HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.

Older Tenants' Voice Since 1988

SUMMER December 2012



'Molly'

Mary Catherine Hadfield OAM
14 July 1922 - 10 November 2012

In Loving Memory

"My life on earth has truly passed,
I loved you all to the very last,
Weep not and courage take,
And love each other for my sake"

HOUSING - A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE

HAAG IS ON RADIO 3CR

'Raise the Roof'
4th Wednesday of each month at 6pm

855 on the AM dial

haag
HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.

Hello to all HAAG members and friends!



First of all, may I express on behalf of all Housing for the Aged Action Group members and staff our sympathy to Molly Hadfield's family on her passing.
What an inspiration Molly has been to all who came in contact with her, empowering people to act on social issues particularly for women and housing.
She has been part of the HAAG family for many years, always cheerful and happy to pass on her extensive knowledge of social justice issues.
We will miss you Molly, rest in peace.

May all HAAG members and staff have a safe Christmas and be up for more challenges in 2013 to improve rights for senior citizens.

Wyn Stenton
Chairperson HAAG committee of management

Away in a Manger



Away in a mange, no means for a bed
The poor of the world lay down their sweet head
The landlords in their penthouse look down where they lay
They pray for the poor on Christmas day

At first light of dawning the needy awake
Ever grateful and happy, no complaining they make
I love thee dear landlord look down from the sky
We are thankful we're low—so you can be high



Be near me dear landlord, I ask you to stay
Close by me forever I will love thee I pray
Bless all us dear tenants in thy tender care
And fit us for heaven where we'll rent from you there

By GL (HAAG member)

HAAG'S Annual General Meeting 2012

HAAG's elected Committee of Management for 2012-2013:

Wyn Stenton	Chairperson
Bob Purves	Vice Chairperson
Dalene Salisbury	Secretary/Public officer
Patrick Barron	Treasurer

Committee members:

Bob Brooks	"Siva" Nallaratnam
Marian Foster	Margaret O'Callaghan
Maree Norris	Ena Ahern
Max Penaluna	Carmel McMennemin

Standing down from the Committee of Management:

Patricia Black	THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND EFFORT
Amy Duncan	DURING THE YEARS. YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE
Molly Hadfield	BEEN WONDERFUL!







Above left: Dalene, Wyn and Kaye

Above: Jeff and guest speaker Shelley Mallett

Left: Lotus Performance Group

'Molly'



We have all been devastated by the news of Molly Hadfield passing away on Saturday the 10th November at 90 years of age.

Molly, who was HAAG's founding member from 1983, had been fit and able right up to a month before she died and had famously appeared all over the media protesting with hundreds of other people at a demonstration on a fair go for pensioners.

Molly was photographed by The Sun newspaper holding a protest sign and punching her fist in the air in an action that epitomised her life of struggle for people on low incomes and the right to a decent income and services for all.

Molly had been active in a wide range of community groups over her lifetime. In particular she was a member of the Union of Australian Women for over 50 years and also a founding member of the Older Persons Action Centre. In 2006 Molly was recognised formally for her work, awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to aged care, community health and youth. She was inducted onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in the same year. Molly was also the face of the Seniors Festival in 2005 as she 'painted the town red' (see picture). Molly was seen on billboards right across town.

Of course it is Molly's housing activism that HAAG members will always remember her for. In the 1980's Molly worked tirelessly to see HAAG develop from humble beginnings in the Frankston area where she and her colleagues fought for more public housing on the Mornington Peninsula and succeeded in a number of housing projects being built specifically for older people.

In 1988 Molly was instrumental in HAAG moving to its current location in Ross House with ambitions to become a statewide representative organisation. In 1991 this aim came true when HAAG received funding from Consumer Affairs Victoria to provide a specialist service for older people. The development of HAAG into a major lobby group and service provider on behalf of low income people is due largely to the constant dedicated work of Molly over the 29 years that she has been involved.

Molly worked hardest when times were tough and when the state government planned to defund Tenancy Advice Services across Victoria in 2004 Molly was at the forefront of the

campaign to defend the right of community groups to be funded to help disadvantaged and vulnerable people. In one famous event Molly stood up in front of 100 people to give the Minister John Lenders a lecture on the importance of advocacy services and told him that he was "ripping the heart out of the community" by taking that decision. Molly and other activists didn't succeed in saving the majority of services but the government were too afraid to defund Housing for the Aged Action Group while Molly was involved.



Molly was a strong campaigner for public housing as a secure and affordable provider of a decent home for older people. Molly believed that it is, and always will be, the government's responsibility to provide a good supply of quality housing for the community.

