

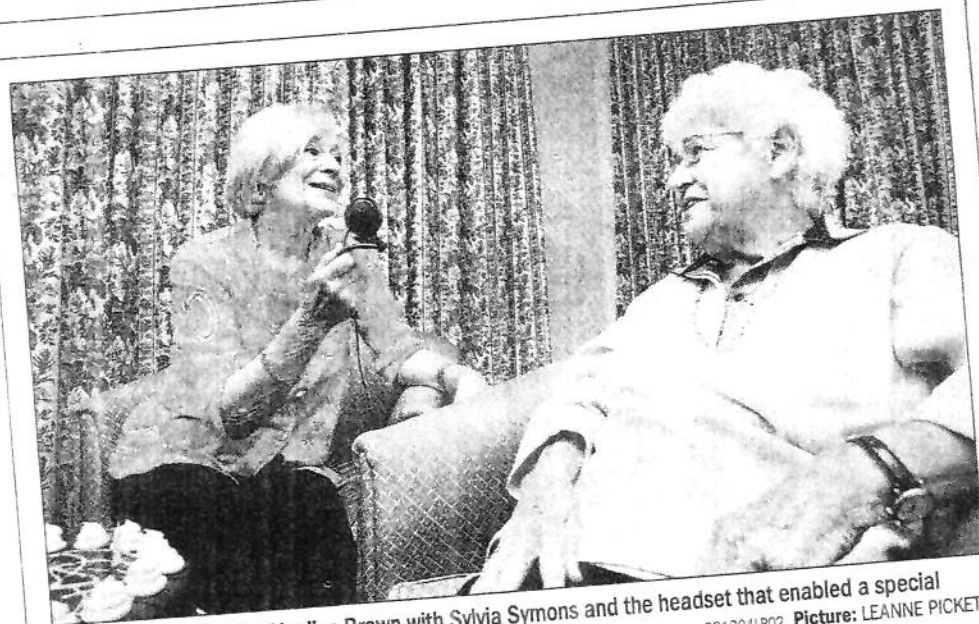
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received timely and efficient services and support. Changes to maintenance obligations in relation to the sewer connection drain have also been revised in the approved customer charter.

Wannon Water is now obliged to maintain sewerage mains while the customer must look after their private sewer property drain, which is the pipe connecting their property to the sewerage system.

"These changes ensure that Wannon Water's approach to maintenance responsibilities in relation to the sewer property drain is consistent with all other water corporations in Victoria," Mr Green said.

The charter is available from Wannon Water service centres and its website.



Ambassador for Ageing Noeline Brown with Sylvia Symons and the headset that enabled a special birthday celebration. 081204LP02 Picture: LEANNE PICKETT

Video links far-flung family

By ALEX JOHNSON

SYLVIA Symons is a great-grandmother at the cutting edge of information technology.

Mrs Symons' three Melbourne-based great-grandchildren celebrated her impending 94th birthday yesterday and sung her Christmas Carols — without even getting in the car.

Mrs Symons is one of many residents at Western District Health Service's Kolor Lodge in Penshurst benefiting from a video-link service known as the Virtual Visiting Program.

While the technology has been in use for about two years, the program was officially launched yesterday with a hook-up between Mrs Symons in Penshurst and Federal Minister for Ageing Justine Elliot and the great-grandchildren.

After her daughter died of cancer 18 months ago, Mrs Symons was moved from her home in suburban Melbourne to Kolor Lodge in order to be closer to her other children in Penshurst.

But the six-hour-round-trip has meant the devoted great-grandmother would

miss regular visits from Madison, 5, Mikaela, 3, and Ashlee, 19 months.

"Exciting" and a "miracle" was how the woman born months after the outset of World War I described the video link.

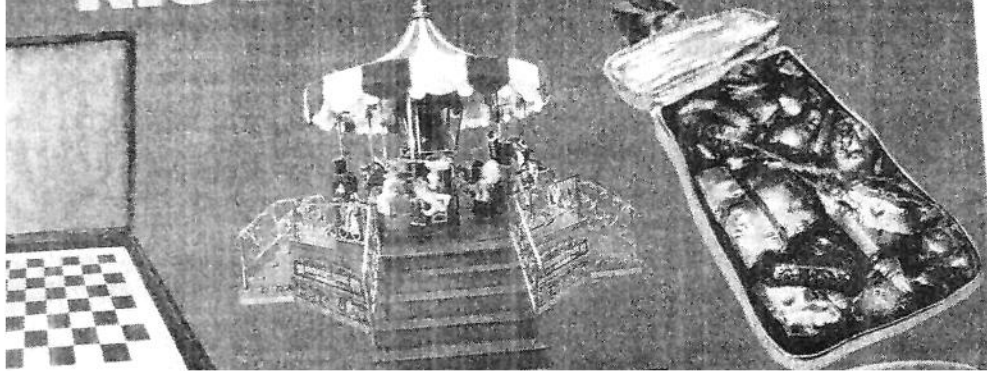
"It's wonderful to be talking to them," added Mrs Symons, whose poor hearing makes telephone conversations difficult.

Ambassador for Ageing Noeline Brown, who was at Kolor Lodge for the virtual visit, said older Australians faced with the challenges of vast physical distances would benefit from the technology.

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