

the chatterbox

NEWS FROM CROWLEY CARE





Contents

- 03 A Moment with our CEO**
Catch up with Michael Penhey on life at Crowley
- 04 Catch Up with Kelli**
Discover more about Crowley's operations
- 08 Last Month at Crowley**
Get the fresh scoop on the goings on
- 20 Residential Care News**
The latest clinical updates and advice
- 22 Independent Living News**
What's been happening in the village
- 36 Maintenance News**
An update from the team
- 38 Hotel Services News**
What the team has been up to
- 40 Recipes from the Chef**
Delicious and fresh treats to enjoy
- 46 Meet Team Crowley**
Meet the newest members of the Crowley team
- 48 Focus on Quality**
News from behind the scenes of Crowley
- 50 Feedback and Comments**
Compliments and recommendations from you
- 54 Games Corner**
Try your hand at these mind melting quizzes!

Cover photo

Lois and Santa at Carols in The Plaza 2024





A Moment with our CEO

Hello everyone,

What a wonderful time of year it is to reflect on our achievements at Crowley.

Our Assisi Apartments are very close to completion, with the final touches and landscaping underway. At this rate, we are expecting the building to be ready for its first residents in February. A great milestone.

Assisi takes our vision forward for Independent Living where its residents enjoy a great quality of life and stay connected within our community. It achieves this through contemporary design with Crowley's signature warmth and security. And I am very proud of what has been achieved here.

Thankfully, it's been another year with a full calendar of our signature events, led by our highly rated Crowley Family Show Day. As we head into Christmas, there are more opportunities to get together in that true Crowley style. I hope you can join us!

As I reflect on 2025, I thank everyone who made the "Crowley Family" possible. Starting with our residents and clients, and their families – without whom we would not succeed. Family support is an integral aspect of personalised care, reflecting our belief we are in partnership with families in the care of their loved ones.

This year, we employed more staff with that magical "Crowley Fit", adding to our teams who exhibit a unique spirit of care in all that they do.

Across the year our Board drove the strategic direction of Crowley through some significant decisions. We are lucky to have such an experienced and committed Board.

Our dedicated volunteers turn up day in and day out, going about their business without fuss or fanfare. And the wonderful Auxiliary supported us again with fundraising that benefited our residents and community in a multitude of ways.

And it was a year where we strengthened our links to our parish community. A big thank you to Father Peter and a warm welcome to Father Erick, who has seamlessly integrated into the Crowley community. We are blessed to have them.



Whilst behind the scenes we were supported by the broader Parish team, all of whom make Crowley what it is. This includes our dedicated Pastoral Team and the support we receive from our Diocese, led by Bishop Greg.

There are too many to thank in this article, but I do want to mention two important regional connections that strengthen us. The first is our ongoing partnership with Southern Cross University for its commitment to local learning and training in the care sector. And the second is the partnership we have forged with Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance, an important organisation raising awareness of our need to understand how we can better cherish and support those amongst us living with dementia.

I do hope you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Very best,

Michael Penhey



Catch Up with Kelli

Kelli Potts
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

A Season of Joy, Community and Gratitude at Crowley

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas at Crowley - and we couldn't be more delighted! Our incredible decorations team has gone to the North Pole and back early this year, transforming our spaces into a sparkling, festive wonderland. From twinkling trees to cheerful displays around every corner, the spirit of the season is shining brightly.

December is always a special time at Crowley, and this year's jam-packed events calendar is set to bring even more joy. Concerts, craft sessions, carols, Christmas lunches, family gatherings, community visits – there is something for everyone to enjoy. Our hope is that each event brings moments of connection, laughter and memories that stay long after the decorations come down.

As we move into the festive season, we'd like to share a friendly reminder about gift-giving to our wonderful staff. We are always touched by the generosity of our residents and families. However, in keeping with our Code of Conduct, staff must declare any gifts they receive, and these are shared among the broader team. Your kindness is truly appreciated, and this process helps us maintain transparency and fairness.

We also want to take a moment to recognise the tremendous behind-the-scenes efforts of our staff in implementing the Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards, which came into effect on 1 November. These changes represent a positive step forward for aged care across Australia, setting clearer expectations and reinforcing person-centred care. Crowley has always been committed to continuously improving our services. This work often happens quietly in the background, but it strengthens every interaction, every decision and every experience within our community.

Proudly supporting Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance

Crowley is a long standing supporter of Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance (DIBA), sharing the commitment to create a more dementia-inclusive shire. I have represented Crowley on the DIBA Committee since 2019.

Last month, Crowley once again played host to the Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance (DIBA) AGM and lunch, welcoming our very special DIBA carers and those they care for living with dementia in the community. A special moment was Judy Robson accepting on behalf of Crowley's Hotel Services Team a Certificate of Appreciation from DIBA – a gesture that recognised their outstanding service quality to many DIBA functions.





DIBA also held their recent Dementia Carers Luncheon in the Activity Centre, where carers again enjoyed genuine Crowley hospitality and a delicious three-course meal – a relaxed and meaningful experience for those who give so much of themselves in their caring roles.

DIBA continues to go from strength to strength, making an extraordinary impact through a range of initiatives that help keep people with dementia and younger onset dementia socially connected and informed.

As we wrap up another year, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to our residents, clients, families, staff and volunteers. Your contribution to the Crowley community is truly valued.

Wishing you a joyful, peaceful and very Merry Christmas.

Kelli ☺





Pastoral Care from our Parish

Fr Peter and Fr Erick

Dear residents, families, friends, parishioners, staff, CEOs, and members of the Crowley Board,

As we celebrate the holy season of Christmas, we give thanks to Almighty God for the gift of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who brings light, hope, and peace into the world. Christmas reminds us of the true meaning of love and service, and it is in this spirit that we acknowledge with deep gratitude the devoted staff of Crowley Care. Your tireless commitment, compassion, and care throughout the year have been a living witness to Christ's love among us.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to our CEOs and the Crowley Board, whose leadership, guidance, and support have been instrumental in nurturing our mission and ensuring that our community continues to flourish.

To our residents, who are at the heart of our parish family, to your families and friends, and our parishioners, we offer our heartfelt thanks.

Your presence enriches our home, and together we share in the blessings of faith, fellowship, and joy.

