Dementia Australia NSW will be presenting a Healthy Brain Ageing Seminar at our Seniors Festival in April which addresses the myths surrounding dementia and provides information relating to normal ageing and memory loss.

This session is suitable for anyone who is interested in learning 5 Simple Steps to Maximise Brain Health and how to help reduce their risk of developing dementia. Drop by for a chat and take some brochures and information about memory loss, dementia and resources about memory concerns, dementia and information including the simple steps you can take to maximise brain health. Material is provided free of charge.

**FREE EVENT**
Thursday & Friday 12/13th April

**Ingredients (Serves 4)**
1x 410g can of apricot in juice
1x Cup of dried apricots, chopped
1x Cup of sugar
2x Tablespoon of margarine or butter
1x Teaspoon of baking soda
1x Cup whole meal flour
1x Cup of plain flour
1x Teaspoon of baking powder

**Method**
1. Preheat the oven to 180º C.
2. Lightly grease a 22cm loaf tin with a pastry brush and oil or oil spray.
3. Puree canned apricots and juice together using a stick blender or a food processor.
4. Place the first four ingredients in a large saucepan and bring to the boil.
5. Leave to cool and then add the baking soda.
6. Add the flours and baking powder to mixture and mix until just combined.
7. Pour mixture into the loaf tin and bake for 1 hour or until a skewer inserted in the middle of the loaf comes out clean.
8. Leave in tin for 10min before turning out.

Credit: seniorchef.co.nz

Deakin University has partnered with McLean Care Inverell, developing a Virtual Reality Vehicle to assist older drivers.

In 2017, McLean Care® was successful in an application for major Government grant funding, which will develop, design and trial a ground-breaking, cutting-edge virtual reality (VR) driving simulator for older people.

This unique and innovative technology may assist older people to keep their driver’s licenses longer. The simulator will focus on the challenges associated with the loss of independence and identity experienced by older people when they are faced with having their driver’s license revoked due to health-related issues or lack of confidence in their own driving.

“McLean Care is committed to ensuring that older people in regional, rural and remote communities have equitable access to services that help them to maintain their health, independence and wellbeing as they age.” said Sue Thomson, McLean Care CEO.

“By combining cutting edge technologies such as sensors, virtual reality, and simulation training, we are leading the way in developing technology to support the seniors in their local areas to remain connected to their communities.

A supplementary outcome of this technology is the ability to enable consumers and their support networks to have the confidence to make informed choices regarding their independence, as the programme will also include reports and health metric data that can be used by Health Professionals to support decision-making.” Ms. Thomson continued.

McLean Care® have named Deakin University as their collaborative partner to develop a world-class state-of-the-art simulator, that will be located in Inverell, and will use 3D modelling to build the Inverell township in a virtual world to provide older people aged between 70 – 80 years with real-life driving experiences in a safe environment.

Mr. Ernest George Lowrey, commonly known as George, has been lucky to be chosen as a Baton Bearer for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

97yr old George attended the Queens Birthday Honours in 2017, and will continue to support his local community by transporting the baton on day 38 of the relay.

Deakin University and McLean Care project team

Sue Thomson
Chief Executive Officer

Credit: seniorchef.co.nz
Geoffrey Dickins

Celebrates 100th birthday

He was born at Rosalie Plains in the Oakey region and attended school in Kelvinhugh. He farmed a block at Theodor until enlisting in the Royal Australian Airforce where he was a member of the Catalina Squadron of airmen for 6 years.

Geoffrey met his wife Judy in 1946 at the recreation hall at Lake Macquarie near Newcastle. On leaving the Airforce Geoffrey and Judy returned to Oakey where together they ran the Oakey Watchmaker and jewellers for 42 years, a skill Geoffrey picked up off a fellow serviceman while in the airforce.

Geoffrey and Judy have 5 daughters, 14 grandchildren and 24 great grandchildren the most recent great grandchildren the evening prior to Geoffrey’s 100th birthday.

37 of Geoffrey and Judy’s family joined them at CWA House on Sunday the 28th of January to celebrate his birthday. Geoffrey and Judy have been happily married for 71 years and both reside at CWA House.

Geoffrey says the secret to getting to 100 is good tucker.

