



TERM 3, 2025 NEWSLETTER

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OUR MISSION

Crossenvale Community House aims to **engage** the local community in providing **resources** and necessary **services** to fulfil the community's potential to **achieve** their aspirations.

OUR VALUES

Participation - Inclusion
Ownership - Empowerment
Advocacy

HOUSE RECAP

We are absolutely flying at Crossenvale Community House and cannot believe that we've smashed through the first half of this year. Boy has it been busy, but we're excited to see what the second half of 2025 has to offer.

In this edition, we'll take a look at our Community Food Relief Program, the Big Lift's visit in conjunction with our friends at Echuca Moama Apex and Echuca Neighbourhood House, some new programs and everything else that makes the house tick. Enjoy your read and get in contact if you want something in the next edition!

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Given the uncertainty regarding the back block at the house, with the department to make a determination soon as to whether they will reclaim it for housing, we decided to move the Community Garden inside our Boothman Street property (more on this in the Big Lift Article). Given this, the Community Garden and the Garden Club have taken a short break until it is reestablished for the Spring harvest. The last of the produce from the garden was picked in May and we're excited to do it all again ASAP - especially since we estimate our garden was producing between 15-20% of our fruit and veggie needs prior to the shift.

This is not to say that we have not been madly getting food out into the community - and by 'we', I of course mean Lisa and her sous chef Mollie. They have been in the kitchen producing single serve meals using community garden and Foodshare products, supplemented with a little bit of frozen veggies. With the mission to create dishes that food relief participants can make at home; nothing fancy pants, just good, wholesome, nutritious stuff, the pair have created loads of meals that a quick zapp in the microwave quickly brings to life.



Chef Lisa with her amazing Spag Bol

As part of the taste testing team, the volunteers and Rob can attest to the quality and taste of everything that Lisa and Mollie have created. In the past fortnight alone, they have turned out **87** meals that won't last long when they get into Crossenvale homes! Great job team!

Bon Appetit!

COMMUNITY FOOD RELIEF GRANT UPDATE

Our cooking crew have had their jobs made just that little bit easier by being able to scrub into the kitchen with the help of our new foot pedal sink. Delivered and installed last month, it is all part of our mission to ensure the highest quality of food hygiene for our food relief participants. The sink joins our new fridge and freezer as part of our upgrades under the Victorian Government's Community Food Relief Program, of which we were a successful and grateful recipient.



The installation and the final product

Thanks to the team at VP&G for delivering, installing and demonstrating the workings of the new sink to volunteers and Rob. You were nothing but professional and got the job done with minimal disruption to our food relief and cooking efforts.

Of course, Crossenvale Community House acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government through the Community Support Fund.



WHAT'S ON IN TERM 3, 2025?

MONDAY

Food Relief Prep 9am-10:30am
Morning Tea 10:30am-12pm

Food Relief 10am-2:30pm



* Fortnightly. Bookings preferred.
** Fortnightly from Tuesday, 2 September.
Bookings required.

TUESDAY

Garden Club 10am-11am
Women's Group** 11am-1pm
Bendigo TAFE Resumes* 1pm-3pm

Food Relief 10am-2:30pm

Room Hire is available for businesses and community organisations. Please call the house to find out more!



WEDNESDAY

Craft w CCH & Vivid 10am-1:30pm
Souper Dooper Soup 12pm-1:30pm

Food Relief 10am-2:30pm



All people over 18yo are welcome at our activities as members of Crossenvale Community House.

THURSDAY

Admin Support 9am-2:30pm
Please book in advance

Employment Support

- Resumes & Cover Letters
- Applications
- Interview Skills

IT Support

- Basic Computer Troubleshooting
- Printing (10c B&W / 20c Colour)

Forms Support

- Housing
- Services Australia (Centrelink)



FACE LIFT WITH THE BIG LIFT CREW

It's not everyday that you get an email out of the blue offering the labour of 71 amazing university students to give you 6 hours of their time for free... and when you do, especially in a town without a university, you take it with both hands. So Rob, Alyx from Echuca Neighbourhood House and Amelia from the Big Lift Crew from the University of Sydney set about making it happen.

As the 99th town visited in its 10+ year history, the Big Lift Crew arrived at the Echuca Basketball Stadium and quickly headed over to the Echuca United Clubrooms for a dinner supplied by an esteemed local caterer (who wished to remain nameless) and dessert from the Moama Bakery. Volunteers from Echuca Moama Apex and CCH chowed down with the crew and welcomed them to Echuca before the leftovers were repackaged to top up our food relief.