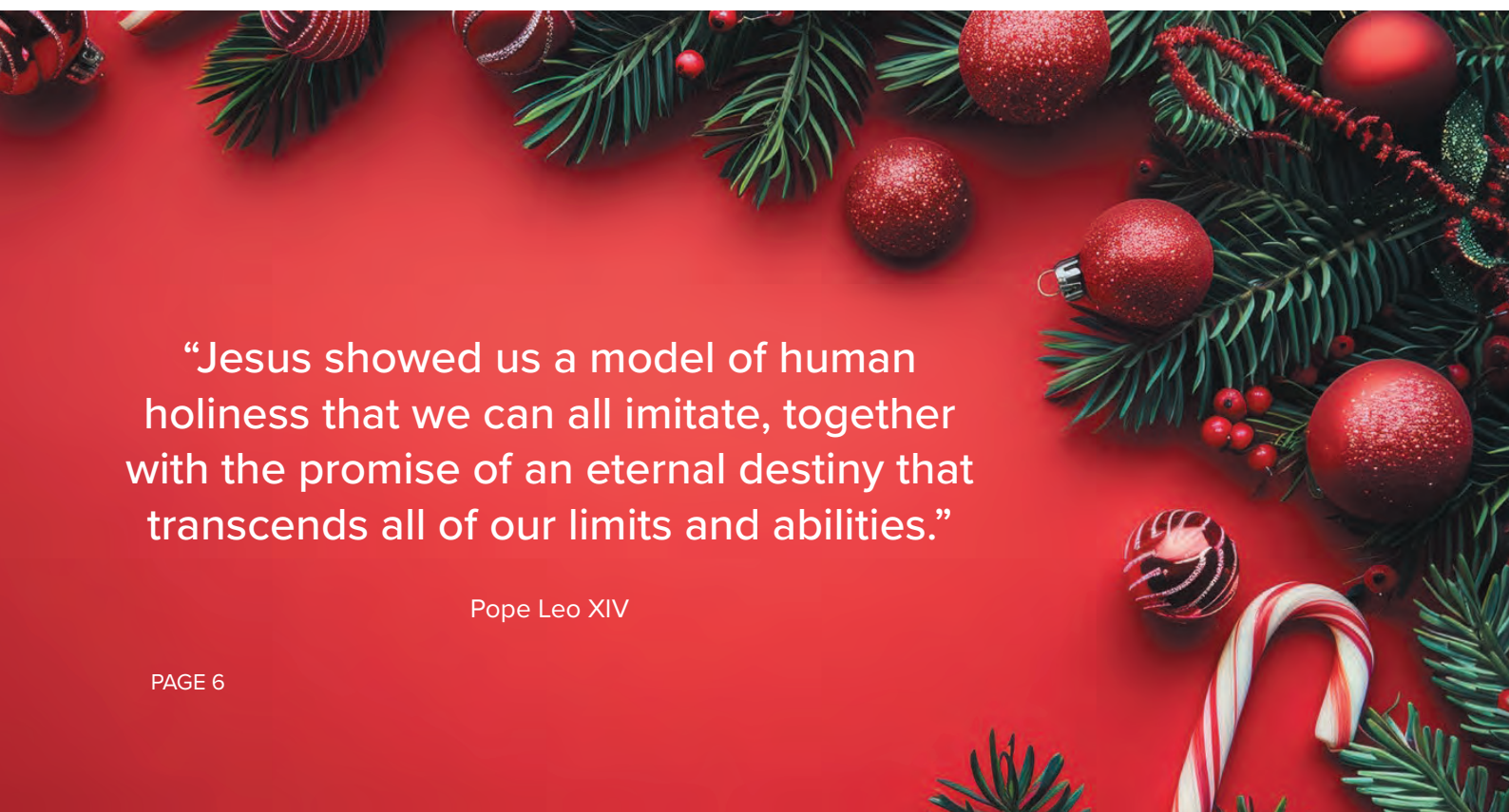
This sacred season invites us to reflect not on the burdens of the past, but on the goodness and grace that surround us. May we cherish the simple joys, smile often, and embrace the love that unites us.

May the Christ Child renew your hearts with peace, inspire you with hope, and fill your days with happiness. On behalf of Crowley Care, we wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with health, joy, and the abiding presence of God.

"And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.'" (Luke 2:10)

With every blessing,

Fr Peter Padsungay and Fr Erick Quinteros



"Jesus showed us a model of human holiness that we can all imitate, together with the promise of an eternal destiny that transcends all of our limits and abilities."

Pope Leo XIV





Leisure and Lifestyle Recap

Hard to believe, as 2025 draws to an end, we've almost done another lap of the calendar year!

We welcomed many new residents, families and staff members and said goodbye to some as well.

It is a good time to reflect, brace for the coming busy season and plan for a new year that will be here before we know it!

Always a highlight are our musical entertainers, many of whom come every month. They bring lots of joy and often transport residents to a time and place dear to them that invokes special memories.

A big thank you to our regular volunteers who assist Leisure and Lifestyle on a weekly basis, aiding the smooth running of programs such as bingo, hoy, exercises and school visits, to name a few.

There have been many events throughout the year where we have celebrated and had lots of fun decorating / creating and dressing up for these occasions.

Our most recent one of course is the one that stops a nation – The Melbourne Cup. Leading up to the big day was some creativity in making and decorating hats / fascinators during a couple of craft mornings. Amazing what can be done with paper bowls, colourful serviettes and a hot glue gun!

The fashions on the field here at Crowley were particularly difficult to choose, however congratulations to our winners:

1. Best hat – Vivienne
2. Best dressed lady – Naida
3. Best dressed man – Geoffrey

Drinks and some delicious nibbles topped the day off after an Australian jockey and the only Australian horse on the field took out the cup and stood on the winner's podium.

Christmas will arrive before we know it. Each year we organize a 'Christmas Pop-Up Shop' for residents to be able to purchase a variety of gifts for family and friends or themselves if they wish to. There are also Christmas cards and a wrapping service available as well on the day.

There will be lots to look forward to in the lead up to Christmas. Our entertainers spoil us in December with many Christmas concerts as well as our local schools spreading Christmas cheer.

This time of year, brings up lots of memories of past Christmas gatherings that have been special, memorable or have become traditions.





Here are some memories shared of Christmas from some of our residents when they were young.

Jim

It was wartime, so there wasn't a lot around. We would make gifts out of tin cans. We made telephones out of two jam tins with a long string in-between. We would put a hole in the bottom of the tin and have one each to talk to each other. On Christmas Eve the local baker would use a horse and cart to deliver his bread but on Christmas Day he would dress up as Santa and drive around singing HO HO HO to all the children.

Helen

My mother and father were so good to us, they would make it very exciting. I had three brothers and six sisters.

Sandy

We had a beach house when I was a child. We'd have roast turkey cooked on a wood stove and plum pudding. We would have a pillow slip on the end of the bed ready for Santa.

Colleen

We'd have homemade cake, pudding and turkey. Everyone would come home for Christmas dinner. I got a doll for Christmas and the next year my younger sister got it with a new dress, the doll continued to be passed on to all four girls with a new dress for each.

Mary

My mum always made good Italian meals but on Christmas day she would make roast duck, chicken and roasted vegetables. We used to all sing lovely Italian songs together.

Yvonne

My brother was out visiting friends, when he came home, he noticed the copper was still boiling so he turned it off. In the morning all hell broke loose as his mum had the Christmas puddings boiling in it. No Christmas pudding that year!





Melbourne Cup Magic at Crowley

What a fabulous day of colour, creativity and cheer! Our Melbourne Cup celebrations were in full swing, beginning with a classy ticketed luncheon event in the Activity Centre hosted by the wonderful Crowley Care Auxiliary. From elegant table settings to plenty of laughter, it set the tone for a truly festive afternoon.

The excitement then continued in the Entertainment Room, where residents sipped bubbles, cheered on the races, and showed off their fancy hats handmade with imagination and fun.

We all enjoyed the sparkle, style and community spirit of the day!







