

January 2016



Annual General Meeting 2015

The AGM was held on November 28, 2015. This years meeting didn't disappoint. There was a lot happening, Members stepping down, new Members coming in and Awards galore! Read all about the day on page 10.

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From The CEO



Happy New Year to all our tenant members and tenants.

Over the Christmas season, Common Equity closed for a short period. All staff had a much deserved break as 2015 was a busy year. Common Equity operates a small team to deliver services to our Co-operatives and tenants and for many weeks of the year, all our teams find that they are very fully occupied in the service of the sector

The year has started with a run already as Common Equity gears up for more purchases of properties for tenants relocating from The Compound and starts the planning for our new Co-operative housing project in south west Sydney.

The early part of this year promises some long-awaited movement on the housing policy front from the State Government. We hope that policies soon to be announced include the kind of initiatives that open the door to more growth of the housing sector including smaller operators such as Common Equity. More importantly, we would like to hear that government policy has a plan to meet the massive demand for social and affordable housing in this State.

The Board of Common Equity will be undertaking a strategic planning day in late February and, in the following weeks, we will be seeking feedback from the sector on the draft plan. Don't forget, there is also an opportunity for feedback from the sector on things to consider in our plan via our website. You can find a link to the strategic plan survey when you click on our website.

This year, on March 19 we are hosting a picnic day for Co-operatives. Our Co-

operatives have been telling us that they want more opportunity for socialising and creating networks with each other. Please put it in your diary. Bookings are essential for this event and we will be advertising tickets through our fortnightly Bulletin. We hope you will join with us to make this a spectacular day and that the event will become an annual one on the calendar.

We hope to co-ordinate some of our feedback mechanisms better this year so the tools are more streamline and we are not bothering you too much. Thank you for all the input you gave us during 2015. It was a great help for planning new services, better communication and sector development.

I would like to congratulate Holly Zwalf, our recently retired member director and Cindy Wang, our hard working assistant accountant on the recent births of their beautiful babies. There is a separate article in our newsletter on the activity of the stork in recent weeks and we wish both Holly and Cindy all the very best.

Robyn Cahoun, CEO

Working for the Sector

“One of the key agendas for this group is to develop shared information about how Housing Co-operatives perform and operate across Australia”

RESEARCH ON THE CO-OPERATIVE SECTOR

Some months ago we told you about the new National Housing Co-operative network that has been established - a first for Housing Co-operatives in Australia.

One of the key agendas for this group is to develop shared information about how Housing Co-operatives perform and operate across Australia and to also, generate a research project to ascertain

the economic and social value of Housing Co-operative models.

To that end, Common Equity NSW is working with the groups from other States to develop a potential research brief and seek a university or relevant group to partner with us nationally to seek funding and undertake the research.

SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

The first two workshops of the *ELEVATE* programme were presented to participants in late 2015 with a third workshop in the series being scheduled for early 2016. The programme is planned to repeat numerous times this year and we hope a number of participants will

sign up. The feedback on the programme has been excellent and as it is further refined, we believe it will become an important component of ongoing sector development.

PAS INSPECTIONS

The PAS inspections are carried out via the Land and Housing Corporation on a regular basis to ascertain the condition and maintenance of properties on the Common Equity head lease. We have become increasingly aware that contractors are not issuing appropriate notifications about inspections and that the conduct of the inspections is

sometimes not as it should be. This came to a head late in 2015 following a complaint from one of our Co-operatives. We are currently pursuing the matter through Family and Community Services

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Late in 2015 a number of grants were available to small organisations for either volunteer support or capital improvement. Common Equity notified the sector of the grant availability and assisted a number of Co-operatives with their applications. Lets hope they yield some fruit.

Working for the Sector

“Common Equity has work underway with a number of new Co-operative groups interested in forming a Co-operative”

“The issue they are looking at is how communications can be improved- within Co-operatives, across the sector and between Common Equity and the sector and vice versa”

SECTOR DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP

The group has held a number of meetings over the last few months. The issue they are looking at is how communications can be improved within Co-operatives, across the sector and between Common Equity and the sector and vice versa. The working group has

five members from the sector and two from Common Equity. We hope some recommendations from the working group will be out soon for consultation and feedback from the sector.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

In late 2015, CENSW circulated a document for consideration by our Co-operatives regarding strategic planning. We asked you a number of pertinent questions for the future of the Co-operative sector. Feedback has been sought from Co-operatives through a variety of mechanisms - you can send a short submission via your Field Officer or fill out a survey via our

website. In addition, Co-operatives were provided with an opportunity to provide feedback regarding some of the issues at a consultation following our AGM in November. This is the first time Common Equity has conducted such a comprehensive consultation mechanism on forward planning and we thank those who have already contributed. Feedback is open until February 22, 2016.

