

## Beaconsfield Neighbourhood House celebrates 25 years, and a new life member



[Matt Dennien](#)



Beaconsfield house President Judy Hearn, Anne Young, Beaconsfield house Centre manager Janne Pinnington and Life member Therese Page Beaconsfield house, Beaconsfield celebrates 25th anniversary. Picture: Paul Scambler.

The Beaconsfield Neighbourhood House is no stranger to afternoon teas, but one held this week was a particularly special occasion.

About 60 people packed the centre's function room, gathered around tables set with high-tea, to celebrate 25 years since the community hub first became an incorporated body.

The awarding of a life-membership – the first since 1996 – was the icing on the celebratory chocolate cake.

Centre manager Janne Pinnington said it was a great milestone for the organisation and that newest life-member, Therese Page.

Therese has been involved for nearly 25 years; she came to playgroup as a young mum, then she had some more kids and kept coming.”

Mrs Page was thrilled by the honour, attending the centre first as a community member before coming on board as part of the organisation.

“My neighbour wanted to learn to paint but didn't want to come on her own,” Mrs Page said.

“So I came along with her to learn how to paint.”

She then “held almost every position” on the committee, Mrs Pinnington said, including five years on the Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania board.

“It’s just a coincidence she’s been involved for 25 years,” Mrs Pinnington added.

The centre moved to its current site from a small room eight years ago, two years after Mrs Pinnington came on board.



Beaconsfield House Centre manager Janne Pinnington and Beaconsfield house President Judy Hearn, present Life membership to Therese Page Beaconsfield house, Beaconsfield celebrates 25th anniversary. Picture: Paul Scambler.

“There’s been a big change in ten years,” she said.

“We’ve got a lot more space for a lot more activities.”

Now, the house boasts a community garden, a seven-day op-shop and the capacity to run educational and training programs.

“We work under a community development model, so if the community wants something we try and make it happen,” Mrs Pinnington added.

Anne Young traces her involvement with the house even further back than its incorporation, and was also there for the celebrations.

“I responded to an ad in *The Examiner* for a catalyst worker at Beaconsfield,” she recalled.

Not knowing quite where to begin, Mrs Young called the Neighbourhood House organiser in Hobart, who suggested getting out to visit some other centres for inspiration.

“I went to Fingal, Savage River, Burnie, Devonport, Ravenswood, among others,” Mrs Young said.

“And I discovered that every one was different and it just depended on the needs of the community on what you did.”

In these early days there was no namesake house, just a small council room the group could organise out of.

The house now runs classes and groups from knitting and diabetic support to tai chi and art.

“I used to coordinate some adult education classes and I believe the cryptic crosswords one is still going now, and I started it,” Mrs Young said.

“I feel very privileged that I had this chance to become a part of Beaconsfield community, and they’re such a lovely community I just feel that I belong.

“Nowadays when things are going a bit pear-shaped it’s good to know communities can be like Beaconsfield.”