Protect yourself
Cases of COVID-19 and other
illnesses are spreading in our
village.
Keep yourself and others safe
• Wear a mask
• Avoid close contact
• Keep up to date on your
vaccinations
• Test if you have symptoms
• Wash and sanitize hands
• Avoid large gatherings
• Stay at home if you feel unwell

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
LUNCH & CORE
MORNING TEA
FOR OVER 55'S
EVERY TUESDAY EVERY MONTH
11AM - 12PM
WARDLELL CORE

SOCIAL EVENT CALENDAR

Month	Event	Time	Location
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec





Honouring Remembrance Day Together

Our community gathered in quiet reflection for this year's Remembrance Day ceremony, a moving morning that brought together residents, staff, and local students to honour those who served and sacrificed.

Students from Xavier Catholic College, St Francis Xavier and Holy Family Primary Schools laid wreaths with grace and sincerity, adding a heartfelt sense of youth and gratitude to the occasion.

A particularly powerful moment was the reciting of "The Unknown Soldier," which invited us all to pause, reflect, and remember the many men and women whose service shaped the freedoms we hold today.

Thank you to all residents who attended and took the time to honour this important day.

Lest we forget.







Christmas Carols

It was a beautiful afternoon in the plaza where residents and families sang along and enjoyed performances by The Headliners Chorus, Ballina Concert Band and St Francis Xavier Primary School Choir. Santa and his elves even made an appearance.











Crowley in Scotland

Kelly Roberts
Clinical Manager (Nurse Practitioner)

Greetings from Stirling, Scotland. I arrived in early November in the pouring rain after a gruelling 30 hours flying, but incredibly pleased and excited to arrive.

Stirling is about 40 minutes from Glasgow Airport, and I'm staying in a little stone annex close to the city centre and almost underneath Stirling Castle.

The buildings are very old and beautiful – high ceilings, stonework and large windows. Apparently, Stirling was a trading town and inhabited by merchants, lawyers and financial planners for many years.

The buildings reflect a great deal of wealth in their size, location and relatively large gardens. I am about 5-10 minutes away from the University, which is handy, and there is a large sports centre with an excellent pool to keep me moving despite the weather.

No whisky tasting yet, but I hope to fit this in before I leave in early December.

I have had some amazing opportunities to connect with clinicians since arriving and have visited a couple of different aged care homes.

None as lovely as Crowley, but the staff are terrific. Some homes have very few registered nurses, and most have experienced and knowledgeable care workers and support staff, who liaise with visiting doctors and Nurse Practitioners. Some care homes do not have visiting GPs and are managed solely by Nurse Practitioners with support from the local district hospitals and in-reach teams.

I had an opportunity to go on a tour of the dementia design department at Stirling University, and this was terrific. It provided some really simple ideas to make things easier for people living with a cognitive impairment.

Some sites I've visited are over 90 minutes away from where I live – apart from scraping off the snow from the car and navigating to unfamiliar places, it has really been a terrific journey, and as hoped for, has provided some unique perspectives on delivering care.

I have been particularly interested in hearing stories from people who have been diagnosed with dementia and how they feel their journey has gone. Many report feeling invisible to the health professionals; however, there are also many positive stories of support and engagement post-diagnosis.

One day, when I went for a swim at the local sports centre in Stirling, I got chatting to an older lady who I thought was a cleaner as she had what looked like a mop in her hand. I was curious, as I had seen many other women and men carrying these mops and had thought the ratio of cleaners to visitors was a little odd. As it turns out, they were playing "curling" on the ice rink! They don't wear ice skates but sneakers and push around the object with their sticks. As it's played on the ice, though, their balance must be amazing, as I didn't see anyone falling over. It is very, very cold in the rink.

I think of you all often and hope you're all well. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in 2026.







From the IL Desk

Jenny Kliese
Independent Living (IL) Coordinator

Christmas and New Year are a wonderful time surrounded by family and friends in celebration. Most people look forward to it. But some may find it challenging for different reasons.

To cope with the holiday season, focus on setting realistic expectations, managing your schedule and finances, and practising self-care.

Prioritise what's important, learn to say no to extra obligations, and schedule time for relaxation and exercise. Maintaining healthy routines for eating and sleeping can also help prevent overindulgence and stress.

Checklist for an enjoyable holiday season!

- Manage expectations and reduce pressure
- Set realistic goals, don't do too much, instead choose a few activities that are fun or most important to you
- Go with the flow, it's okay if things don't go to plan, be spontaneous and embrace the unplanned; that's the human side of life
- Create new traditions that align with your current needs and values
- Stick to a healthy, balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate sleep (still have fun)
- It's okay to limit the time you spend with family or to set boundaries to reduce friction
- Manage family conflict with neutral conversation topics: "life is too short"
- Connect with the community if you are feeling lonely, consider volunteering or connecting with a community group to foster that sense of belonging

- Be kind to yourself and take time out to enjoy
- The holiday season can be a time for mixed emotions for a lot of people, whether they are grieving a recent loss or a time of reflecting on who they have lost. Acknowledge this by finding meaningful ways to honour loved ones, such as lighting a candle or quiet reflection.



If feelings of sadness or anxiety persist, reach out to friends, family, or professional services like Lifeline Australia (13 11 14) or Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636).



**"For it is in giving
that we receive."**

St. Francis of Assisi

Independent Living Public Holiday Hours

Christmas and New Year

Thursday 25 December	Christmas Day	Normal After Hours Procedure - INS
Friday 26 December	Boxing Day	Normal After Hours Procedure - INS
Monday 29 December	Crowley Public Holiday	Normal After Hours Procedure - INS
Thursday 1 January 2025	New Year's Day	Normal After Hours Procedure - INS

Australia Day

Monday 26 January 2024	Australia Day	Normal After Hours Procedure - INS
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The above dates are public holidays when the IL Team are offsite. If you require assistance during this time, press your INS system HELP button or your pendant for Medical or After Hours Maintenance assistance.



Christmas Hours at Crowley

Reception

Barney's Cafe & Verandah

Barney's in the Plaza

Concierge

Wednesday 24 December

Open
8.30am – 4.00pm

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Open
9.30am – 2.30pm

Open
9.30am – 3.30pm

Thursday 25 December (Christmas Day)

Closed

Closed

Closed

Open
9.00am – 12.00pm
1.00pm – 5.00pm

Friday 26 December (Boxing Day)

Closed

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Closed

Open
9.30am – 2.00pm

Saturday 27 December

Closed

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Closed

Open
9.30am – 2.00pm

Sunday 28 December

Closed

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Open
9.30am – 2.30pm

Open
9.30am – 2.00pm

Monday 29 December (Crowley Day PH)

Closed

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Open
9.30am – 2.30pm

Open
9.30am – 2.00pm

Tuesday 30 December

Open
8.30am – 5.00pm

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Open
9.30am – 2.30pm

Open
9.30am – 3.30pm

Wednesday 31 December

Open
8.30am – 5.00pm

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Open
9.30am – 2.30pm

Open
9.30am – 3.30pm

Thursday 1 January 2025 (New Year's Day)

Closed

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Closed

Open
9.30am – 2.00pm

Monday 26 January 2025 (Australia Day)

Closed

Open
8.00am – 3.30pm

Closed

Open
9.30am – 2.00pm

Please note: Coco's Beauty Salon will be closed on all of the above dates

Christmas Mass Services

Alstonville Catholic Parish

Wednesday 24 December - Christmas Eve

5.00pm Children's Mass - Alstonville

5.00pm Children's Mass - Wardell

6.30pm Children's Mass - Alstonville

Thursday 25 December - Christmas Day

8.30am Christmas Day Service

Ballina and Lennox Head Catholic Parish

Wednesday 24 December - Christmas Eve

5.30pm St Francis Xavier Church, Ballina

7.30pm St Francis Xavier Church, Ballina

Thursday 25 December - Christmas Day

7.30am Holy Family Catholic Church, Lennox Head

9.00am St Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Ballina

11.00am St Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Ballina



Crowley Gift Vouchers

Looking for the perfect gift for your loved one this Christmas?