NEW CO-OPERATIVE GROUPS

Common Equity has work underway with a number of new Co-operative groups interested in forming a Co-operative. We have a number of activities planned to work with these groups over 2016. The challenge for Common Equity and these newly formed groups is access to housing stock and capital. The Land and Housing corporation no longer transfers empty stock to housing providers on a lease arrangement. So, for new Co-operatives to be operational, capital for new stock build or purchase has to be available. The CENSW Board is currently reviewing capital acquisition options as part of its forward planning.

Property Management

UP, UP AND AWAY-TAMIL SENIORS CO-OP GETS A CHAIRLIFT

“This chairlift is of great value to our tenants, assisting each of them on a daily basis.”

For some time, the access at our Tamil Seniors property in Auburn has been problematic regarding access. Some of our older tenants have experienced difficulty with stairs. After consultation, we agreed a chairlift would be the right option for this property and the tenants residing there.

The first step in the process was to have each tenant assessed by an Occupational Therapist. Once we had received these reports and recommendations, CENSW sourced three quotes to install the recommended item at the property. We are also required to notify FaCS (Department of Family and Community Services), requesting financial assistance or approval to install the chairlift.

In this instance CENSW was granted approval to install. However, we did not gain any financial assistance from FaCS. CENSW was able to utilise money from the CENSW Disability Improvements Fund to facilitate the project. The Co-operative was consulted about the type of chairlift to be installed, timing etc.

Equipment such as a chairlift can become a vital aspect that enables people to remain independent in their own homes. For older people, being able to have that independence and to easily navigate stairs, is an important component of ensuring that life at home remains functional and easy.

The tenants are very happy with the end product, and as you can see from the photos, the work was completed professionally and efficiently. This chairlift is of great value to our tenants, assisting each of them on a daily basis.

Andrew Stassen, Property Manager



Profiling Our Co-Operatives

GETTING TO KNOW ALBURY HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE



Lynette Percy, Mark Hazeldene, June Hazeldene, Jillian Martin

It was a warm and inspiring experience speaking with June, Mark, Jillian, and Lyn via a teleconference about their Co-operative, hearing their stories and some of the changes that the Co-operative has experienced over the years. I started to understand that some of the challenges that the Co-operative members battle with might be different to the encounters that the city and wider Sydney Co-operatives experience.

Albury Co-operative is situated on the beautiful meandering Murray river which borders NSW and Victoria, 6 hours drive from Sydney. Rob Buchanan, our Senior Field Officer knows and supports the Co-operative in all matters but for the rest of us, the Albury Housing Co-operative is a bit of a mystery.

Albury is a major regional city, located on the Hume Highway on the northern side of the Murray River. The border cities of Albury and Wodonga have continued to prosper, attracting new industries and offering a relaxed lifestyle unmatched by the hectic metropolitan capital cities. The City of Albury now has an estimated population of over 49,467, with Wodonga at 39,644, giving urban Albury and Wodonga a population in excess of 89,111. Albury is also within easy reach of the snowfields, high-country, waterways and wineries, and less than 3 hours by an excellent highway from Melbourne but a bit further from Sydney.

Albury Co-operative's formation

In 1991, a group of interested people gathered to form a committee to pursue the establishment of Co-operative Housing in Albury. An application was made to the Federal Government for funding of approximately \$1M. In 1993 the group was given permission to proceed with the project. Nine blocks of land, located off Baranbale Way, Springdale Heights, were purchased from the Albury and Wodonga Development Corporation (AWDC). The AWDC was set up in 1973 to encourage

more balanced development in Australia and provide an alternative to capital city living. Springdale Heights is a suburb of the city of Albury, located north of the Albury Central Business District. The group, in conjunction with relevant government authorities, then proceeded to design suitable plans and styles of accommodation to meet the needs of each of the families, which would also be aesthetically appealing and in accordance with the local environment

Eventually, in 1994 funding was approved for the construction of the dwellings and tenders were called. The two successful tenders were, A V Jennings for the construction of 6 homes and Swales and Kemp for the remaining 3 properties.

By August 1994 nine extremely happy and excited families eagerly took up residency in their new homes. So began the task, it was explained to me, 'of putting into practice all our acquired knowledge regarding Co-operative housing'. Once the members settled with operational and governance matter, the Co-operative soon recognised the need for 2 bedroom dwellings to meet the needs of single households, the needs of couples and of one parent families with a child. A decision was made to lodge another submission in 1998 for further funding to purchase two bedroom dwellings. Again, the Co-operative was lucky and took possession of two 2-bedroom units at East Lavington.

