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Creative Meditation

Garry is an artist, a poet and a storyteller amongst many other things. He has lived in over 80 places and considers himself nomadic and free as the wind. Garry's art, Atom Art is an expression of his life, his experiences and what he sees is the truth. On a rainy Monday afternoon in the Northern Beaches, we sat with Garry while he recited his poetry and spoke about his art work.



Garry

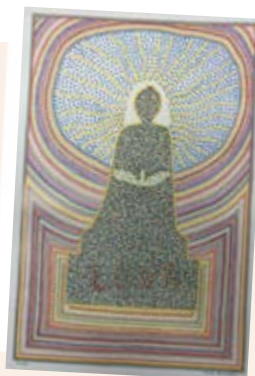
"I created my own art to pay respect to humanity. We're all upon the wheel of life itself and have God given atoms within our being. Each large art work can take between 200-300 hours and is all hand done, with 1 or 2 million little circles to form the entire picture. The circle is sacred and represents nothing. My art work is an ancient form of creative meditation, it takes a lot of energy, as we all are energy, some positive some negative. It takes great patience which represents virtue and necessity."

Why do you do this sort of work?

I love doing it. It helps me meditate. I get to express myself and share my life experiences through art.

How much time is involved in your work?

I was dedicating about 5 hours a day, 5 days a week but have dropped down to 2 days a week. A piece can take me months to over a year to complete. The poems just come to me and I know I just have to write them down.



POEM: Cultural Relation by Garry Wayne McManus Parkinson

The more cultures we listen to, the more we learn
As the wheel of life does equally just turn
Each culture has something true, for free to offer you.
It's like the different balls we pitch as a pitcher
This allows you to draw the entire true picture
It's like the saying, same same
We're all an equal part of life's true game
This will teach you, to understand life's signs in your own name.
This game is not about winning or losing
This game is about how you draw
As we all are equal in Gods eyes and law.
I am an orphan, a ward of the state.
This is why ward spells draw, I know we all do equally relate.

Are you involved with your local community?

I've exhibited my artwork many times and have joined local poetry groups. I've been on the Writers Club Radio in Nimbin, Radio Northern Beaches and attended poetry recitals in Manly. Many of these events have closed due to COVID. I also have a YouTube site - Signs and Poems by Parko.

What would be your message to people reading this?

Don't forget your inner child, these are important years which shape you.



General Enquiries - 8324 0800
customerservice@bridgehousing.org.au

Repairs - 8324 0886
repairs@bridgehousing.org.au

Community - 8324 0836
community@bridgehousing.org.au

Housing Pathways Applications
8324 0890
pathways@bridgehousing.org.au

Housing Team & Tenancies
8324 0885
customerservice@bridgehousing.org.au

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CEO Update

Welcome to the summer 2020-21 edition of Our Place.

This year, the AGM was held virtually. I want to thank the tenants who joined us as we presented this year's meeting virtually for the first time. We announced the results of the TAG elections. I want to welcome new and existing TAG leaders and congratulate them on taking the huge step to represent and advocate for their local community. For tenants in the Northern Beaches, it is wonderful to see that after a few workshops, the North TAG has formed. It is an exciting time with new ideas and new voices and I encourage tenants to find their local TAG and join the community.

We received \$4.5 million from the NSW Government to house rough sleepers under the Together Home Program. I am pleased to announce that we reached our target under this program and have housed 45 people. Many thanks to Mission Australia, St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army who are working with us to support our 45 new residents to sustain their tenancies and rebuild their lives.

It is a special time as communities slowly come together and restore their ties which couldn't stand the weight of COVID-19. With Christmas and the New Year just around the corner it is a time where people will lean on their community more than ever. Some people will be with their families and some people will be on their own. I encourage those who feel lonely to reach out to their neighbours or to their community. Let's keep an eye out for our neighbours and make sure they are safe and feeling connected.

I wish everyone a safe Christmas.

John Nicolades, CEO



Bridge To Work

Our Bridge To Work program is tailored to help you achieve your employment or training goal. Come and meet Sam, and sit side by side with her to refresh your resume, learn how to apply for jobs online or to access hundreds of government-funded courses at no cost! The Bridge To Work program has helped more than 60 residents find work, study or get job-ready. To make an appointment contact Sam at the Bridge Housing office on **0447 092 194** or by email: s.belhajji@bridgehousing.org.au.