The crew tucking into dinner. Gee they were a rowdy bunch!

The next day, two bus loads of eager volunteers descended on the Echuca and Crossenvale Houses to get to work. At Echuca Neighbourhood House, under Alyx's expert supervision, lifted and shift a garden shed that needed a small army to achieve. Alyx was grateful for the many hands, which has reshaped the space in their yard to be much more useful.

At Crossenvale, the gang split into two groups, the painters and the landscapers. Once the paint arrived after plenty of interior design and shifting, the crew got our Activity Room, Hallway, and Storage Area taped, painted and rearranged. The landscapers hammered and carted brickwork, emptied and shifted planter boxes, and took care of some garden maintenance.



Before and After in the Backyard! Wow!



A lot of hard work and a little bit of play!

The Riverine Herald popped in for an article which made into the following day's paper and can be found at www.riverineherald.com.au/news/crossenvale-gets-a-big-lift/ (or if you squint at it below).

WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2025

Liyara Flavel got her hands dirty while helping out in the garden.

Students helped knock down the brick garden beds to make way for new ones.

Sandarka Farhan and Minh Trinh made sure to not miss a spot while painting.

Big lift for local community house

By Lua Ikenasio

About 80 volunteers all the way from Sydney descended upon Echuca on Monday, July 7 as part of the Big Lift program.

The annual program provides University of Technology Sydney students, and a few other students from other universities, the chance to give back to regional communities who need a helping hand.

Over the nine-day trip, the students will stop in one town per day, arriving in each town just before dinner time to eat and rest before spending their mornings doing volunteer work.

This year, the Big Lift group is stopping in towns such as Echuca on their way down to Melbourne, to help community groups such as the Crossenvale Community House.

TBL crew leader Amelia Kraszewski said they had been doing a range of different jobs, depending on what each community needs.

"This is my second year doing it... there's nothing like it. Everyone is just so welcoming, and just so keen to give back," she said.

"(We do) any sort of unskilled labour... like gardening, painting, sometimes it's cleaning mud off walls or like weeding and tree planting.

"Yesterday, we were out of town, we planted like 800 trees on like a farm. It's just really whatever the community needs."

In Echuca, TBL helped the Crossenvale Community

House relocate their garden and do some painting.

Crossenvale house manager Rob Foran said the help from the students felt like a dream come true.

"I couldn't believe it when Amelia sent me the email... You know, it's a bit of a dream really," he said.

"They've been such hard workers and anything that's gone wrong this morning, they've been able to fix quickly."

"They're the most grateful young group of people."

While the extra hands lessened the workload for Crossenvale, participants were just as grateful for the opportunity.

Another crew leader, Madhav Iyer said participating in TBL for the first time last year was a life-changing experience.

"I think the last trip was the most life-changing moment in my whole life," he said.

"(I've had) chats with townspeople, where I was like, 'I'm about to bawl my eyes out' because of how special and how amazing and how welcoming they make you feel... simply because you've travelled a little bit to do a little bit of work."

"That feeling of community, that most of these guys lack in the city, in the suburbs... it's just so inspiring."

After volunteering with the Crossenvale Community House in the morning, the students packed up and set off to their next location.

CROSSENVALE COMMUNITY HOUSE

Thankfully, we beat the rain and after a few thank yous and goodbyes, we waved off the buses as they headed to their 100th town for their next job.



CCH and ENH Members with the Big Lift Army... just before the drenching!

Obviously, an undertaking like this cannot be done without significant input. Thanks to following organisations and businesses for your contributions:



The roles we all played:

- Echuca Neighbourhood House: Contributed to the coordination of volunteers and offered a meaningful service project for the crew,
- Echuca Moama Apex: Providing guidance and support, but have also started the clean up of bricks and green waste and have committed to putting the finishing touches on the redesigned garden,
- Our Caterer and Moama Bakery: Not just for the delicious purchased food, but for the extra freebies and the hasslefree delivery and pick up,
- Bunnings Echuca: For providing the paint,
- Crossenvale Community House Volunteers: For helping to arrange the dinner service, mucking in with the Big Lift Crew on the day, and nudging me to make sure there was no stone unturned in the planning. And of course,
- The Big Lift Crew: What an amazing group of young people who donated their time and labour when they could have been off sunning themselves on their mid-year break.