On 1st July 2012, under the Labor Government's Stimulus Package, 8 units were built in North Albury and marked for Co-operative housing. Initially the units were to be a separate Co-operative to the already existing Co-operative but CENSW believed it would be better and more viable to combine the new with the old. So it was with a lot of trepidation that Albury Co-operative received 8 properties from Common Equity. These units are situated in Koonwarra Street, North Albury. There are 2 x 2 bedroom units and 6 x 1 bedroom units.

Profiling Our Co-Operatives

A story from June Hazeldene

When we retired we moved to Tasmania and were lucky to get a house through Public Housing. Our son is an original tenant with the Albury Co-operative and was taken ill so we decided to move back to the mainland and to Albury. We found private rental really took its toll on our pension. We did however get some financial assistance from our son and his wife and when a unit became available within the Co-operative we were encouraged to apply. We have spent 15 happy years in our beautiful unit and the sense of security has been appreciated. We have enjoyed being on Committees over the years.

Sadly my husband passed away last year so I now live alone, but my rent has been adjusted making life easier for me, which I would not find in private rental. The fact that I can live here for the rest of my life is a great comfort to me. So in a nutshell I believe the biggest benefit of living in a Co-operative is the security.

The latest acquisition increased the housing Co-operative to a total of 19 properties to be managed.

Tenancy challenges

After receiving the new properties from CENSW the venture is still seen to be challenging. Mark commented 'there is a difference between the large urban cities, where space is very sparse and very expensive. In Albury space is still available and in our experience one-bedroom units are perceived by housing applicants as an in-between home, too small to stay for years, let alone permanently. This doesn't just apply to young people who intend to marry and have children and are only interested in larger properties for the long-term. For single households, a one-bedroom unit in Albury is too small to allow for regular visits from family and friends', as a Co-operative members said, it is also too small for tenants to effectively have enough space for their belongings which they have accumulated over the years'.

Different geographical customs impact on our behavior and on our expectations. Mark went on, 'we have had many issues with the one bedroom units and are now thinking to approach companies who are looking for properties for their employees to stay'. It really was evident from the Co-operative members that I spoke with that they are determined to seek the best possible options and solutions to minimise the financial and membership risk of their Co-operative. The Co-operative seems very dear to them despite all the issues that come up from time to time. This may be one of the differences between being a tenant in Community and Public Housing and a member in Co-operative Housing. It is the intentional formation of the Albury Co-operative community that was able to build cohesion amongst some of their members, to work together to align their Co-operative practices and thereby to create the seedbed for secure

and affordable homes for members.

Questions & Answers

The Co-operative has also experienced personal set backs as four of their long-term members have passed away since 2011. This poses many questions for the Co-operative and especially for those members who have lost their loved ones. Strangely, it seems that two adult children have returned to the 'parental home' now with their own babies. As Lyn said, 'this feels like we are starting a new generation'. This is a question that other Co-operatives have also talked about and at times battled with.

To my question, what are the Co-operative's strengths; Lyn answered 'that the Co-operative's good communication processes include positive checks & balances in all operational matters. This helps to balance our activities and creates our success. We are transparent in our dealings with each other and circulate information to all members. It is then up to individual members to read up on the information, and to participate in the Co-operative and some do and some do not'.

'It is hard work to look after your Co-operative, full on and time consuming, but in the long term rewarding to live in a close community and in really well maintained properties. It makes it worthwhile dealing with those irregularities that we all could do without, like chasing up rents and fixing up properties that have been left in bad repair'. The members continued, 'we then pull together to rectify these issues and we call on CENSW to assist where we feel out of our depth but we are happy to live in our Co-operative. As time goes on, we hope to recruit new members that will carry on the spirit and the administration of our Co-operative'.

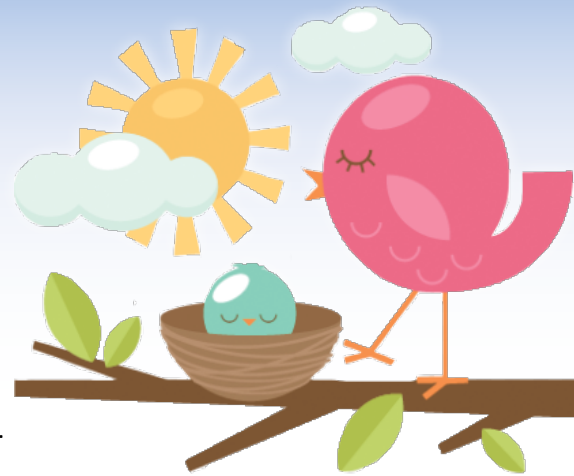
I would like to thank Lyn, June, Mark & Jillian for their generosity of time on such short notice and their openness in our conversation. Albury Housing Co-operative's will be celebrating their 22nd anniversary next year.

