicated in the sexual assault of a resident.



**Debrah Novak**  
Independent



**Leon Ankersmit**  
**NSW Labor**

My name is Leon Ankersmit. I live in Maclean with my wife and three school-aged children. We have lived in the Clarence for the past 15 years. I am an executive manager in the field of community services, most recently as CEO of Anglicare North Coast.

We need a representative who has skills and energy, a vision for the district and the right motivations and affiliations to deliver outcomes during the next term of government. My ability to collaborate and forge partnership in any situation including conflicting interests is the most powerful skill I bring to the role.

I love meeting people and making sure that we attend to the needs of those who are struggling. Whether aged care workers, nurses, cleaning staff or even elderly people who are facing high cost of living on limited income, I will be a strong representative for Clarence in a NSW Labor government.

While it is largely a federal matter, the Greens believe the NSW government must play an active role in the provision, regulation and support of aged care services. A key role for Government is the long-term planning for services, based on needs analysis for each region and consultation with older people. This consultation must include First Nations peoples so that the full range of services are planned to be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.

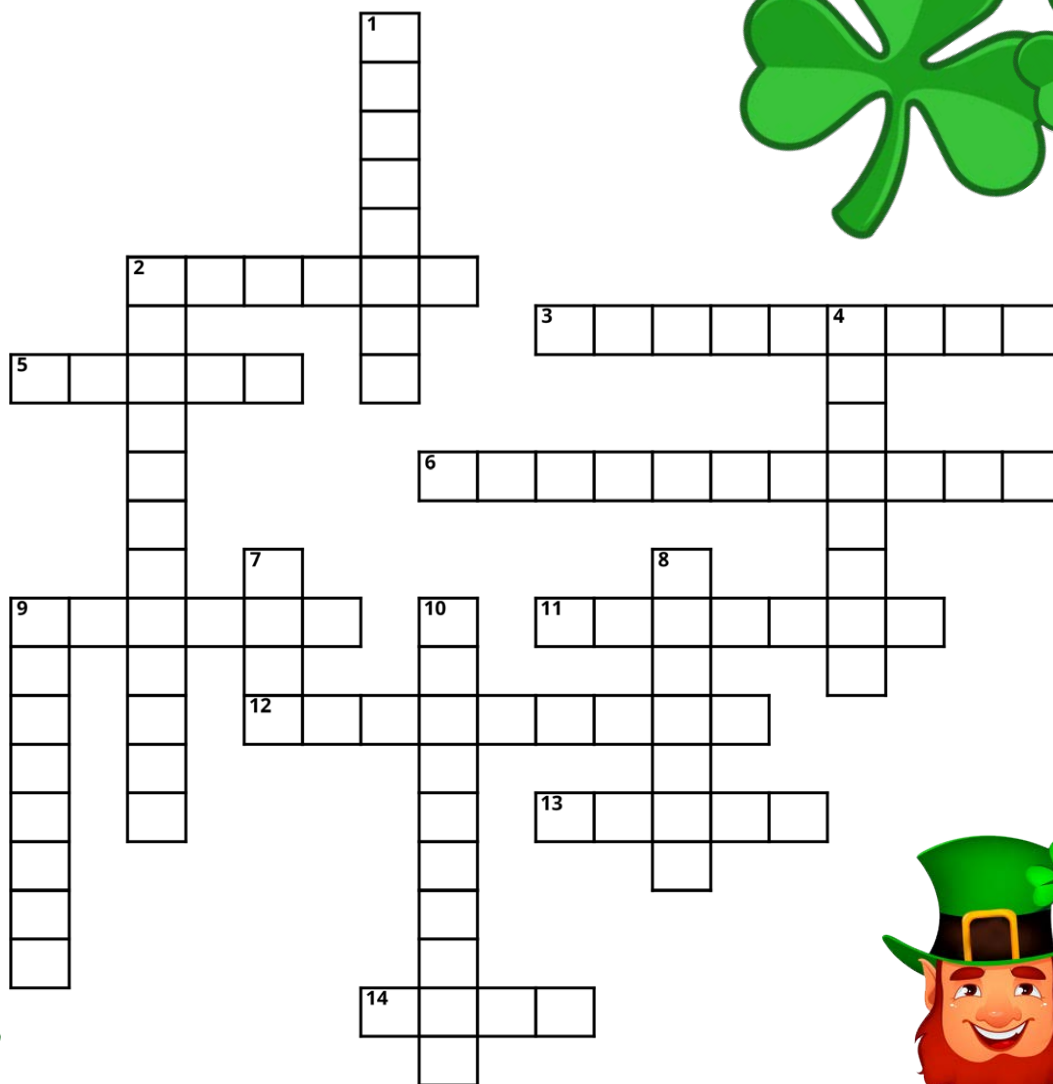
We believe all forms of Australian residential care should be moved to a model that allows for partner placement. We would seek to abolish all forms of legal exemptions to discrimination laws by those providing aged care so that this can include our LGBTIQ+ elders.