Mostly we will miss Molly as a compassionate humanitarian who always believed in the link between the personal and the political. Molly defined our attitude to the importance of home, the compassion we must show in the way we help people, an innate interest in the lives of those who are under stress and doing it hard and the importance of helping people with the attitude that at any time any one of us could be faced with adversity and need a helping hand. Everything HAAG has done, and will continue to do, will be defined by the beliefs and practices of Molly Hadfield.

To ensure the ongoing legacy of Molly's work HAAG will soon be establishing a housing campaign fund in Molly's name. Further details will be made available in the near future.





Above Left: Molly with Wendy Lovell (State Minister for Housing) celebrating the Home at Last service.

Above right: Molly as the face of the Victorian Senior's festival in 2005.

Home at Last - update

Housing for the Aged Action Group's Home at Last Housing Information and Support Service has been developing rapidly since it launched from July 1, 2012. Much work has gone into the process of establishing a new office, employing staff, providing training, developing promotional material like our new leaflets and posters and beginning to establish the service across Victoria.

Home at Last is funded by the Department of Human Services as part of the state government's Homelessness Action Plan. A major part of the Plan has been the development of new prevention and early intervention approaches to reducing homelessness in the community. Home at Last is one of eleven Homelessness Innovations Action Projects that are trialling new ways of assisting people at risk of homelessness and providing help before a crisis occurs rather than providing 'band-aid' responses after eviction has occurred.

To achieve this Home at Last is taking two main approaches:

- Firstly by providing information to older people who wish to plan ahead for their housing future to ensure that they have stable housing when they will rely on the aged pension.
- Secondly, helping older people who have been served with a Notice to Vacate from their housing to find affordable housing within the time frame of the notice they have received (usually 60 days).

The target group for the Home at Last service is older people living in unstable or insecure housing who are at risk of homelessness, in particular those living in the private rental sector but not limited to this group.

Other categories of need include older people living in privately operated rooming and boarding houses, substandard caravan parks, older people who have been evicted and are living in 'temporary' accommodation with acquaintances, friends or family. Older people with other complex factors contributing to causes of homelessness such as mental illness and alcohol abuse will be directly referred to specialist organisations that focus on this type of client such as Wintringham and ARBIAS.

Home at Last - Achievements so far

A number of key elements have been put into place very quickly that are seeing our service becoming extremely busy.

Our community education workers Fionnuala Spillane and Gemma White have been extremely busy promoting the service with over our promotional material distributed to over 1300 organisations across Victoria. This has also created requests for Home at Last to visit community groups and agencies to talk to groups about the service and how we can help. In the near future Home at Last is visiting Mildura, Bendigo, Ballarat and Horsham so if you live in those areas please come along to the talks that have been arranged.

Our information, intake and referral service operated by Anne Maher, Megan Baker and Tegan Leeder now have case-loads building to the point where they are extremely busy and have had substantial success in assisting our clients to be housed.

Our ACHA Outreach Worker Melis Cevik is spending most days out visiting clients arranging the logistics of helping people apply for housing and the physical process of assisting them to move from one home to another.

Our tenancy advice worker Marc Westley has been working closely with the Information, Intake and Referral team by scrutinising legal notices that have been served on people presenting to our service and assisting to negotiate with landlords and appear at the tribunal to obtain more time to help us find housing outcomes.

Shanny Gordon continues to work on complaints from residents in retirement housing as well as advising the frontline Home at Last service workers about factors residents must consider when contemplating moving into not-for-profit retirement villages, residential parks and rental villages.

In three months Home at Last has assisted more than 400 older people who are in housing difficulty in the private market. We are managing to re-house the vast majority of people we are assisting and as each month goes by our service is getting busier.

Home at Last is about to enter a process of evaluation by the Department of Human Services and it is expected that this will be completed by the end of March 2013. We hope that the value the service is providing to the community is recognised and that Home at Last will become fully developed into the vital state-wide service we know is needed now and in the future as we have an ageing society where the demand for affordable will increase substantially.

Home at Last intake, information and referral: 1300 765 178

A HUGE THANKYOU!!!

A huge thank you to the volunteers that assisted us with our last two mail outs. With a total of 1000 information packs posted to agencies around Victoria, you have helped us to get the word out about Home at Last…and didn't we have fun in the process!

Thanks go out to: Carmel McMennemin, Maree Norris, Margaret O'Callaghan, Wyn Stenton, Barbara Whatham, and Phyll Williams, Pauline Williamson for your marvellous work towards the mail outs. We could not have done it without you.

Also many thanks to all of you who generously lent your artworks to our travelling exhibition. We have many wonderful pieces that we are proud to display as our members' work.



Art work by Dalene and Wyn to the right.