Mirjana Kreiselmaier, Field Officer

People Power At Common Equity

BABY BOOM

Congratulations to Cindy Wang, Account Assistant at Common Equity on the arrival of her baby girl, and an impending congratulations to Holly Zwalf, a former Board Member who is about to have her first child any day now.



Cindy's beautiful baby girl was born Sunday December 20 2015 weighing 3585g. Cindy and her husband Brian Gu (who use to work part time here in the office offering IT support to us) named their daughter Isabella. Isabella is their second daughter.

"My second child was born a few days before Christmas. It's my best Christmas gift. I am very thankful to have a very supportive family and company. Thank you all at CENSW for your support and best wishes" - Cindy



At the time of going to press, Holly had not yet had her baby which is due imminently. We wish Holly all the very best and hope to have some good news to share with you in our next newsletter.

People Power At Common Equity

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015

Common Equity celebrated its 2015 AGM in November 2015 with a large representation from the sector of 16 Co-operatives and many others responding with their apologies and proxies.



Below Salesh Nandan, Technical Director and Treasurer speaking at the AGM

The AGM highlighted the substantial achievements of the last year including the organisation maturing as a community housing provider with improved data reporting systems, extended activities in sector development and sector advocacy, more comprehensive review of issues such as risk management, strategic review and future planning.

AGM Awards

Congratulations to all those receiving awards at the AGM. A list of recipients appears below:

20 Years Kapit-Bahayan

- Joe Caballero
- Ruben Amores
- Cen Amores
- Dodong Capulong
- Delia Caballero

10 Years Kapit-bahayan

- Pablo Lee
- Jean Javillonar

5 Years Sedgwick

- Jimmy Lopez
- Myrma Lopez
- Edgar Escultura
- Violeta Escultura
- Cleotilde Baltazar

5 years CHOISES

- Ameika Johnson
- Jessica Beck



Dong from Kapit-Bahayan accepting the award on behalf of Joe Caballero 20 years long service

Nassim Arrage, Chairperson, also talked about the significant projects underway regarding relocation of tenants from The Compound to new premises and the planned commencement of a new building project in the south west of Sydney for a new Co-operative development of 13 studios. These projects were the subject of Common Equity achieving a \$4million grant from Government. He also noted with disappointment the troubled times of The Compound Co-operative which suffered some considerable internal issues over the last twelve months in relation to resolving to relocate. While the majority of tenants will relocate under the Common Equity plan, some have chosen to go their own way. This means that The Compound Co-operative will not continue into the future as a Co-operative. However, the bulk of funds available in the project will support Co-operative housing and tenants and for those relocating, they are moving to new accommodation over which they have a choice and which will be a secure and titled property.



Amalina Wallace, Member Director

People Power At Common Equity



Carmen Osborne, Technical Director

In addition, three awards were allocated in the areas of innovation and special service.

Innovation

CHOISES

In recognition of the Co-operative's efforts & commitment to introduce a new initiative to maintain financial sustainability by incorporating and attaining a goal in the Co-operative development plan.

KAPIT-BAHAYAN

In recognition of the Co-operatives efforts & commitment to supporting external communities especially refugees in developing sustainable and long-term employment skills.

MARGARET GRAY FROM CARE-N-CO

In recognition of her substantial efforts & commitment to introduce a new initiative to maintain financial sustainability and by incorporating and attaining a goal in the Co-operative development plan. Margaret was recognised for her long and diligent service to the Co-operative in this special Common Equity Award.

Robyn Cahoun, CEO



Nassim Arrage, Chair presenting a Service Award to Margaret Gray for all her help at Care-N-Co Co-operative



Left: Members of Sedgwick Co-operative receiving their 5 year long service award. Left to Right: Emma Bracerros receiving the award on behalf of Violeta Escultura, Cleotilda Baltazar, Myrma Lopez, Edgar Escultura, Jimmy Lopez

People Power At Common Equity

JOHN MARTENSEN & ALPHA

Last year, we reported John Martensen's 90th birthday celebration. Sadly, since then, John has passed away. The account below tells the touching story of John's passing and the wonderful support he received from Alpha.

I've always wondered how fit a fiddle is; and what a fiddle needs to be fit for. Not running up hills, surely? Fit for playing and fit to be played, probably. John Martensen—bad violinist, enthusiastic singer, recently deceased—took pride in the fact that he was fiddle-fit. Into his 91st year he displayed an abundance of vim, strutting through Alpha's leafy garden in sandals and socks, thumping his bare chest—the quintessential Alpha male, dispensing wisdom and cheer.