We offer gift vouchers for Barney's Café and Coco's Hair and Beauty Salon.

Available to purchase from Crowley Reception.





Christmas in Australia

René Lange
Risk Manager

Christmas in Australia is a little different from the classic snowy scenes many of us grew up reading about. Here, the season arrives not with frost and snow, but with sunny days, balmy evenings, and the sound of Christmas beetles.

While the season invites joy, connection, and tradition, it also brings its own set of challenges. As we gather with loved ones, here are some important considerations to keep in mind.



Food Safety

There's nothing quite like a long, lazy Christmas lunch on a summer afternoon, but warm weather means food safety must be front of mind. To avoid an unwanted Christmas guest in the form of food poisoning, it's wise to follow simple rules: keep cold foods refrigerated, serve hot foods safely, and ensure hand hygiene. And remember, leftovers shouldn't linger unrefrigerated, especially in the heat.

Stay cool and hydrate

Heat, sun, and mosquitoes are all part of summer in Australia, and older adults can be particularly vulnerable. Watch for signs of overheating and stay cool. And remember that drinking alcohol will dehydrate you. If you do choose to imbibe, aim for at least one glass of water for each alcoholic drink.

Protect yourself

The Northern Rivers can be a mosquito hotspot in summer. Avoid mosquito-borne illness during summer by taking some simple precautions like dressing in loose-fitting / light coloured clothing, using repellent and avoiding being outside during dusk and dawn. Reduce opportunities for mozzies to breed by removing standing water around your property, such as water in pots, gutters, or bird baths.

RESIDENTIAL CARE

Christmas PARTIES

Crowley Residential Care Residents are invited to enjoy a three course Luncheon to celebrate the holiday season.

LIGHTHOUSE

MONDAY 8 DECEMBER

11:30AM - 1:30PM

LIGHTHOUSE

MENU: Assortment of sweet and savoury canapés

SERPENTINE, MISSINGHAM, RIVERVIEW & ROSEBANK

TUESDAY 9 DECEMBER

11:30AM - 1:30PM

ENTERTAINMENT ROOM

MENU: Sourdough roll & butter, Salmon Fillet lemon butter & dill sauce, seasonal vegetables followed by Strawberry Cheesecake passionfruit sauce

BANKSIA, LILLIPILLI & PROSPECT

THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER

11:30AM - 1:30PM

ENTERTAINMENT ROOM

MENU: Sourdough roll & butter, Salmon Fillet lemon butter & dill sauce, seasonal vegetables followed by Strawberry Cheesecake passionfruit sauce

Family members are welcome to join their loved one for lunch. Cost is \$30pp

RSVP AND PAY AT CROWLEY RECEPTION BY THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER

Please advise dietary requirements at time of booking.

CROWLEY CARE
CHRISTMAS DAY

*Seafood
Buffet Lunch*

Thursday 25 December 2025

11:30am for 12pm start

Entertainment Room

Prawns & Oysters
Continental Meats
Carved Leg Ham, Pork & Turkey
Roasted Potatoes
Selection of Fresh Salads
Bread Rolls
Olives and Antipasto

Dessert Bar

Buffet Price \$110

RSVP to Reception by Thursday 18 December





**CROWLEY CARE
CHRISTMAS DAY**

Drinks List

Drinks available from Jimmy's Bar



Beer \$7.50 each

Corona

Great Northern Super Crisp

Heineken Zero

Wine \$25 per bottle

Merlot

Pinot Grigio

Prosecco

Other \$2.50 each

Assorted Soft Drinks & Juices

Craft Corner

How to make holiday dove treat holders

Create charming dove decorations for your Christmas table that can hold chocolates, cookies, or marshmallows - a festive and delightful centerpiece!

What you need

- Dove template (provided on the next page)
- Cardstock or construction paper in your preferred colors
- Glue
- Scissors
- Clip or peg (optional for holding while drying)

Instructions

1. Trace the dove templates onto the cardstock and cut it out. Fold along the indicated lines.
2. Unfold the doves and decorate them.
3. Fold the flap at the back of the dove and glue it securely in place.
4. Attach the beak and breast pieces to the dove using glue. Hold them together with a clip or peg until the glue dries.
5. Once assembled, fill the dove with treats such as chocolates, cookies, or marshmallows.
6. Arrange the doves as centerpieces on your Christmas table to create a festive display.





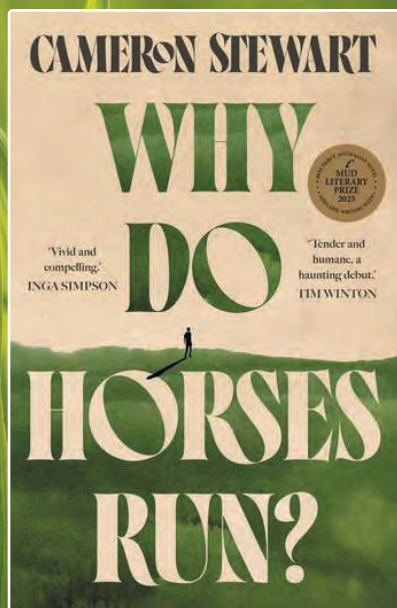
FOLD

FOLD



Book Club

A Why Do Horses Run? by Cameron Stewart



Our latest read was Why Do Horses Run?, a debut novel by local author Cameron Stewart.

Missing, in every sense of the word, a man walks into the landscape and doesn't stop until he can go no further. For three years Ingvar doesn't know why he keeps going or whether he is walking towards something or away from it.

However, he comes to a remote valley harbouring secrets and misfits. Hilda, recently widowed, allows Ingvar to live in a shed on her cattle property. Ingvar has not spoken for three years and Hilda chats frequently to her dead husband. Somehow, they tolerate each other.

What did we think?

- It was a powerful debut novel, beautifully written.
- There is a vivid description of nature and landscape, and it shows the propensity of the natural world to heal and harm.
- Too many unanswered questions concerning the characters.
- Why did he choose that ending? It was frustrating.
- Hilda's story deserved better.
- The incessant and banal self-destruction wore thin.

We also discussed "The Top 100 books of the 21st Century" – see library display- and our favourite read from this year's book club.

This is our last meeting for the year. We will meet again in January to discuss books we have enjoyed over the break.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

Our next meeting is on Thursday 15 January.

Until then, happy reading!

