

WELCOME

We will continue to keep in contact with our members as we navigate the constantly changing world of COVID-19. At least the easing of some restrictions has allowed more valuable family contact, especially for Mother's Day. Anzac Day 2020 proved that, no matter what, Aussies and Kiwis would continue the proud tradition of recognising all those who served, and still serve, their country. It was heartening to see so many in our neighbourhood standing on the footpath, stairs or lounge room windows at 6am to do just that.

Sadly, long time member and past Coorparoo Branch Secretary, Jean Foxcroft passed away in April and Valda & Noel Studders lost their daughter Amanda. Our thoughts and prayers go to them, their families and friends.

COVID-19 – NEW HELP LINE ANNOUNCED

If you are worried about COVID-19 for yourself, a loved one or someone in your care – or are feeling lonely or distressed, there is someone you can talk to. National Seniors Australia has helped launch a new 1800 line to support older Australians during this time of crisis. **The number is 1800 171 866.**

Not only is the support line here for you if you are worried about contracting the virus, but also if you are worried about a friend or family member living with Dementia. The service is a listening ear and a friendly voice about what COVID-19 means for your circumstances.

National Seniors has partnered with the Federal Government, Council Of The Ageing, Dementia Australia, and Older Persons Advocacy Network to get the support line up and running. So help is on hand if you need to talk to someone.

Call 1800 171 866 and speak with a friendly person who is there to listen and help.

RELAXING RULES – STAY VIGILANT

With states and territories around the country beginning to relax social rules, National Seniors is reminding everyone to maintain their own social distancing and hygiene rules.

As the country's peak consumer and advocacy body for older Australians, National Seniors is concerned some people will believe this is a green light to go back to normal.

Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke, cited the examples of Singapore and Germany where a second wave of

the coronavirus spread after rules in those two countries were relaxed.

"People must still follow the advice of medical authorities and not see this as a time where we can start hugging one another or shaking hands. "It's not a case of 'she'll be right mate.' Our own social distancing rules must still be maintained as the virus has not been eradicated" he said.

Mr Henschke also supports the comments by NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian that we must all still behave as if we have the virus or the potential to get the virus.

"The NSW Premier said if we want to maintain the great result we are achieving in flattening the curve, then every time we leave the house we have to act as though we have the virus or we are going to come into contact with someone who has the virus."

MISSING THE ARTS COMMUNITY?

Luckily there's more than one way to ease boredom while staying indoors. You can broaden your horizons with a virtual 'walk through' tour of some of Australia's and the world's most prestigious cultural institutions, museums, art galleries and zoos including the following (but the list is almost endless depending on your interests).

National Museum Australia
Guggenheim Museum
The Louvre
The Vatican Museum
The British Museum
Metropolitan Museum of Art
The Sydney Opera House
Taronga Zoo
San Diego Zoo

COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME (CVS):

The Department of Health offers a number of initiatives and programmes to assist the community, one of which is the Community Visitors Scheme which arranges volunteer visits to older people to provide friendship and companionship.

Whilst the scheme normally focuses on actual volunteer visits to older people, on 29 March, the Prime Minister announced funding for the CVS to further support older people who may be feeling more isolated during the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus is on phone and virtual friendships while social distancing measures and visiting restrictions are in place.

If you are interested in finding out more about this scheme contact the Department of Health.

NEW DEEMING RATES

The Federal Government's new lower deeming rates came into effect from 1 May. The upper rate for savings and investments balances above \$51,800 for a single pensioner fell from 3% to 2.25% and the lower rate for savings and investments below \$51,800 fell from 1% to 0.25%.

Whilst the rate cuts are welcome news, National Seniors Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke, says "they are simply not enough. Bank deposit rates are at an all-time low, shares have crashed, dividends have been slashed and returns from rents are vanishing. The world is in the grip of a COVID health and financial crisis.

"The upper deeming rate has dropped to 2.25%, but where do you find a safe place to get that sort of return? Remember you're deemed to be earning that amount and your pension is cut accordingly by 50 cents in the dollar for every dollar earned above the threshold.

"The rate is manifestly unfair and hurts almost a million Australians including more than half a million aged pensioners. Deeming is used not just to calculate the aged pension, it also affects a range of other social security payments including disability pensions, carer payments, service pensions, parenting payment and widow allowances.

"The current state of the share market and property market shows just how risky the investment

environment is outside of a government backed term deposit. If it says you can earn 2.25% then it should offer an investment that gives that return.

Instead it could offer a green bond as proposed by National Seniors budget submission to invest in Snowy 2.0, which is what some members have said they'd like to do."

If not, Mr Henschke would like the upper deeming rate dropped again to reflect the cash rate as it had done for decades before it was used as a social security savings tool to take money from pensioners and welfare recipients.

National Seniors also recommends an independent body to set deeming rates and the pension, to take the politics out of the retirement income system.