John died a couple of months ago in a manner courageous and exemplary. His dying inspired Alpha House Artist's Co-operative to manifest the attributes of the fourth word in its name, as it rallied around a comrade falling.

John once demonstrated to me, before one of Alpha's monthly general meetings, the series of exercises he did every day: spinning around with arms outstretched, hands cupped "to collect chi and draw it into my body. Keeps me young and strong," adding: "Jolly good show!" All the shows John was in were jolly. His life was colour and enthusiasm: Embracing the artistic underbelly of Sydney in the 50s, 60s and 70s; serving in WW2—posted to New Guinea to keep an eye out for those "pesky Japs"; serving at the coal-face—literally. At some point he started painting and took to wearing berets and a moustache. He got involved with Alpha House when it was a rag-tag gaggle of artists without a home, before it became one of Australia's first housing Co-operatives.

Life was a game John played with grace and gratitude. Loving and generous, kind and forgiving; sharing wisdom and wit, money and friendship with whomsoever the Fates presented.

One thing John took seriously was health. Aged 90 he still gamboled up King Street, using grocery bags as dumbbells, fraternising with chums, throwing coins to busker's and baggers—occasionally bringing them home for biscuits and tea. He ate well, loved generously, and stayed on his toes (and did his best to keep the rest of us on ours). "Stay informed," he insisted.

When John got sick it came as a surprise. He arrived at the door of a neighboring Alphan, unable to walk, wobbly and weak. "I'm



dreadfully sorry my dear. But my legs don't work. I think I need an ambulance". Waiting in emergency he told the Alphans with him that he knew of four or five highly effective "alternative" cancer cures — "all infallible". He didn't get to test them on the large tumour in his stomach: The more conventional chemotherapy knocked him flat on his back, where he remained. John was in hospital for weeks, and hated it. Alphans visited daily, bringing chicken soup, Nexus magazines, and as many creature comforts as the ward could

fit.

John was dying and wanted to be in the only place appropriate for such a daunting undertaking: Home: Alpha.

John was not the first person to die in Alpha, but he was the first to be nursed palliatively.

Until his legs stopped working John didn't give much thought to the fact that his flat was two floors up. Suddenly he could no longer sit up in bed, or walk to the toilet. The Alphan living in the apartment below John's didn't hesitate to relocate before he was released from hospital. In a week the apartments were switched, cleaned and redecorated. Records were made of the layout and contents of John's flat so all could be reconfigured—in the new flat downstairs—exactly as it had been before he went to hospital. Alphans packed and lugged boxes and furniture and recreated John's home. Someone even matched the green paint on the walls. Almost. Countless books in the same spots on the same shelves, beneath the same paintings of nymphs and satyrs, and the same statuettes and figurines of Egyptian and pagan deities. Mythology and art—the cornerstones of John's world.

There was talk of installing a wall-mounted electronic rail-hoist in the stairwell, but such things take time, something John didn't have much of.

It took a while, huffing and puffing, to get him up and down the stairs.

"Hold the rail John. Now lift your left leg. That's it. Up a bit. A bit more. There you go."

"I can't do it! The bloody chemo's ruined my legs."

"You're going to have to help us John. We

People Power At Common Equity

can't carry you." He was a big bloke. One breathless, shaky step at a time up to his new digs. Same as his old digs.

Home, John landed in bed, grateful and overwhelmed. "Now that I no longer use my legs, I'll

have to compensate," he announced pumping dumbbells up and down.

"Don't let them take me back to hospital. Euthanase me before that happens." No-one made promises.

The next months were hectic, challenging, emotionally fraught, and rewarding, edifying, and unifying. How one person manages to be the sole provider of care for a person with terminal cancer is hard to fathom. Thankfully there are 28 Alphans. Everyone helped when they could; but in the main the burden was shouldered by a Core-John-Care-Unit of two to four, on call round the clock; keeping John clean, comfortable, entertained, organising trips to doctors, the Church, the park, up King Street (so John could say hi to his extensive fan-club and ensure the neighborhood was being run properly). The Core-John-Care-Unit (CJCU) asked the rest of Alpha for help from time to time—and seeing how frazzled they were—help always came, though no one was made to feel obliged to provide it. Some Alphan's hardly knew John. No one thought less of anyone who didn't offer to spend the night sleeping on the floor beside him, or changing his diaper. Some of those who found themselves in the CJCU wound up there by dint of propinquity: living closest to John's flat—across the hall, or upstairs—they slept



John died penniless. One of his last requests was burial in a plot by the sea.