Marion

Ready
February 2026

ASSISI

APARTMENTS AT CROWLEY

**Introducing the Assisi
Apartments at Crowley Care.
Independence celebrated.**

**26 unique apartments
designed with care, built
with purpose.**

**Request your information
pack today.**

**Phone us on 1300 139 099
or visit www.living.crowley.org.au**



Trusted since 1979



DISCOVER MORE:
Scan the QR code to visit our website at www.living.crowley.org.au or call us on 1300 139 099 to learn more about this exciting new development.

Nestled along the serene banks of Ballina's North Creek, Crowley Care's latest Independent Living development offers an unparalleled blend of luxury, comfort, and community.

Designed for you, the Assisi Apartments provide an inspirational living experience, where every detail is considered for elegance and ease.

AT A GLANCE

Number of Apartments:
26 self-contained residences

Apartment Sizes:
1 and 2 bedroom configurations with 1 or 2 bathrooms. Secure undercover parking space with remote access.

Expected Completion:
February 2026

Accessible Location:
154 Cherry Street, Ballina NSW 2478

Community Features:
Beautifully maintained landscaped gardens, plus shared activity and entertaining areas.

Safety & Security: Enjoy peace of mind with our 24/7 emergency call system, nightly security patrols, and regular wellness checks by our Independent Living Coordinators.



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Crowley Auxiliary

Margaret Savage Crowley Auxiliary President

Our Melbourne Cup Luncheon was an outstanding success, with more than 70 guests joining us for a wonderful afternoon.

The meal was delicious, beautifully prepared and served, and we were treated to a fabulous performance by Sometime 7, whose a cappella harmonies were enjoyed by all.

Lucky door prizes added to the fun, and our Melbourne Cup Raffle was drawn on the day — congratulations to our winners: 1st Aileen, 2nd Barry and 3rd Peter.

Our Christmas Raffle is now up and running, and is the final fundraising event for the year. The raffle will be drawn at Barney's Café on Friday 19 December at 1pm. We hope to see you there.

The Crowley Family Show Day was another wonderful success with something for everyone. The Auxiliary was delighted to serve Devonshire Tea – always a favourite! We are deeply grateful for the community's continued support.

The functions held by the Auxiliary this year would not have been possible, or nearly as successful, without the incredible assistance of the Hotel Services staff. The room is always set up perfectly, the menu choices are excellent, and their professionalism and kindness make every event run smoothly. We truly appreciate all that you do.

My sincere thanks also go to every Auxiliary member for your enthusiasm and commitment throughout 2025 and to the many family members and friends who quietly pitch in to help at events and with raffles – your help does not go unnoticed, and we are very grateful.

A heartfelt thank you to all our sponsors who donated so generously toward the Christmas raffle prizes. Your ongoing support enriches every event we hold. Thanks to:

- Michael Shay and his team at LJ Hooker Ballina
- Frangipani Lifestyle
- Pillow Talk Ballina
- Ballina Fair Shopping Centre
- Ballina Jockey Club
- Daley's Gourmet Meats
- Ramada Hotel & Suites Ballina

After 19 December, the Auxiliary will take a well-earned rest.

Our first meeting for 2026 will be held on Monday 24 February at 3.00pm.

As 2025 draws to a close, I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with kindness, good health, and all the small joys that make life meaningful.

Thank you for your support, your smiles, and your generosity throughout the year. I look forward to sharing another wonderful year together in 2026.







Update from Maintenance

The native look

Albie Viel
Maintenance Manager

Following on from last month, our gardening team continued the St Francis Place garden makeovers, refreshing three more gardens with a native theme, creating a sense of continuity along St Francis Place.

Our contractors are on site carrying out a variety of preventative maintenance, including resident lifter servicing, ensuring all lifters are weight tested, mechanics working, lubricated, and batteries are charging.

Maintenance history can now be checked by scanning a barcode for critical equipment, which helps safeguard our staff from manual handling injury.

Our two buses undergo RMS inspection in December, including brake function and checking if there is any unnecessary sideways movement in the wheels.

These functions are checked using mechanical rollers. And there is a thorough inspection underneath the bus, including the exhaust system and general condition.

External and internal lights, wiper blades, horn, door opening operations, seat belt functions and overall condition of the vehicles are all checked.

As is the certificate for the modification to install the chair lifter.

Preceding the inspection, our buses are serviced, and any bodywork is attended to as the replacement costs would be significant.

What's Albie J doing?

In November and December, Albie carries out servicing and cleaning of Crowley and residents' mobile equipment, walkers and wheelchairs.

Considering almost everyone has a mobile aid, this is a huge task.

For Independent Living Unit residents, any after-hours emergency maintenance, contact Maintenance through INS.

In the holiday period, residents should know the location of essential service points, the electrical switchboards and water shut valves.

From Albie J, Justin, Keith, Lee, Terry and myself, we wish everyone a safe and Happy Christmas.







Hotel Services News

Tony Baldwin
Hotel Services Manager



Barney's Café

If you've wandered past lately, you'll know Barney's Café is the place to be. It's buzzing more than our oven on roast-day Wednesdays! It's fantastic seeing residents, families, and staff filling the space with chatter, coffee, and plenty of smiles.

If you're planning to bring a little group to the café (even just 4–5 people), please book at the café so that we can have a table set aside and ready for you.

Melbourne Cup magic

What a day! Melbourne Cup at Crowley was another runaway success, with 80 well-dressed guests enjoying a beautifully plated three-course meal. The Auxiliary once again hosted with flair, and it's wonderful to see so many people trotting in each year to support it. The atmosphere was as vibrant as the fascinators!

Christmas at Crowley

The tinsel is out, the carols are humming, and the kitchen is already in full festive flight. Our famous Christmas Seafood Buffet is filling up fast - 60 clever people have already booked their seats at the table (and who can blame them?).

If you don't want to miss out on prawns, platters and a whole lot of merry-making, be sure to book before the RSVP date. Trust me - your tastebuds will thank you.

Christmas presents – a helpful reminder

If a resident receives new clothing or electrical gifts this Christmas, please pop them into Reception before handing them over. The team will label and tag them so everything is safe, sorted and ready to enjoy - no gift left behind!







Banana Santas

Ingredients

- Bananas
- Strawberries
- White marshmallows
- Candy eyes, currants or sprinkles
- Red-colored candies (such as Smarties, M&M's, or Skittles)
- Wooden skewers or popsicle sticks

Instructions

Halve each banana and thread onto the wooden skewer.

Top with a marshmallow, then a strawberry, then a small piece of marshmallow on top.

Create a face on the banana using the red coloured sweet for a nose, and currants, sprinkles or candy for eyes.

***Note:** If you're not serving these right away, brush the bananas with a little lemon juice to prevent browning.*





Recipe from taste.com.au

Serves 12

Choc Ripple Christmas Log

Ingredients

- 500ml thickened cream
 - 1 tsp caster sugar
 - 1 tsp vanilla essence
 - 250g pkt Arnott's Choc Ripple biscuits
- To decorate*
- Arnott's Royals biscuits
 - Strawberry and cream lollies
 - Spearmint leaf lollies
 - Star lollies
 - Snowflake icing decorations

Instructions

Use an electric beater to beat the cream, sugar and vanilla until firm peaks form.

Spread a little cream mixture along a serving platter to make a base. Spread 1 biscuit with 1 ½ teaspoons of cream mixture, then top with another biscuit. Top with another 1 ½ teaspoons of cream mixture. Place biscuits on their side on the cream base. Repeat with remaining biscuits and cream mixture to form a log.