Tenant Survey update

Thank you to the 14 tenants who joined us for online and face-to-face Tenant Satisfaction Survey results workshops recently. We had some great discussions about how to improve our results and heard from tenants first-hand about what they thought we could do better. This feedback will be incorporated into our Customer Service Action Plan which we report back to the Tenant Reference Group on each quarter. Some of the ideas included publishing our operational structure with photos, adding pictures to our visual communication to help explain key processes and a focus for the local Tenant Advisory Groups on wellbeing and connecting after Covid.

NAIDOC week



**Always Was,
Always Will Be.**
8-15 NOV 2020

This year we celebrated NAIDOC week with a viewing of *In My Blood It Runs* <https://inmyblooditruns.com/>, which over 60 tenants and staff came together virtually to watch. We also had a kids drawing activity for primary school aged children which you can see on our Facebook page. Lastly, we launched the RAP Hub, a centralised repository that contains resources, stories and updates on reconciliation. You can find the RAP Hub on our website <https://bridgehousing.org.au/rap-hub>.



The weather forecast for summer is that it will be hot and wetter than usual. This means that there is more risk of mould growing. The best way to prevent mould is to reduce moisture. Ways that you can help to prevent mould include:

- ▶ Open windows to improve cross ventilation
- ▶ Turn on exhaust fans when bathing/showering, cooking and doing laundry
- ▶ If you can't reduce moisture, then using moisture absorbers such as DampRid may help. These are normally available at supermarkets or hardware shops like Bunnings.

More information on mould can be found here: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/mould.aspx>

Big Idea Grants



Our Big Idea Grants initiative gives small grants to tenants for projects that bring people together and include:

- ▶ your neighbourhood and community
- ▶ creating positive connections between people
- ▶ being inclusive and open to all sorts of people
- ▶ allowing support from neighbours and people in the community

Do you have an idea or project to engage your neighbours?

Small Grants of up to \$500 are available for individuals or groups. Large grants of up to \$1000 are available if you partner with a community organisation to work on the project with you. Read the Big Idea Grant Guidelines and complete the application form. Talk to the community team about any projects you are interested in having funded.



Ikhlas had an idea for her neighbours:

Ikhlas, a tenant in the Northern Beaches, applied for a big idea grant to fund an experience for her neighbours – a visit from the Taronga Zoo Zoomobile. Residents and Ikhlas enjoyed the visit with Community Zoomobile Coordinators Kerry and Elani who

brought 6 animals with them. What was the process? Ikhlas came up with the idea, spoke to the Community Team and applied for the grant. The Community Team helped Ikhlas plan the event which included a nice lunch.

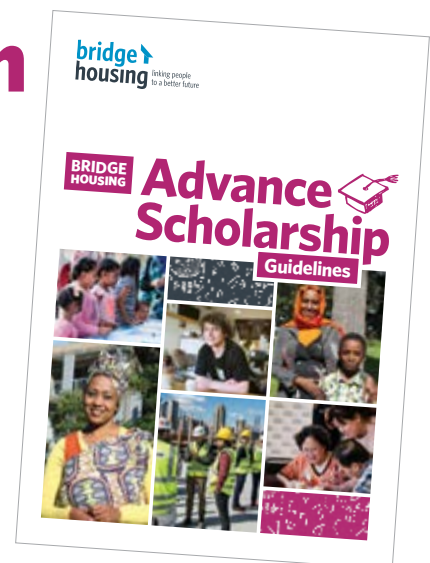
Advance Scholarship Education Grants are opening again

The Advance Scholarship grant will be opening Monday 11 January 2021 until Friday 05 February 2021.

Any Bridge Housing resident enrolled in study are eligible to apply for funds to support their education and extracurricular goals. Tenants are eligible to apply for up to \$1,500 available to each year, pending eligibility and the level of education being completed.

For the first time, Bridge Housing has connected up with Work Ventures and will be offering tenants the opportunity to make their funds go further by accessing high quality, low cost refurbished laptops.

To find out more information visit the Advance Scholarship page on our website or you can contact the Community Team via email community@bridgehousing.org.au or phoning **8234 0836**.



