

WELCOME – A sign in a shop window really highlighted an important philosophy for life – **LIFE IS FULL OF CHALLENGES, BUT HAPPINESS SHOULDN'T BE ONE OF THEM** – which we hope our members can take to heart. Our guest speaker for our May meeting was Judith Hoyle from Bird Life Southern Queensland who addressed the interaction between birds and humans and the importance of encouraging them into our gardens, as well as the sad destruction of various habitats through urban development or the recent bushfires. A big thank you to all members who contributed to the Care Kits For Kids charity again in May.

HONOURING OUR MOST SENIOR MEMBERS

As part of Mother's Day celebrations during our May meeting, three of our branch's most senior members who are in their 90's were recognised for their contribution to the branch. They are Vilma Barwick, Elsie Debney and Evelyn Jamieson. All three ladies have been long-time members of National Seniors and are still actively participating in branch activities. They have contributed to the branch over many years through various roles or on the organising committee, with two ladies still working members of the committee – Evelyn Jamieson as Branch Treasurer and Elsie Debney as Committee Member.

Each lady was presented with a certificate and flowers in appreciation of their valued contribution to the branch, and they shared some of their reflections on their lives and relationships with their own mothers and families.



L-R: Evelyn Jamieson, Vilma Barwick, Elsie Debney

BRANCH MEETINGS

Our next branch meeting will be held on **Thursday 10 June 2021** in the Anzac Room at the Coorparoo RSL Club. Arrival will be at 10:00am for a 10:30am start with morning tea provided. The cost is \$6.00 per person.

Our guest speaker will be Mary-Jane Lawless from National Seniors Travel to tempt us with travel opportunities throughout Australia and hopefully overseas soon.

Monthly meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month with the remaining dates for 2021 being:

8 July	12 August (AGM)
9 September	14 October
11 November	

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Best wishes to the following members who celebrate their birthdays in June:

Carmel Bedser Julie Jermy Joan Peacock

We hope your special days are made memorable by family and friends.

ENJOY A MORNING TEA CATCH-UP WITH FELLOW MEMBERS

Join us for morning tea (at your own cost) and a chat on **Monday 31 May at 10:00am at Easts Leagues Club, 40 Main Avenue, Coorparoo.**

There is ample free parking, or it is a short stroll from the bus way on Old Cleveland Road. We hope to see you there.

JUNE DAY BUS TRIP

Our next bus trip will be on **Monday 28 June** to visit Twinnies Pelican & Seabird Rescue on the Sunshine Coast where we will tour the facilities, followed by lunch at the Landsborough Hotel. The bus will leave the Coorparoo RSL Club at 8:30am and return at approximately 4:30pm.

Cost is \$64.00 per person which includes the coach tour, morning tea and lunch. There is no entry charge for the Twinnies tour, but as they do not receive any Government funding, it might be a nice gesture if we all made a donation towards their

costs of rescuing the bird life in the Sunshine Coast area.

Bookings, and payment, can be made at or before our branch meeting on Thursday 10 June. All enquiries should be directed to Pat Will on 3398 8726 or 0437 774 049 or Julie Jermy on 3395 2056 or 0405 465 845.

CARE KITS FOR KIDS DONATIONS

As a branch, we are continuing to support this organisation through the donation of items to assist Queensland children who are displaced through no fault of their own. Items, with suggestions listed below, can be brought to our monthly meetings and will be delivered to Care Kits For Kids. Most can be bought at discount shops, and not everything needs to be provided each month.

June – Long pants, jackets, tops, beanies (all sizes)

July – Face washer, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush & cover

August – Hair brush, comb, bands, clips, baseball cap

September – summer pyjamas, girls crop top sizes 12, 14, 16

October – Reading book (all genres), small soft toy or doll (no buttons or beads)

November – Back pack, small lunch box

GUEST SPEAKERS – HELP WANTED

Our branch secretary, Graham Tienan, has agreed to continue sourcing guest speakers for our monthly meetings. However, as many of our members are also members of other clubs who host guest speakers, if anyone sees a speaker who would be appropriate for our group, please pass on their details to Graham so he can contact them.