Spread the remaining cream mixture over the log to cover. Cover loosely with foil then place in the fridge for a minimum of 6 hours to set. Decorate with Royals, lollies and snowflake icing decorations. Cut the cake diagonally to serve.



Recipe from taste.com.au

Makes 750ml

The Best Eggnog Recipe for Christmas

Ingredients

- 2 cups thickened cream
- 1 cup full-cream milk
- 6 large free range eggs, yolks only
- ½ cup white sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp brandy
- 1 ½ tbsp golden rum
- Freshly grated or ground nutmeg, to taste

Instructions

In a medium, heavy saucepan, bring the cream and milk to a simmer over medium-high heat.

In a large bowl, whisk egg yolks, sugar, and vanilla to blend well. Gradually whisk in the hot cream mixture. Return mixture to the same saucepan and cook, stirring constantly, over medium-low heat for 15 mins, or until mixture thickens slightly and thinly coats the back of a spoon (do not boil).

Pour the custard into a bowl. Set bowl over a larger bowl of iced water to cool the custard quickly, stirring often, for about 8 mins. Cover and refrigerate until cold.

Mix brandy and rum into the custard mixture. Ladle into cups, sprinkle with nutmeg, and serve.



Christmas Ham with Rhubarb-Ginger Glaze

Ingredients

- 1 cup white sugar
- 3/4 cup Italian red wine vinegar
- 4cm piece (20g) fresh ginger, peeled, very thinly sliced
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 whole star anise
- 3 rosemary sprigs
- 340g fresh rhubarb, trimmed, cut into 1.5cm thick slices
- One 4-5.5kg half leg ham

Instructions

To make the rhubarb-ginger glaze and relish: Sprinkle the sugar over the bottom of a heavy large frying pan over medium heat. Cook without stirring for about 9 minutes, or until the sugar melts and then turns a deep golden brown color. As the sugar browns, tilt the frying pan to distribute the melted sugar, but do not stir.

Gradually add the vinegar (the mixture will harden). Stir until the caramel begins to melt, about 1 minute. Add the ginger, cinnamon, star anise, and 1 rosemary sprig and stir for about 2 minutes, or until the caramel is mostly melted.

Add the rhubarb and 1/4 cup of water and cook for about 10 minutes, or until the rhubarb falls apart and the mixture is jammy.

Meanwhile, to prepare the ham: Position the oven rack on the bottom rung of the oven and preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan).

Place the remaining two rosemary sprigs in the base of the Curtis Stone Every Day Turkey Roaster. Set the roasting rack in the pan. Remove the skin from the ham, leaving the fat intact. Run a small dull knife over the fat to lightly score it all over. Place the ham on the rack in the roasting pan, cover, and bake for about 1 hour and 10 minutes, or until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the ham registers 40°C.

Brush the ham with some of the liquid from the rhubarb relish. Continue to bake, uncovered, for another 25 minutes, brushing the ham with the rhubarb liquid every 5 minutes. The liquid should form a glaze over the ham and the ham should register at least 48°C on the thermometer. Transfer the ham to a carving board and let it rest for 10 minutes.

To serve: Transfer the remaining rhubarb relish to a small serving bowl. Carve the ham and arrange the slices on a platter. Serve hot or warm with the rhubarb relish.

Serves 8





Protect Yourself from Romance Scams

Anthony Primiano
Technical Services and Cyber Security Manager

Has someone online been sweeping you off your feet? It's lovely when a message brightens your day, but some smooth talkers aren't who they say they are. Here's how to tell the sweet talk from the scams.

Did you know Australians aged 55 and over are losing more money to romance scams than any other age group? Many cases are reported not by the victims themselves, but by concerned family members, friends, or carers who notice something isn't right.

A romance scam happens when someone pretends to be looking for love, friendship, or companionship to gain your trust and ultimately steal your money. These scammers go to great lengths to make the relationship feel real and manipulate victims into sending money or gifts.

3 Steps to Protect Yourself

- **STOP.** Never send money to someone you haven't met in person. If someone online asks you for money, they are almost certainly a scammer. Stop contact straight away. Be cautious about what personal details you share online – scammers can use this information to manipulate you or steal your identity.
- **CHECK.** Ask questions and watch for inconsistencies in their story. Don't keep an online relationship secret – talk to a trusted friend or family member about it. Just as you'd introduce a new partner you met in person, share your online relationships too. Others can often spot warning signs that you might miss.
- **PROTECT.** If something feels wrong, act quickly. If you've sent money, contact your bank or card provider immediately. Report the scam to Scamwatch at www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam or make an official report to the police. Reporting helps stop scammers and protects others from becoming victims.

Being scammed can be a distressing experience – and it can happen to anyone. Don't be ashamed to talk about it. Confide in someone you trust and let them support you through your emotional and practical recovery.



If you have been the victim of a scam, you can contact IDCARE (Australia's national identity and cyber support service) and they can help you make a free, personalised recovery plan. Call 1800 595 160 or visit www.idcare.org for more information.

**STOP.
CHECK.
PROTECT.**

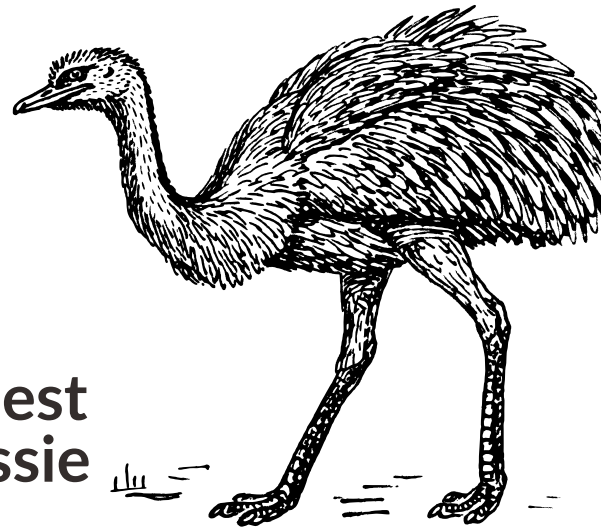
3 simple steps to keep us all safe from scams.

Australian Government | ScamWatch
Stop. Better safe than scammed.



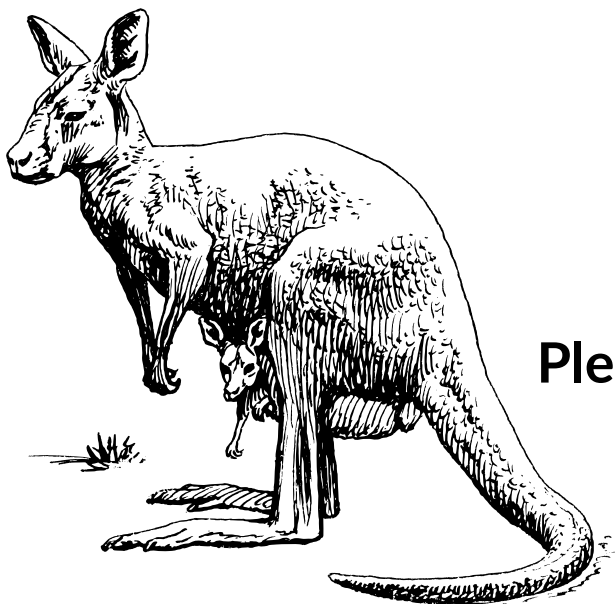
AUSTRALIA DAY

DRESS UP DAY



All residents and staff are welcome to dress up in your best Aussie attire to show your Aussie spirit on Australia Day!