Have you read our Pet Policy?

Pets can enrich the lives of their owners. In line with the Companion Animals Act 1998, we consider a household pet to be a companion animal that is being kept as a household pet and that provides health benefits to a person. We consider a household pet to be a small pet such as a dog, cat, caged bird/s, fish in a small tank, or a small mammal

like a rabbit or guinea pig. If you have a pet or are thinking of bringing a pet in to your household, read our pet policy which outlines appropriate pets and requirements for keeping a pet in a Bridge Housing property. You can find the policy on our website <https://bridgehousing.org.au/documents/841-pet-policy/file> or call us and we can send you a copy.



Community Christmas Meals

Wayside Chapel Kings Cross Community

Lunches will be held from the 18th-24th of December with free takeaway Christmas Day meals available.

Call: **02 9581 9100** or email: mail@thewaysidechapel.com for more information

Village Church Christmas Day Lunch

25 December from 12-2pm
122 Johnston St, Annandale, NSW

Free Christmas Lunch. Book your tickets at villagechurch.sydney/Christmas/events/lunch

Food Markets!

If you're struggling to make ends meet or need support purchasing food, take a look at these low cost markets available around Sydney.

Link Community Care

Ph: 02 9999 0475

Email: Info@Link.org.au

Carehamper - staple groceries, bread and a cooked meal professionally prepared by Pittwater RSL chefs for a \$10 service and handling fee. Call The Link to pre-order a CAREHAMPER before collecting it in Warriewood.

Foodcare - affordable groceries, fruit and vegetables at a low fee. Available for any holder of a Centrelink benefit card with secondary identification (e.g. driver's licence) required. Visit Cromer Community Centre 150 Fisher Rd North. Open Fridays (except public holidays), 10am-1pm.



Oz Harvest Market

95 Wellington St, Waterloo

The OzHarvest Market is a food market with fresh produce and pantry essentials. Open from 10am to 2pm every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Glebe Assistance Partnership Program

Low cost food parcels available for pick up at St John's House 138a Glebe Point Road, Glebe. Monday 10am-1pm and Wednesday 10am-12.20pm.



The Staples Bag

449 Canterbury Rd, Campsie
Ph: 9787 6832

A wide range of grocery staples at affordable prices. Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm and Sat-Sun 9am-2pm.

Grace City Care

902 Pittwater Rd Dee Why
Ph: 9971 0222

Community Foodcare - access groceries at a low fee and to get bread, fruit & vegetables free of charge. Open every Wednesday from 10am-1pm

Anglicare's Mobile Community Pantry

Anglicare's Mobile Community Pantry provide grocery or fresh food items at very low cost. The Pantry is run in partnership with local churches and visits each location on a fortnightly basis.

Make a small contribution and fill a bag with items of your choice from the stock available. \$10 for groceries and \$2 for fresh food (bring along your Pension, Health Care or Immigration Card).

Available at many locations including:

Canterbury St Paul's Church
33 Church St ph. 9789 5991

Granville Anglican Church
39 Jamieson St ph. 9637 1073

Leichhardt All Souls Anglican Church
Cnr Norton and Marion St ph. 9569 2646

Petersham All Saints Anglican Church
325 Stanmore Rd ph. 9569 4735

Riverwood Anglican Church
9 Littleton St Riverwood, ph. 9153 7624

South Coogee ST Paul's Church
1 Gregory St 0407 891 306

Yagoona Anglican Church
213 Auburn Rd ph. 9793 3062



Bridge Housing Tenant Advisory Groups (TAGs)



TAG Elections

The 2020 TAG elections have closed and we would like to welcome new and returning leaders to the TAG community. We gathered recently for a meet and greet and to discuss future TAG meetings and exchange ideas about community and tenant needs. Welcome new leaders Carol, Julie, Robby and Kathy.

West TAG BBQ

West TAG leaders Dani and Hugh organised a BBQ for the West TAG members. Held in a park in South Granville, other members had the chance to connect with members and meet new people. The last face to face event for West TAG was in March.



Join a TAG

The Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) are made up of Bridge Housing tenants who volunteer their time to give back to the tenant community and provide feedback to help us improve the way we do things.

Would you like to join a TAG? Below are the current Tenant Advisory Groups you can join which meet 5 times a year. Email community@bridgehousing.org.au if you would like to be part of the following groups.

- ▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAG
- ▶ Bankstown TAG
- ▶ Central TAG
- ▶ East TAG
- ▶ Elger St Community
- ▶ North TAG
- ▶ Vietnamese TAG
- ▶ West TAG



Rent Policy Change

In 2021, Bridge Housing will implement a moderate income rent charge to align with the NSW Government's Community Housing Rent Policy.

What's changing?

From March 2021, households earning a moderate income will be charged between 25% to 30% of their household income plus 100% of Commonwealth Rent Assistance. This policy already applies to moderate income households on the Northern Beaches and to moderate income households managed by the NSW Government. More information can be found in our Rent Policy and Rent Information page on the Bridge Housing website: www.bridgehousing.org.au

Receive a call from a friendly volunteer

People are spending more time at home and it can increase the feeling of isolation for many. COVID Connect is a service by Red Cross for people feeling lonely, who are on their own and missing regular social contact. Receive a call from a friendly volunteer who will be happy to call you once or regularly for a chat.

Register for a call by calling **1800 733 276** or register online at redcross.org.au/covidconnect



Good Neighbour Champion Winners!

A very big thank you to everyone who nominated Bridge Housing tenants in their community who are making their neighbourhood special. We've received wonderful examples of how tenants are coming together and supporting each other to help create communities including Evella (pictured) from Matraville who received a \$50 voucher.

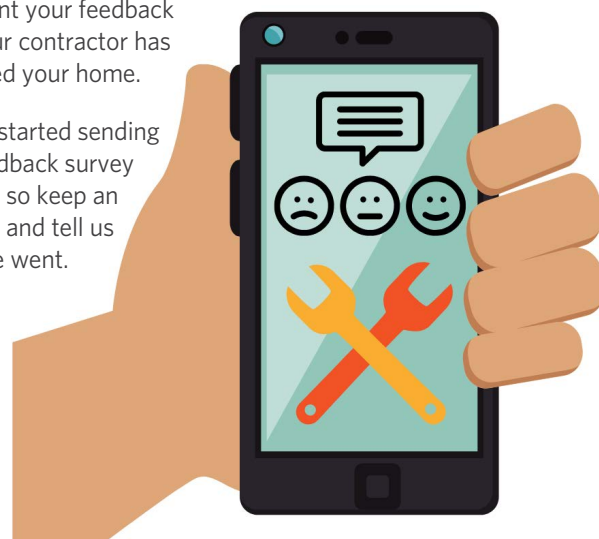


Do you have an awesome neighbour? Contact us to nominate them and let us know why they should be a Good Neighbour Champion.

Repairs Feedback Survey Winners!

We want your feedback after our contractor has attended your home.

We've started sending our feedback survey by text, so keep an eye out and tell us how we went.



Christmas New Year Operating Hours

Bridge Housing's Head Office at Goulburn Street is closed from Friday 25 December 2020 and reopen Monday 4 January 2021. For urgent assistance call the out of hours contact centre on 8324 0800. The Northern Beaches office at Brookvale office is open for homelessness assistance only from Monday 28 December - Friday 1 January. Northern Beaches tenants with urgent maintenance and repair services should call the Contractor Call Centre on 1800 422 322.

BHL Opening Hours & Location

Goulburn Street Office

You can find our Head Office at Level 9, 59 Goulburn Street Haymarket. When visiting the Goulburn Street office, please use the lifts that face the street to get to Level 9.

We are open 9am - 4.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 1pm - 4.30pm on Wednesday

Brookvale Office

You can find our Brookvale Office at Level 1, 660-664 Pittwater Road, and Brookvale. When visiting the Brookvale office you can take the lift or the stairs from outside Centrelink.

We are open 9am - 4:30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 1pm - 4.30pm on Wednesday.

Outreach Times and Locations

South Coogee Outreach

3 Yamba Place
South Coogee 2034
Hours: **Temporarily closed**

Mill Hill Outreach

Waverley Council
1st Floor, 31-33 Spring St. Bondi Junction 2022
Hours: **Temporarily closed**

CONTACT US

If you wanted more information about anything you've read in the newsletter, contact us!
Email: community@bridgehousing.org.au Ph: 8324 0836