One final photo with organisers and volunteers

The Big Lift Crew had a ball and we could not be happier with their results. They have already asked if they can drop in on us again during their next visit south in 2027, and we have given them a resounding YES PLEASE!!



WELCOME TO OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

Crossenvale Community House welcomes three new volunteers, Lynne, Mollie and Bel to our amazing team.

Lynne comes to us via the Salvation Army Echuca, where a chance discussion about the house and what we do resonated with her. Lynne was in the following week to fill in our volunteer forms and was sorting our food relief packages the following week. Lynne has been an eager contributor since and a mad keen trivia player on a Thursday.

Mollie has been popping regularly with Lisa for a while, but decided to take the plunge when Rob went on holiday (slacker!). Mollie's love of music and her skills as an artist will certainly add some fun and flair to the house.

Bel completed a fortnight of work experience with us to contribute to her Vocational Major, but enjoyed her time so much that she decided to stay on as a volunteer. Bel has supported food relief participants with supplies, as well as getting involved with the general maintenance and cleaning around the house. Our Halloween Spooktacular has piqued her interest, and Bel will certainly be involved in CrossenWail's hijinx.



Next time you're in, make sure you say hello and thank this amazing trio for their contributions to the house. If you're interested in joining these amazing people and the rest of the gang, go to crossenvale.org/become-a-volunteer-1 or pop into the house for a tour and chat.

RESOURCES FOR RESIDENTS

Community House Library

While you're at the house learning, meeting friends or picking up some food relief, make sure you check out our mini-library. With books for the young and young at heart, there'll be something to entertain and inspire.



Have old books you're not going to read any more?

Don't let them just sit there collecting dust! We'd love you to donate them and give others the chance to experience the thrill and adventure of reading? We will take books of all shapes and sizes for every age.

Free Wifi

From your laptop or mobile device, click on **Crossenvale Guest WiFi** and follow the prompts. You can then find a space inside or chill out in the garden while getting your online needs sorted.

If you have problems getting online our staff and volunteers are more than happy to help!



Food Relief

Our food relief program turns your \$2 donation into 2-3 days worth of delicious food. Hampers contain bread, milk, fresh produce and pantry staples, as well as a few goodies.

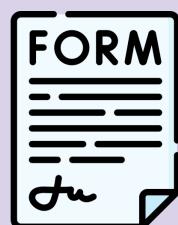


Our Awesome Partners

We thank Foodshare Bendigo and the FoodBank for their support on behalf of food relief programs everywhere.

Printing, Forms, Applications and More

Applications and paperwork can be a real pain, but we're here to help! Book a time or pop in for support and guidance. We can then help you onto our wifi for you to update and submit those important documents.



NEW PROGRAMS!!

WOMEN'S CRAFT & CHAT

This has been a long time in the works, but anything worth doing is worth doing right. Listening to community feedback from several women who wish to connect, create and share, Lisa has taken on the task of starting a women's group at Crossenvale. Starting small, Lisa will bring women together to work on craft projects, with conversations blossoming out of the safe space that she creates.

Crossenvale will be there in the background to provide a light morning tea and support referrals for those who wish to access our community's resources during and between sessions. We're asking for a gold coin donation each week, though this is not mandatory. All women aged 18+ from all walks of life are welcome to join.

Well done Lisa and we can't wait to see how this develops and improves lives.



MORNING TEA GROUP

Also brought about by community feedback, Crossenvale are going to launch a weekly Morning Tea group for the whole community to be able to access. Come in, share some local goss, and enjoy a cuppa with us!

Days and times for these activities can be found on Page 4 of the Newsletter.



