

Vi has a way of sharing

'Gracious lady' brings joy to nursing home patients

By **ROXANNE MCCARTY-O'KANE**

Vi Lindfield is certainly a "one of a kind" woman.

The 89-year-old has splashed out on a new set of wheels to assist her with her weekly visit to the "old people" at the Caloundra Nursing Home.

Armed with bags of chocolates, grapes, bananas and biscuits, Vi was starting to struggle with the uphill climb to the home from

her house nearby.

Taking her shiny red scooter for a spin, Vi agreed carting loot to visit the residents every Friday would now be a breeze.

The dedicated volunteer has been a community visitor to the home for 23 years and prides herself on speaking with every resident to spread some cheer.

"I love coming here, and forward to it as much as they do," she said.



Vi Lindfield visits "the oldies" at Caloundra Nursing home.

"It's great seeing the old people. How they greet me is lovely."

Facility manager Annette Thurgood said many of the "old people" Vi visited were under 70 years of age.

"She is really positive and spends a lot of time one on one with the residents and often has coffee out the back with their families," she said.

"I have been here for seven years and she

has not once missed a Friday visit."

Voluntary service has been an integral part of Vi's life.

While working in a pharmacy in her native UK, Vi spent three days a week with the Sussex Special Constabulary.

She was a member of the Coastal Command office in the WRAF between 1939 and 1941 and worked as a telecommunications officer until she retired

and moved to Australia in 1986.

Community Visitor's Scheme coordinator Val Bradfield said Vi held the record as the longest-serving volunteer in the local branch.

"At an age where most people put their feet up, this gracious lady continues to exhibit exemplary love and support for the aged," Ms Bradfield said.

Seniors' skills a real lifesaver

You are never too old to learn and the new Grey Medallion surf rescue initiative to train over-50s in lifesaving techniques proves the point.

Completed over two days, the Grey Medallion aims to teach an older demographic how to act in an aquatic emergency.

Participants do not need to be fit or able to swim to complete the Grey Medallion as it aims to teach them how to rescue someone, without getting into the water.

Ithaca Caloundra City Life Saving Club is conducting its next Grey Medallion course on January 30-31 at its Bullock Beach headquarters.

Caloundra resident Jackie Clarke, 72, heard about the course through her University of the Third Age newsletter and decided it was a way she could contribute to the community.

"The course updated my knowledge of lifesaving and was very useful," she said.

"It is pretty worthwhile with so many retirees in the area. There is a lot of first aid taught and I can volunteer as an extra pair of hands.

"One of the most important things is to assess the situation and make sure the rescuer is safe before committing to a rescue."

Interested people do not need to have a lifesaving background.



Participants in the Grey Medallion course encourage others.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Ithaca club secretary and the Coast's only accredited Grey Medallion trainer Patricia Barry said the course has only been running since early 2009.

"We keep numbers to less than 10 per group. So far 40 people have earned their Grey Medallions," she said.

Participants of the Grey Medallion course are then eligible to apply for membership of the Ithaca club as associates.

To sign up call Patricia on 0403 071 651 or email: secretary@caloundra city.asn.au

-John Hammond