MONDAY 26 JANUARY



Please Note: Name tags & regulation footwear must be worn

Welcome to Team Crowley

Say hello to the newest members of Team Crowley



Casey
Residential Care



Sandeep
Residential Care



Susan
Residential Care



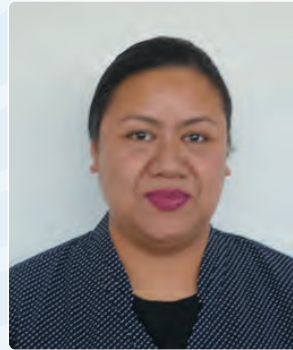
Allanna
Residential Care



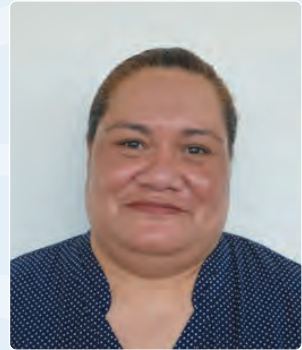
Charlie
Residential Care



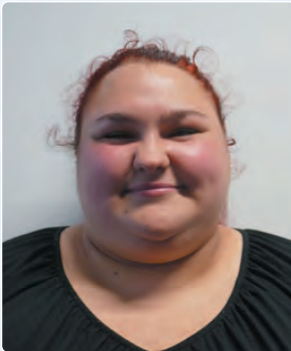
Ana
Residential Care



Faaki (Aki)
Residential Care



Feao
Residential Care



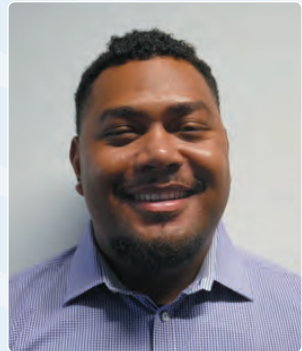
Sky
Residential Care



Jenny
Home Care



Luke
Hotel Services



Josefa (Joe)
Hotel Services



Supporting our New Graduate Nurses

Shannon Wilson
Human Resource Manager

We are excited to share that Crowley has engaged in a 12-month program with our industry peak body, Ageing Australia, supporting our new graduate Registered and Enrolled Nurses.

Called the Aged Care Transition to Practice Program, it will blend formal learning, workplace support and mentorship for our new graduate nurses, accelerating their capability.

Endorsed by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, and delivered by Ageing Australia, the program is informed by University of Sydney expertise.

Our first intake commenced in September 2025 for nurses in their first year of registration.

Enrolled Nurse Roxy, and Registered Nurse Taylor, are taking part as new graduate nurses.

To support their journeys, they have each been paired with two experienced and senior nurse mentors, Alvin and Amir, from our Residential Care team.

It will be great to see the impact of this program over the next year as we support our graduate nurses.

Roxy, Alvin, and Taylor have shared their experiences to date:

“My experience in the Transition to Aged Care course has been really valuable. Focusing on care prioritisation, delegation, leadership, and communication has helped me feel more confident and better prepared for the demands of aged care. I can already see how these skills will help me work more efficiently, support my team, and provide safer, more consistent care for residents.”

- Roxy



“Participating as a mentor in the Transition to Nursing program has been a valuable and enriching experience. Guiding new nurses through their transition has reinforced my own clinical knowledge, encouraged reflective practice, and strengthened team cohesion. This program enhances organisational capability by ensuring our emerging nurses feel supported, confident, and well-prepared to deliver high-quality care.”

- Alvin

“ My experience moving from PCW to RN in the aged care sector has been fulfilling and instructive thus far. I’ve had the chance to work closely with senior citizens, which has given me a better knowledge of their social, emotional, and physical requirements. Through the transition to aged care course, it has given me a deeper understanding of how crucial it is to give person-centred care, encourage independence, and cultivate relationships based on trust. Throughout the course, I am excited to learn more in-depth education within geriatric care.”

- Taylor Parker





Focus on Quality

About us

Michelle Golding Quality Manager

Well, it's almost the end of the year – and what a year it has been for Quality!

This was our first year taking on responsibility for the organisation's events and resident activities, and what a rewarding experience it turned out to be.

From staff trivia to the Biggest Morning Tea, Daffodil Day fundraising, and our annual Family Show Day, it's been a year full of creativity, teamwork, and memorable moments for both staff and residents.

The Quality Team is headed up by myself, Michelle Golding, as the Quality Manager, and includes three team members: Kim, Brooke, and Ash. I began my journey with Crowley in 2007 as

the Home Care Roster Worker and have held several roles within Administration over the years. I have been the Quality Manager since 2017.

I love working in Quality and am genuinely passionate about what I do every day. Supporting our staff, residents, and the organisation as a whole continues to be incredibly fulfilling, and I'm proud of what our team has achieved this year.



Kim

Kim our Quality Officer has been with Crowley since 2016. Kim's role includes the quality control of Crowley's documentation, assisting with the coordination of education and vaccination clinics, ensuring compliance is maintained with our contractors and coordinating the Chatterbox and clinical stores.



Brooke

Brooke is our newest member in the team and assists with all administration tasks for events and resident activities.



Ash

Ash has just celebrated her three year anniversary in the team and assists with all administration tasks.

Combined we have more than 31 years of Crowley knowledge. There are many tasks the Quality Team are responsible for and all those little things behind the scenes that happen daily, weekly and monthly.

Quality Facts & Figures

Did you know in 2025 we:

- Managed more than 1,600 documents including policies, procedures, handbooks and forms
- Assisted with meeting the organisations compliance and legislative requirements
- Coordinated the Monthly Chatterbox and distributed more than 6,000 copies annually
- Coordinated four vaccination clinics
- Coordinated 11 dress up days
- Produced over 200 Mandatory Training staff packs containing workbooks, handbooks and resources
- Stocktaked over 212 stationery items
- Surveyed residents each quarter to ensure compliance against the Mandatory Quality Indicators
- Maintained organisational systems – policies, procedures, continuous improvement, Compliments / complaints, education, contractor management
- Coordinated clinical stores and PPE stocks across the organisation
- Recorded 200 feedback cards that includes compliments, suggestions / ideas and complaints
- Coordinated 200 staff to attend seven sessions of Mandatory Training and two sessions of CPR
- Produced, maintained and distributed a Cleaning, Incident Management, Infection Control, Palliative Care, Feedback, Medication Management Toolkit and Clinical Manual
- Checked and replenished PPE stocks on PPE trolleys throughout the facility over 300 times
- Purchased, distributed, stocktaked and maintained stock levels for over 200 clinical items for Residential Care
- Maintained stock levels of over 50 clinical forms across 7 nurses' stations fortnightly
- Produced over 3,000 meal labels each fortnight for our meal van
- Maintained and produced over 25 packs that include information for general enquiries, resident and client admission and review, as well as new employee and volunteers
- Coordinated flowers for families, residents and staff for birthdays, anniversaries and sympathy
- Produced vouchers for Barney's Café and Coco's Hair & Beauty Salon

From the Quality Team, we wish you all a safe and Merry Christmas!



