



New villas open at Edale

There have been exciting changes happening at Edale Masonic Village in Marton.

After a long wait, building work could finally begin on the empty sections at Edale, thanks to the merger with The Masonic Villages Trust back in 2018. Now the project is complete and the facility has welcomed new residents who are settled in and enjoying life in their brand-new, purpose-built villas.

The construction project added five new villas to the site. Each new unit has two bedrooms and operates

under a license to occupy agreement. Before the build, Edale was home to 18 residents - this number has now increased to 28.

This expansion and development is especially important in terms of preparing for the future because New Zealand has an ageing population. By 2036, it's projected that almost one in four New Zealanders will be aged over 65. That's more than 1.2 million people.

Edale Manager, Anthea Kingi, is seeing this trend playing out, stating there is absolutely growing demand for retirement living.

Work on the new build project took more than 18 months to complete so it is an exciting milestone for Edale to have the units completed and fully occupied.

"It is a fantastic addition to the complex in Marton. We have waited a long time for the villas to go up on the empty sections and we are very proud of the progress that has been made since merging with The Masonic Villages Trust".



Woburn Masonic Care closes after 53 years

It was a sad day in December last year when Masonic Villages Trust Chief Executive Warick Dunn closed and locked the door of the 53-year old Woburn Masonic Care facility for the last time.

Woburn Masonic Care in Lower Hutt was operated by Masonic Care Ltd, part of The Masonic Villages Trust. It closed in December and is to be rebuilt over the next two years.

The care facility has an interesting history. It began life as a Freemasons' concept when Brethren in the Wellington District decided they should expand their charitable giving to a wider field than that catered for by the Fund of Benevolence.

Subsequent approaches to the then Department of Health ascertained there was a need for an old people's home in Wellington, and on May 1, 1960, a Mrs Ella Carter mooted the possibility of a \$100,000 donation which meant the Association could get the ball rolling on an old people's home.

Mrs Ella Carter made the donation on the proviso that "all residents coming to the home would reside within 60 miles of the Wellington Post Office".

As luck would have it, at about the same time former Woburn farmland was being developed by descendants of Daniel and Harriet Riddiford.

Cutting a longish story slightly short, plans were then drawn up in 1962

for the Woburn Home in readiness to present to the Health Department.

However, the Department threw a spanner in the works, which the Wellington District Masonic Charity Association turned into another charitable opportunity. They wanted pensioner flats included in plans on the perimeter of the Woburn property.

By 1965 plans to proceed with building seven blocks, each containing four pensioner flats, were agreed to – leaving space for the subsequent erection of an old people's home – and the development would hence be known as the Woburn Masonic Village.

February 18, 1967 was described as "another red-letter day in the life of the Association" when MW Bro J Redwood, Grand Master, travelled from Auckland to declare the Woburn Masonic Village officially opened.

After the ceremony, a sundial was unveiled at the entrance as a token of appreciation for Mrs Carter and her generous assistance.

But all good things must come to an end and Warick Dunn says the aging Woburn facility no longer provides the kind of modern amenities that are needed.

"The facility can no longer support the full continuum of care that our residents need," he said.

At the time of its closure there were 50 residents at Woburn requiring various levels of aged care.

Many of those residents, and almost half the staff, have now relocated to another Lower Hutt facility the Trust has leased to provide care and accommodation during Woburn's redevelopment.

"We do very much regret the impact on staff and our residents and their families, but we do need to be in a position to provide the best environment for care and, unfortunately, we can't continue to do that at our Woburn care facility. We have to look to the future," Warick said.

But, the tradition of Masonic Care will live on. The new-look Woburn Masonic Village should be ready to re-open early in 2023.





First female chair elected to The Masonic Villages Trust Board

Marie Gillies has been elected the new Chair of the The Masonic Villages Trust Board. She is the first woman in the Board's 60 year history to fill that role.

"It's quite an honour and I feel very privileged," she said. "There's lots of work to be done and plenty of exciting opportunities."

Marie has been on the Board eight years. She has very strong connections to Freemasonry. Her father was a Freemason attending Lodge in Tokoroa and Marie says as a young girl she has

memories of him getting his bag and coat and heading out the door.

"It was only later, as I grew up, I knew he was off to Lodge," she says.

Marie's late husband, Bob, was also a Freemason (as was Bob's father).

Marie says she first joined the Board after the DHB suggested to the Trust at the time that 'there were a lot of women living in the Trust's various villages and in its care facilities, but not one female on the Board. Maybe a bit of diversity and inclusion would be good', was the conclusion.

She says the Trust is a flagship for Freemasonry. Its villages and care facilities are very visible in our communities and do a lot to support the positioning of Freemasonry as a caring and charitable movement.

"Very exciting times," she says with a smile.

