

DIVERSITY MATTERS

NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2021



hmc

Hunter Multicultural Communities



Thank you to everyone who worked with us through this tough year, and a massive thanks to all of our staff and coordinators for helping come together to celebrate the end of last year!



Christmas Wrap-up

With the challenges of 2020 behind us we decided to wrap up the year with some levity!

Due to ongoing Covid restrictions, it was decided to hold a special combined dinner for all our staff and volunteers including our cooks, drivers, garden volunteers and Men's Shed members to celebrate everyone's achievements.

It was a massive event, and despite some issues during the preparation – a gazebo frame imploded a bit in the harsh winds the day before – the night went spectacularly, with full catering, live music, and even a jumping castle for the kids!

There was a lot of Christmas merriment and everyone had a great time getting very silly at the HMC centre.

A little while later the staff at the office got together for a nice party with all of the Coordinators, and our own Angela made us an incredible Greek-style spread to enjoy, along with some incredible sweets from Suzi.



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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Each newsletter we will be celebrating and recognising the work of our volunteers. Here's where you can help!

Please nominate (along with a brief reason why) any of the HMC volunteers who go over and above and we will reward one nominee each newsletter with **a \$50 gift voucher as a token of our appreciation.**



Here at the HMC office we often get some unusual visitors, but the cold blooded kind are a bit rarer. This little lad (missing a tail, unfortunately) was promptly directed to our Community Garden where there are a lot more strawberries to munch on!

THANK YOU...

Margaret Kenning
(Garden Coordinator)



Margaret loves her garden and enjoys encouraging others to join her in planting, potting, preparing, and learning about the bees and the chickens.

The garden encourages a relaxed and friendly venture for people of all ages and can be enjoyed with as little or as much involvement as wanted, even including the option of the Newcastle Family Support group.

I know that Margaret spends many hours going the "extra mile" to make sure all goes well in the Garden. There is also much encouragement for people to have stalls for the Market Days as well as other people who work and share all the resources at the Hunter Multicultural Communities facility.

Rosemary, Garden Volunteer

Return to Centres

Since the beginning of the COVID crisis, our Multicultural Friendship Groups have been closed to help protect our vulnerable clients, and now over a year later we're delighted to have them starting back up!

It will be a staggered start-up process as we all get back into the swing of things, with some centres starting with limited numbers and others starting a bit later, but we can't wait to welcome all of our clients back.

Of course, we are going to add in COVID-safety procedures to make sure we can keep everyone safe, but otherwise activities like Bingo and Healthy Moves are set to return, along with meals for each centre. We hope to return to giving our clients excellent, safe services where they can meet with friends again after this long isolation period.

Additionally, we're hoping to continue our Multicultural Meal Service, which has been a huge hit with our clients! The Meal Delivery Service is a project that we at the HMC are incredibly proud of, and has proved to be massively popular, so we look forward to extending it in concert with our Friendship Groups returning.

As usual, thank you to all of the people who put in hard work to make all of this possible: Godfather Espresso, the delivery drivers, the coordinators, and of course our cooks who make all of these delicious meals possible.

Message from the CEO

A very warm welcome to everyone for this new year 2021 which I see as full of exciting possibilities for our organisation!

I invite you to enjoy this newsletter and take a look back at our special festive Christmas celebration where our guests had a chance to relax and reconnect in-person after such a long period of isolation during the COVID restrictions. It was wonderful to finish the year on a positive note bringing together our staff, members, delegates and business partners with a focus on looking forward to future opportunities and partnerships for 2021.

While 2020 brought its challenges we were able to keep in touch and provide a new level of services to our clients and support local community groups due to the foresight of our HMC Board, the dedication of our coordinators, talents of our cooks and generosity of our volunteers. Jason and I are extremely proud and grateful for everyone's tireless efforts last year, so a very big "thank you" to all.

Our multicultural meals program is testament to the innovation, fortitude and determination of our people and our organisation to provide ongoing services in the face of adversity and how, with some flexibility and collaboration with our valued partners, Flexible Options we have been able to create a successful program that started off as an emergency response to a very immediate need.

The learnings from last year have allowed us to refocus the organisation as we now operate in a changing business environment, looking through a new lens and being open to new ways of doing things to better serve our ever-growing multicultural communities. 2021 will see the HMC working to implement the new Aged Care Standards, building greater social cohesion, advocating for our CALD communities, building post-COVID resilience and responses and making a greater contribution to proposed Government policies, initiatives and reforms.

