



STOP PRESS!

HOMESHARE ROUNDTABLE CANBERRA – OCTOBER 2017

The hoped for Homeshare Round table, mentioned in our last newsletter, is set to happen next month! The offices of the Ministers Wyatt (Aged Care) and Porter (DSS – NDIS) have worked with HANZA and The Australia Institute to find a date to bring representatives of government, peak aged care and disability bodies together with Homeshare providers to review the work done to date in accepting and growing Homeshare and to chart a way forward.

Our Christmas newsletter will bring you the news!

NEWS

SPECIAL CONGRESS EDITION



As we have alluded to in past editions, the 5th World Homeshare Congress was held this year in Madrid in late May. The Spanish did us proud with a spectacular venue, great food, simultaneous interpreting and fascinating content. We were greeted in the wedding-cake style Palace de Cibeles in the centre of Madrid. 14 countries around the world now have Homeshare programs and are as excited as us by the outcomes of the work.

Four of the HANZA committee attended, a great effort on our part, and a good excuse for a European holiday.

The speakers inspired us with new enthusiasm. They filled us with the realization that we are a part of a

worldwide movement that is gathering strength every year and proving itself at each stage.

Prof. Malcolm Johnson gave the Nan Maitland Memorial address and was his usual confident, articulate self. He told of the history of Homeshare, starting with Maggie Kuhn until the present day. He talked of the spirituality of the human condition and the value of an all age society and the shifting dynamics between generations.

He concluded with the observation that Homeshare has demonstrated its worth and now it must prove its worth. Research is needed.

The next speaker was Enrique Baron Crespo, an urbane European who bestrides the world stage. He is the former President of the European Commission and much else. He spoke of the fact that he has been homesharing all his life, first with family then with others. His talk referred often to the EU and its role in promoting democracy. This led him on to the role of Homeshare. "Immigrants saved Spain" Perhaps Homeshare, with its intergenerational solidarity has a role in further promoting democracy. It promotes a closer union among people and its values relate to respect, equality, ethnicity and a horror of discrimination.

He reminded us of the exalted position in which Homeshare must be judged: humans by their very nature, prefer to live in groups. Homeshare exemplifies this in so many ways. It did us good just to hear him.

AND DOREEN STOLE THE SHOW!



L-R Spanish homesharer and householder, Doreen and PossAbilities Homeshare coordinator

At the end of the 2 days,(they kept the best till last), we were introduced to Doreen. She is 89 years old, lives in a small town one hour from Manchester. Doreen has never had a boyfriend. She nursed her mother until she died. She nursed her father until he died. She nursed her brother until he died, and a friend until she died. Then she became sick, could not care for herself and was forced to go into a nursing home.

After nine months of this, she was fed up and wanted to go home. The local community worker thought Homeshare might be the answer."PossAbilities Homeshare" came to the rescue and produced Anouk, a young French student.

Anouk took Doreen to the theatre, to movies, to Bingo and to Manchester. She had never been to Manchester before.

And now here was Doreen after her first time flying, in Madrid, on the stage, telling us all: "Homeshare has changed my life" and "I wish I could have done it sooner".

EXPERIENCE THE CONGRESS

Solidarios, our hosts in Madrid, have posted the presentations given at the congress on their website. Follow this link to find them:

www.hiworldcongressmadrid2017.org/en/materials/download-congress-materials/

The website also includes the photo gallery – a wonderful album that really captures the flavour of the event.

Solidarios has now also analyzed the delegates' feedback forms. We're delighted to see that participants enjoyed the congress so much that most are now planning to attend the Brussels congress in 2019!

INTERNATIONAL HOMESHARE

The congress gave us the chance to hear about what is going on in many countries:

There are often the same problems throughout the world: deficit housing stock, an ageing population, high rental costs.

In many countries, the Householder gets much needed rent from the Homesharer.

Fees seem to be charged by the program in most cases.

Homesharers are usually students in European programs.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Kirby Dunn, CEO of HomeShare Vermont told us how Homeshare is resurfacing in America after the long economic depression. There are now 34 new programs throughout the country, not one of which is in a state that voted for Donald Trump. We all smiled.

SOUTH KOREA

This country has a dynamic that is the aftermath of the long-ago war. The Korean academics who presented to us described:

- High % of home ownership of the 65+ cohort.

- Low income of this group

- Deficient housing stock.

The Seoul city government is sponsoring a pilot Homeshare program in one of its larger districts. One of the unusual components of this program is that the city will pay the Householder €800 to prepare a pleasant atmosphere for the Homesharer: new wallpaper, paint, bathroom improvements etc. Novel and nice!

SPAIN

A variation on homeshare.

In Alicante it was noticed by housing officers that while youth demand proper housing as a right, older people say nothing. So they decided to build specifically for this group. Careful thought was given to location, (city centre) architecture and social structure. The word intergenerationality was used in their presentation. For every four apartments, one was reserved for a young person. Rent for all is the same. The condition on which a young person is given an apartment, is that if an older person knocks on their door for help, they give it.

The program is working well. So far, every door knock has been responded to satisfactorily. Surprising to the creators of the program, it is the older people who design and manage any community entertainments and meetings. They expected the young to lead. Silly them!

They are continuing to build more and more of this design with the addition of community centres, medical clinics etc.

SPAIN AND HOMESHARE INTERNATIONAL

For some time Homeshare International has been designing protocols for research into Homeshare. Mariano Sanchez of the University of Granada described work plans for new initiatives in these areas.

UK HOMESHARE

Chris Anderson, Director of donations of the Lloyds Bank Foundation and Alex Fox, CEO of Shared Lives Plus presented *The experience of commercial/non-profit collaboration to promote intergenerational Homeshare programmes in the UK*. UK Homeshare is immensely fortunate to have formed this partnership which aims to put homesharing on the map, developing both a range of different approaches and a sustainable operating model. The Homeshare Sector Summer Report 2017 is due out any day which will bring us up-to-date with the impressive progress the project has made. Check the Homeshare UK [website](#) for the report and lots of interesting reading.

WHAT DID WE GET FROM THE CONGRESS?

I came away from this congress impressed with the worth of what we have been doing here in Australia for all these years. Our numbers keep growing and each new Homeshare group is as committed and enthusiastic as we have always been. There can be no doubt of the value of Homeshare or its place in the welfare of so many.

There is the matter of fees. In most examples that we saw, fees are charged by the program. I tend to think that we must follow suit very soon for many reasons. There was a feeling amongst delegates that the ultimate fate of Homeshare should be a self sustained one. This, of course has its problems: we do not wish to discourage anyone from its benefits because of financial embarrassment. On the other hand, as one telephone enquirer said to me, that he doubted the value of a service given for nothing. We must be careful.

And there are the issues of fee collection and means testing. It can be burdensome.

Rents are also an issue. Many householders charge rent and for good reason. In Korea students can be paying rent of up to half market value. This is reasonable in an environment where householders are sometimes suffering from acute financial distress and rental prices are exorbitant. And anyway, for the students, there is nowhere to rent near their place of study.

Here in Australia we have the same problems: workers such as police, ambulance and nurses are having difficulty in living anywhere near their work.

So, Homeshare is good for everything!

Carmel Hurst OAM

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