We also believe the primary objective of residential care for older people is to provide a high standard of care rather than return high profits to the facility owners. You can read our policy in full at:  
<https://greens.org.au/nsw/policies/older-people>



**Greg Clancy**  
**NSW Greens**

# St Patrick's Day Crossword



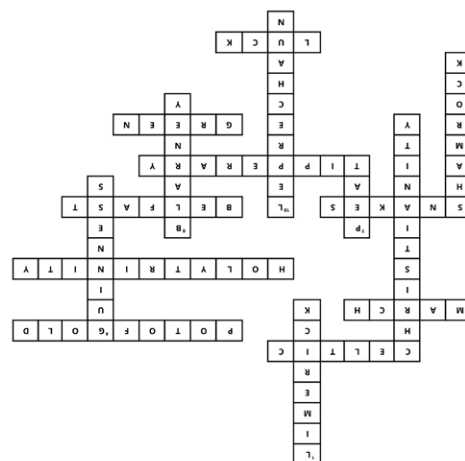
## Across

- 2. Language group that includes Irish and Scottish (6)
- 3. You find this at the end of a rainbow (3,2 (9)
- 5. Month that St. Patrick's Day falls on (5)
- 6. What does the three leaf clover symbolise? (11)
- 9. He banished these reptiles from Ireland (6)
- 11. Capital of Northern Ireland (7)
- 12. What is the name of the Irish County featured in a famous song? (9)
- 13. Color representing St. Patrick's Day (5)

- 14. The four leaf clover symbolises this (4)

## Down

- 1. Popular short and humorous verse, often nonsensical (8)
- 2. St. Patrick converted the Irish to this (12)
- 4. The name of a famous Irish beer (8)
- 7. Dug from the bogs of Ireland to use as fuel (4)
- 8. Kiss this stone to be cured from shyness (7)
- 9. Another name for a 3 leaf clover (8)
- 10. He makes shoes and guards gold (10)



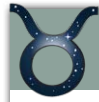
# Village stargazers - March Outlook

Welcome to your March 2023 monthly horoscopes by [Sunsigns.org](https://www.sunsigns.org). You will get an idea about prospects for finance, love, social relationships, health, travel, and education.



## ARIES

Whatever you plan will see a successful finish as the stars are in your favour. It's a great time to review and reorganise your activities. Social activities will be in focus. Health will be excellent.



## TAURUS

You can look forward to a good month as the problems of previous months will be sorted out. Love life will be delightful, and the family environment will be very cordial. Health prospects are excellent.



## GEMINI

Star positions are favourable, and you should take the proper steps to progress in life. Life with a spouse will be enjoyable, and singles will get into the right relationships. Health and finances are good.



## CANCER

Expect a good month after the first week. Life with a spouse will be more pleasant by accepting the partner's ideas. Singles will have good chances of getting into relationships. Health is encouraging, while family life will face hardships.



## LEO

Jupiter will provide you with many prospects for improving your activities. There will be no negative obstructions, and the mood will be cheerful. Family will be full of joy and happiness. There will be festivities, and a new addition to the family is possible.



## VIRGO

There can be conflicts in your life, and you must face them boldly. They will disturb your peace of mind and can cause obstructions. There will be a feeling that the whole world is against you. Try to remain focused and you will find solutions to the problems.



## LIBRA

It is essential to retain your individuality and not to be manipulated. Try not to be too negative. Socialising as much as possible is essential. A friend could make some unreasonable demands but there is no cause for concern.



## SCORPIO

Aspects of Saturn will encourage harmony in relationships. Both the family environment and married life will be cheerful. Health status will be fabulous. It is the moment to enjoy the good times offered to you.



## SAGITTARIUS

Planetary support is coming for harmony in love relationships. Life will be exciting with some wonderful events. Make sure you are not overly enthusiastic and take into account the emotions of others. Pay attention to your mental health.



## CAPRICORN

Apply moderation, and avoid jumping to conclusions. Stay focussed on your desires. Health is good and there will be a respite from long-lasting ailments. Regular medical help will be enough to keep them in good shape.



## AQUARIUS

Relationships with others will be very friendly. You will have the motivation to get things done. You will be bubbling with joy and enthusiasm but there may be minor health problems. Take care of them by prompt attention.



## PISCES

Saturn will help you in your actions and accomplishments. You will get opportunities to improve your capabilities and knowledge. Relationships will become more friendly over time. You will be able to have contact with the right people.

# Village's poet laureate

Clarence Village's poet laureate John Sullivan has again captured a village moment in witty prose. John's prolific poetry writing lends itself to publishing a new work every month so expect to see more of his penmanship in future editions.

Love your work John!

## Aqua-aerobics for Seniors

Lots of grey heads in the water  
and they're bobbing up and down  
all shades of grey and white  
and some of them are brown  
They are all senior citizens  
and most are on a pension  
Now I have joined their weekly class  
with a little apprehension.

Well some are there to exercise  
some are there to talk  
Some escaping from their partner  
to enjoy a water walk  
Some of them have two left legs  
whilst others fail to listen  
Some bladders showing wear and tear  
they'll leave the pool, they're missing.



Some folk can't move sideways,  
tread water on the spot  
Some cannot move backwards  
but they'll give it all they've got  
They'll sing along to Beatle songs,  
The Rolling Stones and Cher  
Most will have an exercise  
they mostly will prefer.

Some will wear their glasses  
Some will even wear a cap  
They all must wear their swimmers  
there's no avoiding that  
They are all shapes and sizes  
and from all walks of life  
It may be wise to not say more,  
I could get into strife.

*John Sullivan, February 2023*



**Clarence  
Village**



CarePage QR Code.  
Scan this code to take  
you directly to our online  
feedback form.

### Aged Care

Dougherty  
Villa

206 Arthur St, Grafton

6643 2377

### Supported Living

Clarence Village  
on Queen

166 Queen St, Grafton

6642 5991

### Independent Living

Clarence Village &  
Clarence Village Gardens

194 Turf St, Grafton

6642 5991

[www.clarencevillage.com.au](http://www.clarencevillage.com.au)