We also welcome two new staff members to the HMC team. Meghan Canham joined us in October 2020 as Aged Care Services Manager. Her skills and experience will guide the organisation through the complex environment of the Commonwealth Health Support Program environment and help us implement the improvements and outcomes mandated by both the Royal Commission into Aged Care and the New Aged Care Quality Standards. Additionally, we are fortunate, to have Karen Varnum complement our team to help improve our community connections as Community Engagement Officer. Karen brings a wealth of experience and will work with our many stakeholders to strengthen relationships, build new partnerships and assist in developing programs that benefit disadvantaged, vulnerable and CALD communities across the Newcastle, Hunter and Central Coast Regions.



I look forward to reporting many more exciting and successful developments from across the HMC throughout the year and wish you all a happy and healthy 2021.

Annette Gebhardt
Chief Executive Officer

Healthy Moves

Since the restrictions about COVID-19 were relaxed, we had the approval from our CEO Annette to do some activities in small groups. Since September, Lonny and I organised a "Healthy Moves" class with Lorraine as the instructor at the HMC Hall. The activity of a chair-based exercise was offered Tuesday and Wednesday for our regular clients and the whole community. Classes were of 45 minutes duration and were done under COVID-safe practise.

Erin was helping us with the booking and administration to organise the activity and Gayle helped us with volunteers to offer transport for clients.

Lorraine helped our participants to improve their balance, strength, flexibility and to stay fit and healthy after many months of isolation. After the class, we were offered a yummy morning tea from Godfather Espresso who provided us with a variety of coffee and fresh scones.

The participants were very happy to come every week and I am already getting messages about when this activity will resume!

Thanks to HMC for this, as the people were really happy to attend this activity.

Adriana, Coordinator



HMC Bingo Afternoons

We came up with the idea after talking to Anna Marendy, a client of mine and president of the Hippocrates Association in Newcastle. She generously offered the HMC the Hippocrates Hall free of hire to run a weekly bingo activity open for everyone (thank you Anna!). As the hall was already registered as a COVID safe place, we only had to decide on a date and pass the information on to our clients and the wider community. And then the day finally arrived.

On October 28th 2020 we ran our first bingo afternoon at the Hippocrates Hall, 30 Crebert Street in Mayfield for the first time. It was a success!

After months of very limited social contacts due to COVID restrictions, the clients who attended were a happy bunch and there was not only bingo being played, but lots of chatting and laughter. Almost all of my volunteers were there to assist and catch up with our clients as well. We had a lovely mix of people from four different centres and a few new faces over the next few weeks until Christmas. Our cook helped with afternoon tea and everything ran smoothly.

Our biggest concern was to make sure that the clients followed the necessary COVID procedures (like hand sanitising, signing in and keeping the physical distance) but it was easier than we anticipated. Everyone was aware of how important these rules are and did what was required. Well done by everyone!!

There was of course more cleaning involved on these afternoons to make sure that everything was freshly sanitised on the day and after the bingo but it was well worth it.

We finished for the year on the 9th December with a Christmas special bingo and a surprise raffle, donated and beautifully presented by our volunteers Sharyn and Dennis (Thank you!).

I believe that everyone who attended the bingo sessions gained a lot from it. It only emphasised the importance of our social support groups for our seniors overall wellbeing!

Lonny Schall, Coordinator

Kitchen Report

Over the COVID period we've been busier and busier with our Meal Delivery Service, and we now have almost 100 clients receiving our meals. This is a great workout for all of our cooks! Of course, all of our cooking wouldn't be possible without the help of the Godfather Espresso staff, who are amazing in how they prepare produce for later use in the kitchen.

Chef Andy has been an absolute legend in organising the entire process, being in charge of the kitchen and of the weekly menus that go out to all of our clients. He designs a vast array of fresh, delicious, multicultural foods that are always changing and take advantage of fresh produce available that season.

Over Australia Day we were closed for the public holiday, but on the next day he cooked up an amazing Aussie BBQ for each of our clients (and a few off the staff!) which included sausages, rissoles, bacon, eggs, homemade sausage rolls, lamb chops, and fresh homemade lamington for dessert.

We're delighted to report we'll be continuing our Meal Service alongside Friendship Groups members returning to share time with their friends again in person at the Centres from mid February. We're also planning on extending our Meal Service in some existing and new areas and are excited to see how this develops.

Thanks to everyone who have been supporting us, we wouldn't be able to do all of this without our clients' ongoing support, and of course the massively generous donations from OzHarvest!

Make sure to check out the Greek souvlaki recipe our cook Angela has provided, it looks absolutely delicious!

HMC Kitchen Staff

Greek Souvlaki

Thanks to our amazing cook Angela for suggesting this! Once everything is ready, get together with some friends or family (restrictions allowing) and enjoy this traditional Greek recipe!