Mail outs

Above: Pauline, Barbara and Gemma

Right: Maree and Margaret



Community Education: The story so far…

We would like to let you know what we've been up to. We have delivered talks to a range of different groups including staff groups, older people, and school and university students, at a conference and at the HAAG AGM. We have had articles printed in seniors papers, run advertisements on the radio and been interviewed for radio. We have produced about 25,000 leaflets and with our hard working volunteers and Krystal's great work on our data base we have sent out materials to 1300 organisations. At the end of the month we'll be breaking in to television with a report on WIN TV when we visit Mildura and hold a seniors information session. The work we are doing is also being supported by the ever increasing jolly band of HAL volunteers who are delivering leaflets to their libraries, doctors, friends and neighbours.

Getting Active (Politically!)

Ever wondered what you can do to support HAAG? The Community Education team have a couple of suggestions for those of you feel like getting your feet wet:

- Distribute brochures at your local doctor's surgery, library, or anywhere older people are likely to visit. HAAG can send you brochures to distribute if you call us on: 9654 7398
- Speak to your local member of parliament and tell them about how secure housing can change the life of an older person.
- Ring up talk back radio and get the community talking about housing issues for older people (we can give you some basic training if you are interested).
- Volunteer to do a TV or radio interview when they come up.
- Ring your local paper and suggest they write an article about how HAAG has supported someone in your community.
- Speak with people you meet about HAAG.
- Ask your social group (PROBUS, CWA, UAW, Matrix Guild, Activity Clubs, etc) if they would like HAAG to speak at their meeting.

In the coming editions of the newsletter we would like to include a section on how members are contributing to HAAG, so if you do any of the above activities please ring or email us to let us know.

Our volunteers are invaluable! So if you want to assist fill out the attached volunteer form and we'll contact you for mail outs, talks and anything else that comes up.

Dear HAAG Members,

Home at Last's Community Education program would like to invite you to b
teer. We need volunteers for various tasks including:

Mail Outs: Come in for an hour or two and join a few people to send out o
It's quicker and easier when a few pairs of hands get around the table.

Speaking to community groups: Home at last's Community Education Workers promote the organisation and its services throughout the state and to various communities of interest. We sometimes need volunteers to share their experiences and their first hand knowledge and experience of negotiating the housing system with HAAG's support.

Speaking with media: We sometimes get requests for our member to speak on radio or on TV. This is a great opportunity to get the word out about HAAG and housing issues for older people.

If you would like to volunteer please fill out the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Availability (please tick):

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday

Activity you would like to volunteer for (please tick):

- Mail Outs
- Speaking to community groups
- Speaking with media
- Other : If you have any ideas please suggest them here:

  _____

Please mail back to: 1st floor Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000

Part 4A Site Agreements:

31 August 2012 was the due date for permanent residents in caravan and residential parks and villages, who own their moveable dwelling but lease/rent the land on which it stands, to have site agreements in writing.

This was a timeline provided by Consumer Affairs Victoria when changes were made to the Residential Tenancies Act introducing Part 4A which provided improved rights for owner/ renters.

To find out what is happening out in the parks and villages, and whether residents are receiving appropriate agreements HAAG has produced a survey asking permanent residents to respond.

Dear CARPAV members,

Concerns have been raised by residents across various Victorian residential parks and villages, about recently being asked to sign Part 4A Site Agreements that are lengthy, complicated and in the case of particular sections contained in some agreements, inconsistent with the Victorian *Residential Tenancies Act (RTA)*. HAAG is seeking information on the process and on the detail of residents being offered Site Agreements.

The offering and signing of agreements is in response to last year's amendments to the *RTA* where the rights of a site tenant (who own their dwelling and lease the land) are protected by new provisions which add consumer protection to Part 4A site agreements. These provisions are detailed in Sections 206B – 206J of the *RTA.*

Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) have produced a checklist, available on their website, for people entering into a site agreement. This includes the following advice:

- get legal or financial advice if you are unsure about any part of the site agreement
- know what the site agreement will cost you in the longer term
- understand what is involved when you leave at the end of your tenancy or if you decide to leave at an earlier date
- make sure that you have the complete site agreement, including any schedules or attachments

Our immediate concern is that existing site tenants may not have had the opportunity or encouragement to question the appropriateness, validity and legality of details contained in Agreements they are being asked to sign.

If you could take the time to respond to the questions listed on the back of this letter, it will allow HAAG to gain a more comprehensive picture on Site Agreements and to advise our members accordingly:

Part 4A Site Agreement Questionnaire

Which Caravan/Residential Park do you reside in?

Do you own your dwelling and rent the site? (Part 4 A site tenant)

Have you recently signed, or been asked to sign, a Part 4A Site Agreement?

Were you previously on a written agreement/lease before being asked to sign a new agreement?

How long were you given to look at the document before being asked to sign?

Did the Part 4A Site Agreement specify a period of time: 2 years, 5 years, for instance, or was it what is known as 'periodic', specifying no period?

Were you concerned with any particular parts of the Agreement?

Did the agreement include a section: *Death of a Resident?*

Do you have any other concerns with your Part 4 A agreement HAAG?