Esme Dorries

Celebrates 102nd birthday

Esme Dorries, “Granny” was born at Wooloowin Brisbane on the 16th of November 1915. She went to school at Nundah and Mt Stanley School.

She was an excellent student and loved to cook, crochet, sew and knit, often winning prizes at the local show.

After school Esme worked at a school, completing house work for boarders. Before her 17th Birthday, Esme fell on an ice cream stand, her right leg going between the slats, injuring her ankle. She was sent to Brisbane hospital and after some time she was sent home as the doctor said there was nothing they could do for her and that she was going to die. Her mother lay her on a mattress on the verandah in the sun, feeding her plenty of fruit and vegetables.

A small lump and spot still exists on her leg today and Esme will give a very quick “Don’t touch that leg it hurts” should anyone touch it. Shame that doctor wasn’t around to see her on her 102nd birthday!


Esme has 6 children, 21 grandchildren, 52 great grandchildren and 29 great, great grandchildren.

Ruth Mason

Celebrates 100th birthday

Ruth was born on the 4th of November 1918, to parents Anne and Fredrick Frank at Rushton in Toowoomba. Ruth was the second child of three children.

Ruth started her schooling life at six at the Biddeston school and when the Crosshill school opened, Ruth attended there until the age of 13.

Like most school children of that era, Ruth would walk to and from school for approximately 4 miles.

When her brother Syd was called up for war, Ruth would drive the tractor and German wagon up to 3 miles to cart hay for the cattle.

At the age of 24, Ruth married John Mason on the 15th of January. John served in the Australian Army for a total of 6 years. He fought in New Guinea. When John returned home, he and Ruth lived at their property at Lintonhorpe and ran their cattle and crop farm together.

Ruth spent her days cooking and sewing and assisting her husband on the farm. After 20 years, Ruth moved to Toowoomba.

Ruth believes her hard work in her early years has helped her to live a long life.

Olga Kajewski

Celebrates 100th birthday

Olga Kajewski, nee Bothman was born on the 21st of March 1917 to parents Christina and Fredrick at Miss Millie Rhode’s nursing home here in Oakey. Olga was the youngest of children, 1 brother and 4 sisters.

Olga started, age 6 at the Greenwood School where she would walk 3 miles by herself each day. Olga left school at age 14 to help her parents run their dairy farm, where she milked cows by hand, not with machinery. At 18, she married her husband Richard on the 19th of February 1936. They were blessed with three children, Lorraine, Marlene and Glenis.

The family lived at Silverleigh where Olga spent her days assisting her husband in the diary and raising their family. Olga enjoys cooking and sewing. After selling the farm in later years, Olga and her husband moved to Toowoomba.

Olga has lived at CWA House for 8 years. Olga has 5 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. She enjoys watching tv in her room, especially the cricket and football. Olga cheekily stated that she started driving at an early age and was doing so without a licence. Olga only stopped driving when she was 91.

Ellie Dillon

Celebrates 105th birthday

Ellie was born Norella Rita on 7 December 1912 to Heinrich (Henry) and Bertha Voli (nee Genrich) in the rooms of the local midwife, Miss Millie Rhode in Cherry Street Oakey. This was also the same year as the sinking of the Titanic. Ellie was the fourth one of eight children and she is the only one alive.

When Ellie turned five she went to live with her Aunt and Uncle in Kingsthorpe where she attended school. After leaving school at around 12 she returned home to Oakey to the family farm (this farm was directly behind CWA House and the Voll house still stands today although looking a little different). Ellie’s sister, Mavis and her Husband, Bertram Cherry lived in a house that stood exactly where CWA House stands today.

After returning home to Oakey Ellie developed a very keen interest in sewing. Ellie’s parents bought her a Singer from the sewing machine when she was 13 and she became a beautiful dress maker - making clothes for her family and many others in the Oakey District. Ellie was also a bit of a home hairdresser. Many people in the Oakey area came to her for hair cuts and perms etc.

Ellie was also one of the people to fly with Sir Charles Kingsford Smith on the Southern Cross when he flew into Oakey in August 1932.

After marrying, Ellie continued her dressmaking and hairdressing businesses at home - the last dress she made was in 2002 when she was 90. Ellie was a very talented lady - on one occasion she could not buy enough of the same fabric for curtains so she bought some plain fabric and painted it to match.