ACTIVE SENIORS

There are many reasons why we tend to slow down and become more sedentary with age. It may be due to health problems, weight or pain issues, or worries about falling. Or perhaps you think that exercising simply isn't for you. But as you grow older, an active lifestyle becomes more important than ever to your health.

A recent Swedish study found that physical activity was the number one contributor to longevity, adding extra years to your life—even if you don't start exercising until your senior years. But getting active is not just about adding years to your life, it's about adding life to your years.

Getting moving can help boost your energy, maintain your independence, protect your heart, and manage symptoms of illness or pain as well as your weight. Regular exercise is also good for your mind, mood, and memory.

Physical health benefits:

- Helps you maintain or lose weight
- Reduces the impact of illness and chronic disease
- Enhances mobility, flexibility and balance

Mental health benefits:

- Improves sleep
- Boost mood and self-confidence
- Can help brain function

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Best wishes go to our branch members Carmel Bedser, Julie Jermy and Joan Peacock who celebrate their birthdays in June.

CHRISTMAS CHILD

Heather Tye, who coordinates the items for collection for the Christmas Child boxes, has advised that while the distribution of the boxes at the end of the year to the recipients is still uncertain due to shipping restrictions, they would still accept any donations of items and keep them stored until distribution can recommence.

As such, if you have purchased, or would still like to purchase any of the remaining items, for when our meetings recommence, they would be greatly accepted.

Just a reminder, the items normally collected are:

February -	Pencils (no crayons)
March –	Rubbers/Sharpener
April –	Face Washers
May –	Tennis Balls
June –	Combs/Hairbrushes
July –	Bangles/Necklaces
August –	Small cars for boys
September –	Soap
October –	Cuddly Toys
November –	Cuddly Toys (same as Oct)

I AM WHAT I AM

I used to think I should change
Find myself a better me
But with time I realised I am
Just what I am meant to be.

I am the wrinkles
In the corners of my eyes
I am in my laughter
And every tear that I've cried.

I am a thousand cherished memories
Twinkling up above
I am the passions that I follow
And the people that I love.

I am the highs and the lows
And the moments in between
I am the places I've been to
And the future that I dream.

I am not perfect
My skin doesn't quite fit
But I am who I am
Body, mind and spirit.

I am a life well lived
In the place that I call home
I'm proud of all I've done
But I haven't done it alone.

I am what I am,
All I was, and will ever be
Because of those who've shared
This journey with me.

Thanks to BlueCare for sharing this poem.

SHARE YOUR STORY

With more free time than normal, many people are starting to write their own life stories to share with their families. National Seniors, as an organisation, is also interested in discovering the vast variety of backgrounds that make up their membership base, so if you feel you would like to share your story, please put pen to paper and let us know about the 'real you'.

NATIONAL SENIORS WEBSITE UPGRADE

Whilst contact with our members via phone or interactions face to face through branch activities is part of the way that National Seniors Australia engages with the community, online activities are fast becoming a practical way of sharing information in a timely manner – especially when living in the COVID-19 world.

National Seniors Australia has a responsive and content rich website platform that members can access for information, support, offers, member benefits, product and services.

With so much information, products and services available on the website, it can make navigation to find what you're looking for challenging for many, so they have made some changes throughout the site which should make finding what you're looking for a little easier. Work to further enhance the site will continue and they have modified the website header in order to make it much easier for the untrained to find what they are looking for on the site.

The selection options now include:

- **Members**
- **What we offer**
- **What we do**
- **News and Resources**
- **Get involved**
- **About us.**

Current news articles can be viewed on the **News** option; you can listen to **weekly Podcasts**; or find branch information under the **Get involved** tab as the **Join a branch** option.

CLEVER SIGNAGE

SIGN IN A SHOE REPAIR STORE IN VANCOUVER THAT READ:

"We will heel you, We will save your sole, We will even dye for you."

AT AN OPTOMETRIST'S OFFICE:

"If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place."

ON A PLUMBER'S TRUCK:

"We repair what your husband fixed."

ON AN ELECTRICIAN'S TRUCK:

"Let us remove your shorts."

ON ANOTHER PLUMBER'S TRUCK:

"Don't sleep with a drip. Call your plumber."

AT A CAR DEALERSHIP:

"The best way to get back on your feet - miss a car payment."

OUTSIDE A MUFFLER SHOP:

"No appointment necessary. We hear you coming."

IN A VETERINARIAN'S WAITING ROOM:

"Be back in 5 minutes. Sit... Stay.."

AT THE ELECTRIC COMPANY:

"We would be delighted if you send in your payment on time. However, if you don't, YOU will be delighted."

IN THE FRONT YARD OF A FUNERAL HOME:

"Drive carefully. We'll wait."

SIGN ON THE BACK OF A SEPTIC TANK TRUCK:

"Caution - This truck is full of Political Promises."

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries please contact our Secretary, **Graham Tienan**, on Mobile 0407 736 453 or email nsacoorparoossec@gmail.com, or if you do have an email address please advise so we can forward information more promptly (and help save on postage costs).

SMILE

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

Frostbite

