

Case study

Young at Heart in aged care homes

The *Young at Heart* project is engaging residents at aged care homes in Queensland's North Burnett region to promote health and wellbeing.

What

Queensland performing artist Cilla Slack developed a live music show, *Young at Heart*, aimed at promoting the physical, creative and emotional health of residents at aged care homes in the North Burnett Region.

Cilla's inspiration for the *Young at Heart* project came during a tour of her award-winning show [Blue Gum Farm TV](#), an education program which shares the adventures of life on a real farm in Gayndah.

During the tour, Cilla observed that the older audience members enjoyed the songs and story-telling as much as the younger ones did.

Working with local professional and emerging artists, Cilla developed a new series of songs and stories depicting locally distinctive farming culture and unique rural heritage. Residents from the aged care homes also participated in the development and performance of the work.

Young at Heart performances were open to the wider community to foster a continuing connection between the residents and the North Burnett community.

This was the first project of its kind in North Burnett and aligned with the council's *Norming the Arts* initiative which focuses on making the arts accessible, real and relatable across the community.



Young at Heart performance at Ridge Haven Retirement Complex in Monto. Image courtesy Cilla Slack.

When and where

Biggenden, Eidsvold, Gayndah, Monto, Munduberra, December 2017 to January 2018

Key stats

- 6 performances
- 6 local artists and art workers
- 142 audience members

Investment

\$6820– [Regional Arts Development Fund](#) (RADF)

RADF is a partnership between the Queensland Government and [North Burnett Regional Council](#) to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland. Arts Queensland invested \$2.08 million across 59 councils through RADF in 2017-18.

Find out more

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Outcomes

- *Young at Heart* performances were well received by the community with all surveyed audience members indicating they would like to see more *Young at Heart* performances in the future.

In researching and speaking with people within the community I am inspired by how popular the concept is and how warmly it is received.

Cilla Slack

- Community performances provided opportunities for residents to socialise with each other and with the wider community.
- The combination of songs and story-telling provided a welcome chance to reminisce, especially for many that had retired from farms to live in town.
- The project provided employment opportunities for regional artists which would not otherwise have been available.
- Artists worked with aged care staff to build skills in using arts to promote wellbeing. This supported the Council's initiative in *Norming the arts*.



Young at Heart. Image courtesy Cilla Slack

Reflections and learnings

The most poignant aspect of this project, and one that will stay with me long after it's finished, is the amount of appreciation shown by the audience who received the performances. The elderly residents (as well as the staff and careers) were so thrilled that it was a show tailored and presented just for them. Seeing the joy it brought was truly motivating. Cilla Slack

Feedback

Love the show and believe it's a great and important message. Audience member

Very engaging and enjoyable for young and old.
Audience member

Great show! The kids and residents loved it. Audience member

Should be more of it. Audience member

Tip for others

Allow more budget and time for promotion of the event.
Cilla Slack

What next?

The project has led to ongoing performance opportunities within aged care and respite centres in the North Burnett region.