Thank you for taking the time to fill this questionnaire out. Your response will assist us to continue to improve the rights of residents in caravan and residential parks and villages.

Caravan and Residential Parks and Villages (CARPAV) working group MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

For the past 10 years the Caravan and Residential Park and Village (CARPAV) working group has been operating under the umbrella of HAAG. The efforts of this group and HAAG were rewarded in 2010 when the Labor government made changes to the Residency Tenancies Act 1997 by adding Part 4A.

Unfortunately the changes were not retrospective in the area of security of tenure, which is the most important area for permanent parks residents. Any owner/renters within existing caravan/residential parks and villages are not covered by the 5 year security of tenure clause, which is of significance to new residents entering new parks.

The CARPAV working group is endeavouring to grow its membership base and change its structure to become more relevant in its approach to having a recognised and unified voice for permanent Caravan and Residential Parks and Village occupants. With this in mind the group has produced a survey flyer which will be distributed to existing permanent park occupants in the next month.

The survey will cover areas such as the possibility of setting up CARPAV branches within existing parks. It asks for residents views on the need for regional groups and seeks to gauge their interest in being involved.

To assist the working group to formulate future direction policies, it is relying on those who receive the survey to respond. If additional survey forms are required they can be obtained from the HAAG office.
CARPAV is the voice for all Victorian permanent park occupiers whereas HAAG's charter is for older age tenants in all forms of rental accommodation.

If you would like to let us know about your park or village, or you have a story or experience to share in relation to your housing, please send us your contribution for our Autumn 2013 newsletter.



NEXT NEWSLETTER: Autumn EDITION — March 2013
Articles due 1 March 2013



Send articles to:
1st floor, Ross House,
247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, 3000
Or email: shanny.gordon@oldertenants.org.au

HAAG has had a strong national presence this quarter being invited to speak at several conferences over the past few months.
One conference was the **7th National Housing Conference** held in Brisbane.
Both Jeff Fiedler and Shanny Gordon were speakers at the conference.

Jeff spoke about the Home at Last service and explained why there is such a need for a specialist older person's service.

Shanny spoke about residents committees in caravan and residential parks and villages as a form of tenant participation looking at the values of, barriers to, and resources needed for residents committees.

Below is a photo of (from left) Anne, Jeff, Shanny and Ken Dyson from the Mornington Peninsula Shire. Taking the photo is Fionnuala.



Whilst in Brisbane HAAG met up with David Paton, a member of Affiliated Residential Parks (APR) Queensland .

David is a resident of a residential village and APR works with residents to support them to ensure their rights are being protected and promoted, much in the same way HAAG and CARPAV work in Victoria.

At the meeting a national alliance was discussed where associations from each state would come together to work on a national level to look at improving the rights of permanent parks residents.

HAAG now has contact with South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and potentially Western Australia. This is an exciting time and connections have been made to begin information sharing and relationships across the country.

To the right is a photo of (from left) David, Anne, Shanny and Jeff. Taking the photo is Fionnuala.



I'M EIGHTY

Today, dear lord, I'm 80 and there's much I haven't done…
I hope, dear lord, you'll let me live until I'm 81
But I haven't finished all I want to do…
Would you let me stay awhile until I'm 82?

So many places I want to go, so very much to see…
So you think you could manage to make it 83?
The world is changing very fast, there is so much in store…
I'd like it very much, dear lord, to live to 84.

And if by then I'm still alive…
I'd like to stay to 85
More spaceships will be in the air, so I'd really like to stick…
And see what happens to the world when I am 86.

I know, dear lord, it's much to ask,
and it must be nice in heaven...
But I would really like to stay until I'm 87
I know by then I won't be fast, and sometimes will be late…
But it would be so pleasant to be around at 88.

I will have seen so many things and had a wonderful time…
So I'm sure that I'll be willing to leave at 89...maybe!



By a HAAG member

HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.
1st Floor, 247-251 Flinders Lane,
Melbourne 3000.
ADMIN: 9654 7389
Home At Last: 1300 765 178

SURFACE MAIL

POSTAGE PAID AUSTRALIA

Print Post Approved
331088/0083

WHAT IS HAAG?

Housing for the Aged Action Group offers
Free and Confidential Advice to older people renting their home.

There are four main aspects to our service:

- ***Housing options***
- ***Private renters assistance and tenancy advice***
- ***Outreach care and housing***
- ***Retirement housing advice and support***

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HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.

Interested tenants and residents are encouraged to join
Housing for the Aged Action Group
Pensioners No Charge

So ring us on: 1300 765 178 (cost of a local call on landline) or Admin (03) 9654 7389
Address: 1st Floor Ross House 247-251 Flinders Lane Melbourne. 3000.
Email: haag@oldertenants.org.au web: www.oldertenants.org.au