INGREDIENTS

- 1kg lamb leg or shoulder, cut into chunks
- 80ml olive oil (approx. 5–6 tbsp)
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- juice of 1 lemon
- 2 red onions, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp dried Greek oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme or some fresh thyme, chopped
- 1/2 tsp smoked sweet paprika (optional)
- 1/2 tsp cumin (optional)
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 10 metal or wooden skewers

For the tzatziki sauce:

- 1 cucumber
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1/4 of a cup extra virgin olive oil
- 500g of strained yogurt
- 1–2 tbsp of red wine vinegar
- a pinch of salt

To serve:

- 10 pita breads
- Olive oil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- A pinch of salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut the meat into equal sized chunks (about 3cm) and set aside.
2. Prepare the marinade in a large bowl by adding the olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, the herbs and spices and season with freshly ground pepper – don't add salt yet.
3. Whisk all the ingredients to combine.
4. Add the meat and chopped onions and blend to coat.
5. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap, chill and let marinade for at least 4 hours. It's best to leave the meat to marinade overnight, to soak up all the wonderful flavours!

Prepare the tzatziki sauce:

6. Pour the olive oil and grated garlic into a blender and blend until combined.
7. Remove the skin and the seeds of the cucumber and grate it into a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper and leave aside for 10 minutes.
8. Wrap the grated cucumber in a towel and squeeze, in order to get rid of the excess water.
9. In a bowl, add the cucumber, the blended garlic and oil, the yogurt, 1-2 tbsp. of red wine vinegar, a pinch of salt and blend, until the ingredients are combined. Store the sauce in the fridge and always serve cold.

Assemble the kebab:

10. Use either wooden or metal skewers, about 10 for this recipe but it depends on the size of the lamb chunks.
11. (Optional) If using wooden skewers, cut them to fit your griddle pan and soak them in water to prevent them from burning.
12. Lift the chunks of lamb out of the marinade and thread the pieces onto the skewers (don't forget to season them with salt!)
13. Use a grill, barbecue, or griddle pan to cook the kebab for about 10-15 minutes, until cooked to your liking.

While waiting, prepare the pita bread:

14. Preheat the oven to 250°C and use a cooking brush to lightly oil the pita on both sides, and then season with salt and oregano.
15. Put the pita on trays at the bottom of the oven, and bake for 2-3 minutes.

HMC Community Garden Report

The last 3 months have been ones of extremes with very hot days and then lots of heavy rain and gale force winds. This type of weather is very challenging for the plants, chickens and gardeners alike. Currently we are picking spinach, Warrigal Greens, tomatoes and cucumbers, limes, and have an abundance of herbs.

We now have Darren and "The Work for the Dole Crew" back after a long COVID break, so there will be lots of new items popping up in and around the Garden over the next few months. Already we have had a 2nd greenhouse erected and both will be packed with seedlings, young plants, herbs and succulents that have been propagated from various plants and are ready to sell at our first Market Day for 2021.

We now have a special memorial in the Garden to honour our colleague and friend Milan, who passed away in July last year.

Our 12 chickens are laying well and have all been banded and named and are enjoying the visits from the many children who come frequently to the Gardens.

We are looking forward to having our regular Wednesday "Gather in the Gardens" group, from the Newcastle Family Support Group and consists of parents, grandparents, support workers and many children who are learning about where our food comes from and how to grow it.

Thank you to those who have dropped off small jars, pots, plants, fruit etc. to the Gardens, they are all being put to good use. I am busy making lots of jams, pickles and sauces to enter into the Newcastle Show next month and to sell, so remember to call in to purchase these along with our fresh herbs which are always for sale. Sorry, honey is in short supply due to the extreme weather conditions these last 3 months.

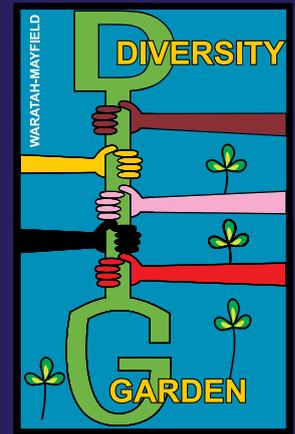
Two very successful Market days were held in September and November last year and I wish to thank the Godfather Café, Newcastle Beacon, HMC Staff, volunteers, stall holders and visitors who came along to support us. I am looking forward for your support again this year.

We have also designed a Gift Voucher which may be purchased for any nominated amount at any time, and can be redeemed for plants, pots, novelty gift items etc., come and have a talk to me about them.

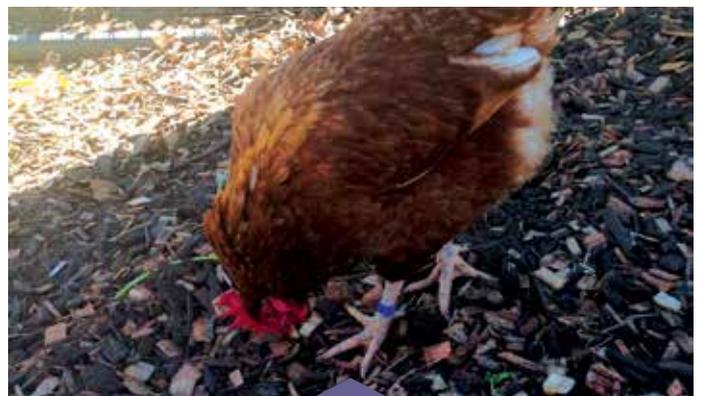
Margaret Kenning, HMC Garden Co-ordinator

Please come and join us!