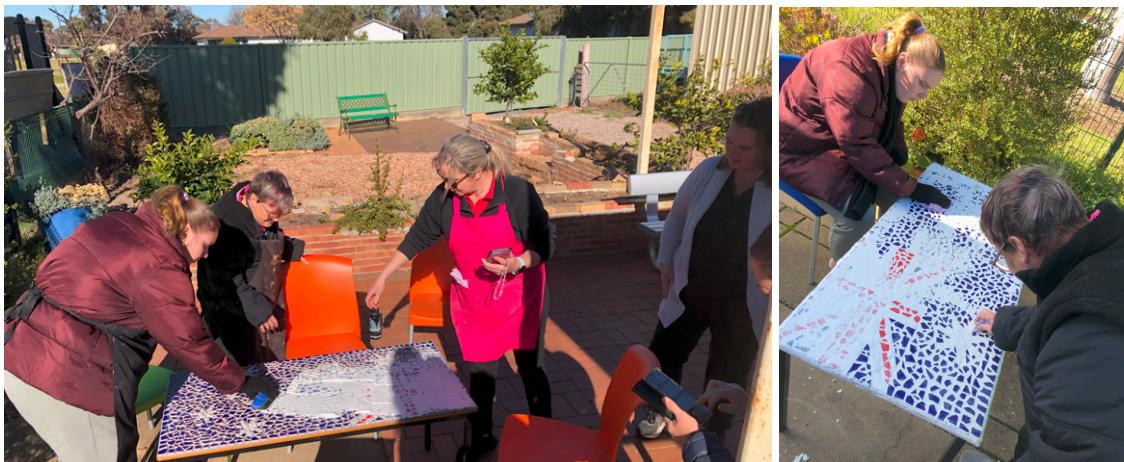
PROGRAM UPDATES

VIVID x CROSSENVALE ART & CRAFT

More Mosaicing has been the order of the day in Term 2, with the gang finishing their Australian Flag to go with the Aboriginal Flag created in Term 1. Jackie and the Vivid gang of Geri and Shania as well as the CCH crowd of Bel, Renee, Lisa, Mollie and Bel 2.0 have painstakingly smashed, glued and grouted their way through the two flags with laughter and learning being the key ingredients.

The gang are now focussing on some smaller mosaic and art projects to take home before they get stuck into the Crossenvale logo to finish the set by the end of the year. We will have an unveiling ceremony and lunch in the new backyard to celebrate their achievements in Term 4. As always, watch this space!

Thanks to our friends at Vivid for their commitment to what has been an awesome opportunity for both organisations' participants.



Teamwork makes the dream work!

SHARE THE DIGNITY

Thanks to Michelle and the team at Share the Dignity in Echuca for resupplying Crossenvale Community House with more bags for women through their annual *It's in the Bag* campaign. We now have more capacity to support women and those who menstruate to access the items that they need. If you or someone you know finds themselves in need of sanitary and hygiene items, please contact us and we can support.



GET INVOLVED AT CROSSENVALE

BECOME A MEMBER

Becoming a member is super easy. We'll help you fill out your application and, once approved by the committee, you become a member!

What does it mean to be a member of Crossenvale Community House?

- You are part of an awesome community organisation of that includes members, volunteers, committee of management and staff,
- You are welcome to join activities as a participant,
- You have the right to vote and have your say at Committee of Management meetings.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Want to be heard AND contribute more to the Crossenvale community? Then volunteering might be for you!

We are looking for generous people who have some spare time and an interest/passion that they can share. Once you've completed our induction, we'll support you in your role and provide free training. You'll be building our community's capacity, your self-confidence and your resume.

JOIN OUR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Learn the finer details of governance and operating a community group from Crossenvale and Echuca-Moama's expert committee of management team. Don't just have your say, but be part of making decisions that shape the future of Crossenvale Community House.

To become a member, a volunteer, or to join our committee of management team, please see Rob for a copy of the paperwork and to discuss the process.



DATES FOR THE CALENDAR

JULY

7-14	NAIDOC Week NAIDOC Week is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about First Nations cultures and histories and participate in celebrations of the oldest, continuous living cultures on earth.
22	Victorian School Holidays Term 3 Commences

AUGUST

4	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day An opportunity for the whole community to celebrate our first nations children and each year, mob from all over the country host and attend events focused on kids, culture, family and community.
5-10	Loneliness Awareness Week Shines a spotlight on the shared experience of loneliness and calls on all Australians, including individuals, communities, workplaces, education, and government, to take action to reduce loneliness and create more opportunities for meaningful social connections.
12	International Youth Day Bringing youth issues to the attention of the international community and celebrating the potential of youth as partners in today's global society.
19	World Humanitarian Day Bringing together partners from across the humanitarian system to advocate for the survival, well-being and dignity of people affected by crises, and for the safety and security of aid workers.
30	Wear it Purple Day To foster supportive, safe, empowering and inclusive environments for rainbow young people.

SEPTEMBER

12	R U OK? Day To inspire and empower everyone to meaningfully connect with the people around them and start a conversation with those in their world who may be struggling with life.
27	AFL Grand Final Public Holiday Friday

Apologies for missing any dates that are significant to your culture, religion or beliefs. Please share them with us as we would love to know more.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU SOON!!



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