



Embracing the season of change

It is with great pleasure that I introduce our autumn / winter edition of Life magazine. Autumn is a season of change, embodied throughout our beautiful grounds that are shifting to magnificent hues of gold, red, and orange in preparation for the cooler weather ahead. Over the last couple of months, I have been delighted to see our community back on-site enjoying our gardens, connecting with family and friends at our café, and spending quiet time reflecting and honouring their loved ones.

During this season of change, we too are constantly evolving – exploring new ways to innovate and adapt to support the needs of our community, by offering genuine choice. It is also a time for renewal; for asking ‘what if?’, and for coming together in a deliberate and caring way. I encourage you to take a

moment to learn about what's happening across our grounds. Please come and visit, we are open 365 days of the year.

We hope that you leave with a sense of reflection, community and the optimism of tomorrow.

-Jane Grover, CEO



A time to honour our ancestors

In early April, we were proud to welcome members of our Asian community to our Springvale site for the annual Ching Ming Festival, an ancient Chinese holiday that focuses on honouring ancestors. During this time, families gather to clean the tombs of loved ones, offer food, and partake in religious ceremonies. We were delighted to see so much of our community on-site during the festivities and thank all who came along to make this a special day on our grounds.

Enjoy learning about the Ching Ming Festival

Everyone belongs

From the Ching Ming Festival to wishing our Muslim community a happy Ramadan, we acknowledge and support the amazing cultures and traditions found across our vibrant and diverse community. During Harmony Week this year, we shared interesting insights into observances, practices, and beliefs, from a plate of Koliva signifying the cyclical nature of life in Greek Orthodox customs to the Jewish community's celebration of Passover in honour of their ancestors.



[Read more about diverse community celebrations here](#)



Falling in love with our trees

While many of you have discovered the oasis that is Springvale Botanical Cemetery, you may not know the fascinating history of its trees. A 300-year-old red river gum has proudly watched generations of families by our beautiful Café

Vita et flores, and a pair of bunya pines stand along our main drive to mark the location of our original gatehouse at the cemetery's inception over one hundred years ago.

Learn more about the history among these leaves



A special act of kindness

Over the Easter weekend, an anonymous member of our SMCT community warmed our hearts by generously filling hundreds of memorial vases at our Walls of Reflection with vibrant flowers. A picture alone cannot capture this act of care, that was a tender and touching tribute in honour of loved ones. Our sincere appreciation to this genuine soul, who brought love and kindness to the many families that visited loved ones over the long weekend.



For honour and country

For many communities, honouring legacy is an important part of shared family history and values. But what happens when part of your legacy is hidden?

In partnership with the Museum of Chinese Australian History, we recently supported the launch of *For Honour and Country: Victorian Chinese Australians in World War II*, a book exploring the previously hidden and untold stories of Chinese Victorian servicemen and women who courageously served during World War II.

Sharing these personal stories inspired many veterans and their families to reconnect with the legacy of hope. SMCT is proud to acknowledge and help amplify their stories.

Pictured above: Chinese Australian war veteran Hamilton Chan and his family shared their family legacy of hope and courage.

Discover the hidden history of Victorian Chinese Australian veterans



Say it with flowers

Our florists love to celebrate the seasons and special events that mark our year. Inspired by autumn, our team at Café Vita et flores have put together beautiful autumnal arrangements, perfect for a pop of colour in your home or a gift to a loved one. Look out for new and inspiring arrangements when you next come to visit!

To our beloved mothers

Our community gathered online to share heartfelt messages to the special women who have shaped our lives as part of our annual Mother's Day Remembrance Service. Together, we reflected on treasured memories and stories, supporting each other through an emotional evening and lighting a candle in tribute of our mothers and their legacies.



Always in our hearts: a celebration of mothers

We are here to support you

We believe that everyone should be able to honour and celebrate life how they choose. We are working with the latest advice from the [Victorian Government](#) to adapt our services and procedures to protect the health and wellbeing of our employees, partners and the community we serve.

[Learn more about our COVID-19 response here](#)