We are still looking for Gardeners as we are becoming very busy and are having many special interest groups who wish to use our Gardens as part of their therapy and needs.



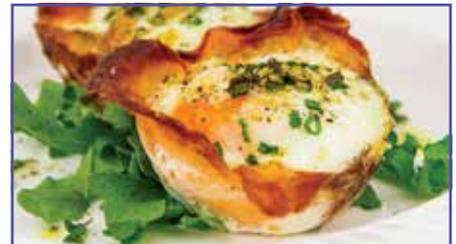
Thank you to Family Support Newcastle for encouraging mums and bubs to join in at the Garden, all the kids love learning about their local environment.



Our chickens are still adjusting to all this rain, and a few of them have managed to slip out of their bands. We'll have to wrangle them again soon!



Thanks to all the help we've had, the Garden has been looking better than ever. All this rain and sunshine has made the Garden bloom!



Salmon & Chive Quiches

Makes 6

INGREDIENTS

- 300g sliced smoked salmon
- 8 eggs
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped chives, plus extra for sprinkling
- ½ cup (50g) grated, reduced-fat cheddar cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Using a non-stick, silicone or lightly oiled regular muffin tray, line 6 cases with salmon.
3. Whisk the eggs, add the chives, and season with cracked pepper.
4. Pour the mixture evenly into the salmon-lined cases.
5. Sprinkle each with the cheese and more chives.
6. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until set. Enjoy!

2021 Market Day Dates

Morning markets 8.00am to 2.00pm.
Place the dates on your calendar and diaries now!
To book a stall call 4960 8248. Stalls are \$10 each.
Bookings open a month before each market.

Saturday 27th March ← **BOOKINGS OPEN NOW!**

Saturday 1st May (Mothers' Day Market)

Saturday 4th September (Spring Market Day)

Saturday 27th November (Christmas Markets)



OPEN

Monday to Friday 8am – 2pm
Saturday 8am – 12.30pm

Come along and support the café that makes a difference!

Contact us on 0407 429 385.

At the start of COVID-19, Flexible Options/Godfather Espresso realised they would need to adapt to the new restrictions.

A service was created by the HMC to provide clients who are aged, vulnerable or have a disability with the option to order an ethnically inspired three course meal. Godfather Espresso staff jumped on board and teamed up with the HMC. Our supported employees and staff are assisting with food prep, working alongside the chef in the kitchen, labelling packaging, and delivering meals into the community.

The collaboration has been a huge success with the service expanding greatly and now available for all individuals.

Ruby, Godfather Espresso



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The toy koala given to Maira as the 50,000th migrant to Australia will be kept at the Greta Museum for all to see.

Greta Presentation

It's been over a year since we held the massive Greta Army & Migrant Camp 70th Anniversary, and our colleagues have been busy up at Greta over the past year!

The 71st anniversary last year was marked by the presentation of a national treasure to the community: A simple koala bear and inscribed card. These had originally been given to 7 year old Maira Kalnins as the 50,000th migrant to Australia, and she graciously donated her beloved koala bear to the Greta Museum as a way of saying thank you to the town and former camp, and will be put on permanent display at the museum.

As a token of appreciation, Maira was given one of the rare and beautiful Greta Roses, grown in our own Community Garden:

“On behalf of the Hunter Multicultural Communities, of which I am a board member, I would like to present this Greta Rose to Maira as a way of thanking her for her generous donation to Greta Museum today.”

– Alek Schulha

The Greta Rose has been cultivated by our own Margaret Kenning after she discovered them at the camp on the 60th anniversary in 2009, and clippings are now being grown at the Community Garden to represent the thousands of migrants who called Greta Camp home.

Alek Schulha has also been working tirelessly on helping present and preserve the Greta Memorial Monument, constructed out of some of the original bricks that made up the Greta Camp buildings. He's also working on collecting even more stories for the second edition of his book *“Beneath The Shadow Of Mount Molly Morgan,”* in which he collects the little-told stories from those who lived at the camp as new arrivals to Australia.



Maira with her Greta Rose, on behalf of the HMC. The Greta Rose was in bloom at the Garden, and is a beautiful tribute to the Camp and those that lived there.



The site was once home to 100,000 migrants seeking a new life away from war-torn Europe.



Australian Government
Department of Health



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www.huntermulticultural.org.au