"I think one of our advantages is that we don't build the one-size-fits-all type of modern retirement village, and we're not driven by the need to prioritise our commercial shareholders.

"Our accommodation can be bespoke and suited to the local community, and that appeals to a lot of older people who value community and the continuation of the lifestyle they've always enjoyed."

So, there's a bit to do for our first female Chair, but Marie will ensure she still finds time to walk her eight year old spoodle, Ruby, and spend time with her two daughters, two grand children and one great grand child, little Izzy, who's just three years old.

New Village gets new manager

The Wainuiomata Masonic Village is happy to welcome Esther King as the new manager. Esther began working 20 hours a week at the Village earlier this year.

A love for the Wainuiomata community and a desire to serve attracted Esther to this role. She was especially keen to support Wainuiomata's seniors and she credits The Masonic Villages Trust for creating such a wonderful place to work and live.

"I really admire the values-driven approach of The Masonic Villages Trust, which puts people first and is focused on strengthening communities. It's very special being part of the team and working together to deliver this much-needed retirement option for our Wainuiomata community."

Wainuiomata is a vibrant, caring community of 20,000+ people set in a stunning valley in Lower Hutt.

Esther says it's been so important for the community to have this Village developed here in the valley, so people don't have to move away, but can stay

and enjoy their retirement connected with their community.

Her favourite part of the job is spending time with the residents. "For me, that's the best part of everyday. Our residents are awesome.

"I feel really honoured I get to work so closely with them. It's such a pleasure getting to know them all, and it means the world to me when I can make things go smoothly for them and see them enjoying their home and Village community."

Esther has always been drawn to jobs with a community service focus. Before this role she worked for more than five years with Love Wainuiomata, as their Make Stuff Happen champion.



"I loved working on projects that brought the Wainuiomata Development Plan to life," she says.

Esther also previously worked in the community supporting families with Plunket, and enjoyed assisting customers through roles with Kiwibank and Westpac.

Esther lives in Wainuiomata with her husband and two children and describes herself as a proud local.

"When I'm not at the Village I love spending time with my family, heading out on walks and exploring the region, or staying home and doing puzzles and board games together."





May celebrates special birthday

There were big celebrations in Marton recently as May Donald marked her 107th birthday. May celebrated her birthday with family and fellow residents at the Edale Care Home, and even got a special mention on a breakfast television show.

To celebrate the occasion Edale hosted a roast lamb lunch in May's honour and then surprised her with high tea, birthday cake, and singing.

Those who could not be there sent cards and bouquets of flowers. May was also looking forward to a special visitor that weekend. Her great-great-grandson, born last year.

May still enjoys card games and puzzles, although she has had to give up knitting in recent years.

When asked about her secret to a long life, May smiles and cheekily comments "I have no idea". At 107, May is now the fifth oldest person in New Zealand.

Edale Manager, Anthea Kingi, describes May as quiet and extremely active, both mentally and physically.

"May is a loyal reader of the Whanganui Chronicle. She gets up and reads the paper every morning and has done so for at least 50 years. She always comes down to the dining room to join everyone for meals and makes a conscious effort to get up and move about every day. She has a use it or lose it mentality."

Anthea says May also celebrated her milestone 100th birthday at Edale and every year she celebrates a "three-digit birthday" the Village puts on a very special party, pulling out all the stops.

Born May Signal in Patea in 1914, she was the third of six children. Her grandfather, Robert Signal, was one of Marton's earliest European settlers.

May married Harold Donald in 1933 and his job with the railways moved the family all over the central North Island, before they finally settled in Marton in 1942.

The couple welcomed five children and now have too many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren to count.

The Edale Masonic Village has been May's home for many years now. May lived in Flat One for nine years before moving just across the driveway to the rest home in 2014.

The Masonic Villages Trust: 60 years young

The Masonic Villages Trust is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2020.

At its inception in 1960, its goal was to provide unparalleled care for New Zealand's elderly, a mission to which it still adheres today.

To celebrate its 60th anniversary, The Trust has published an abridged hard copy version of its history, some of which we have reproduced here in pictorial form over the decades.

As Grand Master MW Bro Graham Wrigley said in his foreword to the 60th anniversary publication: "Freemasons throughout the world have a long tradition of caring. Through their hard work, they built small villages or groups of flats that were available to those in need. They weren't earmarked just for Freemasons or those connected to Freemasonry, they were available to anyone and that principle still stands today."

The 17 retirement village locations and five care facilities that comprise The Masonic Villages Trust are just one example of the hard work of Brethren of the last 60 years. Thank you, on behalf of all the older New Zealanders you have supported.



Mrs E Carter, MW Bro J Redwood, Grand Master, and the Minister of Health Hon Don McKay at the Official Opening of Woburn Masonic Village, 18/2/1967



Official Opening Woburn Home, 1970