A resourceful Alphan found a funeral plot on Gumtree: a lovely patch of land in a lovely cemetery in the bush an hour from Newtown. No sea views. As the life of the party, John was afraid of being too far away from it, away from the action, away from the grubby streets of the inner-city; he feared getting stuck in "woop woop". It was pointed out to one of the Alphans who objected to John being buried so far away: "He's not in this world any more. "Woop woop" has taken on an altogether different meaning. If there's an after party, John's holding court, flamboyantly, probably dressed in that awful dressing gown. And if there isn't an after party, it doesn't matter." John subscribed to the idea of reincarnation, so maybe he's not at the after party; maybe he's a baby in Bangladesh.

Newtown's St Joseph's Church was a suitably rickety, suitably ostentatious, edifice for John's send-off. Tears were few, laughs and hugs were plentiful. Six brightly coloured, gorgeous women carried the coffin. John would have been tickled pink. It was the priest's idea; he who had counseled John in his last weeks and welcomed him back to the Church he'd left decades ago. The Catholic Church brought John comfort in his last months. He felt

with doors open, the better to hear cries of pain. After a couple of months the CJCU were exhausted and, in spite of John's complaints and fearful, tearful opposition, he spent ten days in respite.

whole and sanctified: embraced by the two institutions that had most influenced him and that he loved above all others.

Shortly after he was released from hospital John attended an Alpha GM, held down in the studio instead of upstairs in the (wheelchair defying) gallery. Wrapped in blankets and a beanie, he sat in the middle of the gathering. Almost as deaf as a post, understanding little, he nodded and shook his head, and did his best to not throw-up into the sick-bag on his lap. Those beside him shouted salient snippets into his ears. "Eh? What's that dear? Oh yes, yes, jolly good." He found strength to raise his hand to vote, concurring with the majority, even if he didn't know what he was voting on. Halfway through the proceedings, exhausted, he excused himself and was wheeled away to bed. Before going he said: "Thank you very much for letting me continue to stay here at Alpha in my current state."

"Oh don't be ridiculous John," we muttered, wiping away tears.

Ben Birt, Member of Alpha

This article is slightly abridged version due to space constraints.



Members Services

MARCH
19|16

CO-OPERATIVES PICNIC DAY

During various regional meetings it is often been raised that the Co-operative sector doesn't have many opportunities to mix and mingle together. Regional meetings tend to be attended only by those who are representing their Co-operative and the meetings are too busy with a full agenda of items to be discussed.

In response to this feedback, we have decided to plan a picnic day, this will be

held on March 19, 2016. The day will be fun and relaxed allowing Co-operatives to mix and mingle with each other. Catering will be provided as well as music, games and prizes. We are hoping to make this an annual event.

So, make a note of this date in your diary! We will be releasing more information shortly.

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST IN THE NEXT *ELEVATE* PROGRAMME

ELEVATE is a series of workshops that develops skills of Co-operative members in Co-operative management, conflict management, negotiation and governance. The next programme is

starting soon. To register your interest in participating in the workshops, please contact Mirjana Kreiselmaier on 9356 9240 or mirjana@commonequity.com.au

JOHN MANT SCHOLARSHIP

Common Equity's Board had decided in 2014 to initiate a new programme, the John Mant Scholarship Programme. The aim of the board's thinking was to assist Co-operative members and tenants to engage in further education through the provision of incentives. CENSW offered five scholarships in 2015 to both new and continuing students in their educational pursuits. The results are awesome and all five students have made advances in their capacity and skills to become more competitive in the employment market. The successful story of each of the scholarship recipients highlights the significance of taking opportunities to make positive changes in life. Sometimes small steps produce ongoing and unexpected positive changes.

Common Equity is again calling on Co-operative members and tenants to lodge scholarship applications for 2016 if you are motivated to embark on further studies or training with the aim of gaining paid employment. In the last financial year, five

tenants and Co-operative members have been supported to ease the financial burden whilst studying and we hope to be able to provide support this year again.

For all further information on the specifications of eligibility for the scholarship please email, lucy@commonequity.com.au or call our office on, 9356 9212. Lucy will email or post to you the Scholarship Brochure entailing the details as well as the application form. Alternatively, you can access this information including the application form on CENSW website. Please go to, www.commonequity.com.au

These are the eligible scholarship categories:

- Certificate Level Study (including Apprenticeships and Traineeships and other registered vocational training)
- Diploma and Advanced Diploma Study
- Undergraduate Study

Mirjana Kreiselmaier, Community Development Officer

Members Services

“The Co-operative Sector in Australia’s modern economy was very much alive and kicking!”