Making Feedback Flow

We receive great feedback from residents, clients, families and friends

Michelle Golding
Quality Manager

Entertainers

- To Crowley Care Ballina, The Heart of Dance Dancing Team, would like to express our sincere thanks for your kind donation and support helping our team travel to Blackpool, UK to compete in the World Dance Masters Line Dancing Championships next year. The girls had a wonderful time dancing at your Crowley Family Show Day. Thank you for asking us to be part of it, we are beyond grateful.

Residential Care family

- On behalf of Mum and Dad and family we would like to express our deepest appreciation for everything that was put together for our family on Saturday 4th and the beautiful flowers and the tremendous support given. The area was setup beautifully and the catering staff were truly amazing. Huge thank you to Judy for leading the team and making sure that the day would be special. Although this was a sad day for all, having the support of the Crowley staff made this somewhat easier. We don't know all the staff who worked in the background to make this happen, but please know that your hard work was not unnoticed.
- I have just received your beautiful flower arrangement, thank you very much, it was such a thoughtful thing to do. Again, thank you to all the wonderful staff at Crowley, the love and care they showed Mum over the past year was beautiful. Bless you all.
- Sharon is amazing. She was most appreciated and asked to pass on a thank you.
- Congratulations on a 'cracker Show Day'.

Staff

- Great Show Day. Great organisation. Lillipilli residents had a lovely time.

Residential Care resident

- I would like to say how wonderful it was on Show Day. Enjoyed it!
- Show Day: wow what a day. I want to say a gold star for Crowley Care workers. You gave us a day to remember. Thank you for your hard work so willingly done for the many laughs you gave us and the displays for us to enjoy. This was my first Show Day at Crowley Care and I hope I'm here for the next one! Crowley Care is second to none. You always put us residents ahead of yourselves and I am grateful. Thank you.
- I would like to thank the Crowley staff especially Jenny and the girls at Barney's who made sure I was okay and could still find a place with my wheels for a cuppa. Jenny was there from the first day home from hospital to assure me all would be done to help me in my recovery. A big thank you to my Independent Living fellow residents for your visits and your great help to ensure I got to my usual Crowley activities. All the love and caring I got over the past weeks has got me 'through'.

Tell us what we did well and what we can do better..



We value your feedback at Crowley Care and we'd love to hear from you. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. **Fill** in a Feedback Card and place in the Feedback Boxes located in Reception and the Banksia Dining Room
2. **Send** us an email to info@crowley.org.au or
3. **Call** us on 1300 139 099



A Year of Chatter

Looking back at 2025

Wow! Can you believe we are at the end of 2025 already?

We have had a wonderful year here at Crowley, and a highlight as always is our Chatterbox!

Please enjoy a look back at the last year of Chatterbox and some of the beautiful faces we have had on our cover.

We hope you have enjoyed the last 12 months of Chatterbox editions just as much as we have enjoyed producing them for you!

And while Chatterbox now takes a break over Christmas and New Year, we packed this double issue full of goodies to hold you over until we return in February. Have a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

See you in 2026!







Christmas Quiz

Join in the season's festivities with this Christmas quiz!

1 What country is credited with starting the tradition of decorating Christmas trees?

- A. Germany
- B. Norway
- C. Sweden
- D. France

2 In which Christmas movie does the character Kevin McCallister get left behind?

- A. Elf
- B. Home Alone
- C. The Santa Clause
- D. Miracle on 34th Street

3 Who wrote the classic Christmas story A Christmas Carol?

- A. Charles Dickens
- B. Mark Twain
- C. Leo Tolstoy
- D. Jane Austen

4 Which reindeer has a red nose?

- A. Comet
- B. Blitzen
- C. Rudolph
- D. Dasher

5 What popular Christmas song was actually written for Thanksgiving?

- A. Jingle Bells
- B. Silent Night
- C. Deck the Halls
- D. Winter Wonderland

6 Where does the famous Christmas ballet The Nutcracker take place?

- A. France
- B. Russia
- C. Germany
- D. Austria

7 What was Frosty the Snowman's nose made of?

- A. Carrot
- B. Button
- C. Coal
- D. Candy cane

8 Which Christmas beverage is known for its creamy texture and spices?

- A. Eggnog
- B. Mulled wine
- C. Hot chocolate
- D. Apple cider

9 What color suit did Santa wear before red?

- A. Blue
- B. Brown
- C. Green
- D. White

10 What is the best-selling Christmas single of all time?

- A. "Jingle Bell Rock"
- B. "Silent Night"
- C. "White Christmas"
- D. "All I Want for Christmas Is You"

11 In The Grinch Who Stole Christmas, what is the name of the Grinch's dog?

- A. Max
- B. Spot
- C. Sam
- D. Fred

12 What Christmas decoration was originally made from silver?

- A. Tinsel
- B. Lights
- C. Garlands
- D. Ornaments

13 How many reindeer pull Santa's sleigh?

- A. 8
- B. 9
- C. 6
- D. 7

14 Who was the author of The Night Before Christmas?

- A. Washington
- B. California
- C. Texas
- D. North Dakota



Melbourne Cup Word Search Answers

Check your answers for last month's feature puzzle! Did you get them all?

D	X	K	W	A	T	R	I	F	E	C	T	A	G
M	H	J	R	G	A	F	S	T	A	K	E	S	L
F	L	E	M	I	N	G	T	O	N	P	W	B	A
C	K	T	T	F	D	C	H	I	R	Y	Q	W	M
G	W	R	R	C	B	Q	Y	E	A	Y	W	D	O
A	F	O	A	W	V	E	L	H	C	B	N	K	U
M	E	P	C	S	K	N	S	A	E	A	B	J	R
B	N	H	K	C	O	S	L	T	T	P	E	O	W
L	C	Y	O	I	D	S	F	S	E	E	T	D	I
I	E	J	H	D	E	D	D	E	L	X	T	H	N
N	D	S	O	S	L	N	W	D	G	X	I	P	N
G	A	Y	R	I	A	S	I	E	Q	N	N	U	E
F	Q	O	H	R	V	R	Y	I	C	F	G	R	R
L	H	F	G	P	B	T	B	E	A	T	U	S	S

Race
Hats
Jockey
Track

Jodhpurs
Flemington
Sweep
Horses

Glamour
Betting
Odds
Fence

Bridle
Fashion
Gambling
Trophy

Trifecta
Stakes
Grandstand
Winner

'Round the Traps'

Mandatory training



Local Contacts

Crowley Administration
1300 139 099

Crowley Business Fax
6686 6082

Crowley Website
www.crowley.org.au

Crowley Facebook
www.facebook.com/CrowleyCare

Emergency
(Fire, police, ambulance)
000

Ballina District Hospital
6620 6400

St Francis Xavier Parish
6681 1048

We wish to acknowledge the contributions of staff, residents, clients and others to our newsletter.

Unfortunately we cannot always include all material we receive for various reasons.

Enquiries should be directed to the Crowley Care Administration.