“Richard O’Leary also stressed the values of his Co-operative: Openness, Honesty, Social Responsibility, Caring for Others. These are surely worth more than a cursory glance”

CO-OPERATIVES NSW SYMPOSIUM

A Co-operatives NSW Symposium was held on Saturday October 31st 2015 at Sydney University. Peter Page, Member Director attended and reflects on the day.

The Symposium opened and chaired by Greg Patmore, Co-operative Research Group at Sydney University, which jointly sponsored the symposium with the Co-operative Federation of NSW.

I was generally pleased and heartened to learn that, apart from housing, the Co-operative Sector in Australia’s modern economy was very much alive and kicking! Indeed, it seems it might well be on the verge of a vigorous growth period if the apparent growing interests by governments continues to grow and develop.

This Symposium held recently at Sydney University, under the auspices of that Universities Co-operative Research Group (led by Greg Patmore) focused more on food and beverages industry existing in NSW. However, there were representatives from organisations involved with providing advice and services to people who are in or who wish to become involved in the Co-operative sector in some way or other.

At the Symposium, one of the main keynote speakers was Ellen Michel, the Executive Director of Co-operative Grocer Network (CGN) in the USA. The overall picture painted by Ellen was of a Co-operative sector very much alive and developing fast, particularly in the rural and regional population centres. It was encouraging to hear that in general, \$1,600 is generated for every \$1,000 spent in food Co-operatives. Of course, many problems have been faced by Co-operatives but in general the sector is strong and expanding.

The second speaker was Richard O’Leary,

the Macleay Regional Co-operative CEO. Macleay Regional Co-operative was founded in 1905 and traded in a variety of fields. Recently (2014) it took over a Kempsey supermarket known as a Super IGA. The IGA (Independent Grocers Australia) network was actually a large nation-wide Co-operative of independent grocers under the direction of The Co-operative Food Group based in Newcastle, NSW.

The IGA stores represent the spearhead of Co-operatives in the food and beverage industry in Australia. Here is a national Food chain in a position to compete with the larger food chain supermarket. Essentially it is a Co-operative model versus a corporate model.

Richard O’Leary also stressed the values of his Co-operative:

Openness, Honesty, Social Responsibility, Caring for Others. These are surely worth more than a cursory glance.

I am happy to say that my attendance at this symposium was very worthwhile. Not only is the Co-operative sector alive and well in our modern world, it is actually growing. In NSW alone, there are almost 700 established Co-operatives (and more than 40,000 incorporated associations!). Furthermore, with growing interest by governments, I believe the sector has a rosy future. But I want to finish with a challenge: Which of our own Co-operatives in CENSW will be the first to set up their own Co-operative as a means of self-support and fund-raising? Could several Co-operatives within an area or which share some basic commonality such as interests or language work together to explore and exploit this form of activity to promote their own development?

Peter Page, Member Director

Something Fun

SUDOKU

4	9		8				6	
1			4			8	3	
					6			
		5	7			2		
			5		4			
		6			8	1		
			6					
	5	1			3			7
	3				9		8	5

How to Play: Within the rows and columns are 9 “squares” (made up of 3 x 3 spaces). Each row, column and square (9 spaces each) needs to be filled out with the numbers 1-9, without repeating any numbers within the row, column or square.

Something Fun

LOGIC PUZZLE

Active Clues

1. Of the expedition leaving in March and Ruben's team, one will include Janice and the other will include Yolanda.
2. Janice's team will leave 1 month before Yolanda's team.
3. Ruben's expedition will be either Velma's team or the team leaving in April.
4. Shelby's team will be either Zachary's team or Charles's expedition.
5. Mike's team will leave 1 month after Charles's expedition.
6. Charles's team will leave sometime before Zachary's team.

Back story and Goal

Springfield University is sending out several expeditions to study different bat species around the world. Each expedition will include a Chiroptologist (bat expert) and a Speleologist (cave expert), and each will take place in a different country. Match each team to their expedition and the month in which they'll be leaving.

Remember, as with all grid-based logic puzzles, no option in any category will ever be used more than once.

		chiroptologists				speleologists			
		Charles	Mike	Ruben	Zachary	Janice	Shelby	Velma	Yolanda
months	January								
	February								
	March								
	April								
speleologists	Janice								
	Shelby								
	Velma								
	Yolanda								

Peach And Prosciutto Salad

Celebrate the best of summer with this super easy salad!

INGREDIENTS

- 100g baby rocket
- 100g thinly sliced prosciutto
- 3 yellow peaches, cut into wedges
- 1/2 x 250g tub cherry bocconcini, drained, torn
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- 1/4 cup French vinaigrette dressing

METHOD

Arrange rocket on a platter. Tear prosciutto into large pieces and place on top of rocket. Top with peaches, bocconcini and chives.

Drizzle the salad with dressing. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve.



Peach and prosciutto salad mai

Turmeric Chicken



INGREDIENTS

- 200g seasonal greens, such as baby spinach, Swiss chard
- 150g wholewheat couscous
- ½ a bunch of fresh mint, (15g)
- 1 lemon
- 1 tablespoon blanched hazelnuts
- 2 large roasted peeled red peppers in brine , or 4 small ones
- ¼ x skinny homemade houmous, or 2 tablespoons natural yoghurt
- hot chilli sauce, optional
- 2 sprigs of fresh oregano
- 1 level teaspoon ground turmeric
- olive oil
- 2 x 120g skinless free-range chicken breasts

METHOD

Pick and finely chop the oregano leaves, then place in a bowl with the turmeric, a pinch each of sea salt and black pepper and 2 tablespoons of oil to make a marinade. Toss the chicken in the marinade and leave aside.

Blanch the greens in a large pan of boiling water until just tender enough to eat but still vibrant in colour, then drain, reserving the water. In a bowl, just cover the couscous with boiling greens water, season, pop a plate on top and leave for 10 minutes. Pick and finely chop the mint

leaves and stir into the fluffy couscous with the juice of half a lemon, then season to perfection. Toast the hazelnuts in a large dry non-stick frying pan on a medium-high heat, removing and crushing in a pestle and mortar once lightly golden. Return the frying pan to a high heat and cook the chicken for 4 minutes on each side, or until cooked through, turning halfway and adding the peppers when you flip the chicken. Reheat the greens, if needed.

Meanwhile, you can either make a quick houmous (put three-quarters into the

fridge for another day if making a full batch) or simply use yoghurt – both options are delicious. Serve the chicken with the couscous, peppers, greens and houmous or yoghurt, scattered with the hazelnuts and with a lemon wedge on the side. Nice with a drizzle of hot chilli sauce too.

USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS

HOUSING NSW

PHONE **1300 468 746**

www.housing.nsw.gov.au

Delivers 24/7 a wide range of services

REGISTRAR OF COMMUNITY HOUSING

Phone **1800 330 940**

Fax **02 8741 2522**

E registrar@housing.nsw.gov.au

www.rch.nsw.gov.au

Responsible for regulating community housing providers in NSW under the National Regulation System for Community Housing.

NSW CIVIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL (NCAT)

www.ncat.nsw.gov.au

Phone **1300 135 399**

TENANT ADVICE AND ADVOCACY SERVICES

www.tenants.org.au

Provides free, independent information, advice and advocacy to tenants throughout NSW.

NSW FEDERATION OF HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

Phone: **02 9281 7144** Fax: 02 9281 7603

E: nswfha@communityhousing.org.au

www.communityhousing.org.au

GREATER SYDNEY ABORIGINAL TENANTS SERVICE

Phone: **02 9698 0873**

Covers Sydney, Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Hawkesbury, Macarthur areas. Provides free, independent information, advice and advocacy to Aboriginal tenants.

HOMELESS PERSONS INFORMATION CENTRE

PHONE **1800 234 566**

Direct Call **9265 9081**

7 Days, 9am - 1pm, 2pm - 10pm)

Information and referral service for people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.

LEGAL AID NSW

PHONE **1800 330 940**

www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Provides services to disadvantaged people

LAW ACCESS NSW

Phone **1300 888 529**

Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE OF NSW (NCOSS)

Phone **02 9211 2599**

Fax 02 9281 1968

E info@ncoss.org.au

www.ncoss.org.au

The peak body for the social and community services sector in NSW

HOUSING APPEALS COMMITTEE (HAC)

Call **1800 629 794**

Phone **02 8741 2555**

Fax 02 8741 2566

E hac@dhs.nsw.gov.au

www.hac.nsw.gov.au

An independent avenue of appeal for social housing clients in NSW

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LINE

PHONE **1800 656 463** (7days, 24 hours)

It provides telephone counseling, information and referrals for people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence. It makes referrals to women's refuges and family support services, counseling, police and courts, lawyers and hospitals. It helps with transport, emergency accommodation and other relevant support.

AFTER HOURS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION LINE

PHONE **1800 152 152**

MON - FRI 4:30PM - 10PM; Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays 10am - 10pm)

Takes telephone referrals evenings and weekends from agencies that assist people seeking shelter for the night. Accommodation is booked until the next working day.

AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY

*Should there be a major maintenance issue outside of business hours, CENSW is able to assist by calling or texting: **0432 664 486***