ARE YOU A KNITTER?

Many of our members were kind enough to knit scarves and beanies during the winter months last year which were donated to the Mission to Seafarers Brisbane. These are then distributed to ship's crew members who are heading to colder climates.

If you are interested in doing this again could you please advise Graham Tienan so we can have an indication as to any contribution we can make to this organisation as a branch. Some patterns are available at our branch meetings if you are interested.

ENJOY READING?

Don't forget our book swap at each monthly meeting. There are some great books available for only a gold coin donation which goes to club activities. Donated books are all in good condition and can be swapped back another month.

2021-22 FEDERAL BUDGET & HOW IT RELATES TO OLDER AUSTRALIANS

National Seniors Australia General Manager, Chris Grice, forwarded the following information for distribution to branch members:

“About a week has passed since the release of the 2021-22 Federal Budget so we've now had time to reflect on what has been announced in the Budget and what it means for older Australians.

There were a number of initiatives that were targeted at older Australians, either to support Aged Care or Retirement Incomes.

Whilst there is still so much to be done to ensure that these promises are kept, National Seniors Australia is proud to have contributed to the shaping of these decisions representing the interests of older Australians now, and for the generations to come.

Through our research, policy submissions, in-person evidence, as well as government and media relations led by National Seniors Australia CEO, Professor John McCallum, and National Seniors Australia Chief Advocate, Ian Henschke, National Seniors Australia has directly influenced many recommendations within the Royal Commission Into Aged Care Quality and Safety final report and the Federal Government's Retirement Income Review report.

There were 50 specific references to National Seniors Australia research or submissions in the Aged Care Royal Commission report, and 30 references to National Seniors Australia research or submissions in the Retirement Income Review report.

As a member of our branch community, I thank you for your contributions and assistance in helping us to achieve these outcomes.

I hope this information reinforces the importance and relevance of your continued support of National Seniors Australia, and the value of our work for all older Australians.”

STAYING SAFE IN WINTER

Many winter products can be unsafe if they are old, faulty or used incorrectly. To have a safe winter and avoid injury, follow these safety tips.

Hot Water Bottles

Hot water bottles are widely used for warmth or to help ease pain. They are manufactured from rubber or polyvinyl (PVC) and can deteriorate with age. Each year, about 200 people in Australia are treated for serious burns from using hot water bottles.

Safety tips –

- Don't use boiling water in your hot water bottle – use hot tap water.
- Don't overfill.
- Avoid direct contact with your skin. Wrap the hot water bottle or add a fitted cover before use.
- Never leave the hot bottle on an area of the body for more than 20 minutes.

Wheat Bags

When using a wheat bag, follow the heating instructions and never heat for longer than what is written on the label.

Homemade wheat bags can pose a fire and injury risk because the moisture content and volume of these bags is not known, so there are no heating times to guide you.

Age causes the organic fillings inside wheat bags to dry out and become more combustible.

Safety tips –

- Do not heat and place the wheat bag on or in bedding. Blankets trap the product's heat and may cause it to ignite.
- Allow the wheat bag to cool completely each time before reheating.
- If you notice a burning smell, let the bag cool and then dispose of it – it is no longer safe to use.

Electric Blankets

Inspect the electric blanket before use and look for frayed fabric, exposed elements, damaged cords or scorch marks. If you notice any damage to the electric blanket, throw it away. Damaged or faulty electric blankets can cause an electric shock or fire hazard.

Once winter is over, roll the electric blanket up and store it in a clean and dry place as the manufacturer recommends.

Safety tips –

- Check before use. The cords should not be frayed and the blanket covering the wires should not be worn out.
- Don't sleep with your electric blanket on. Warm the bed and then turn it off.
- Never place heavy items on your bed when the electric blanket is turned on.
- Seek advice about using an electric blanket if you have diabetes or are pregnant.

Heaters

Check your heater every winter to ensure it is safe to use. Inspect the electrical cables and make sure there are no exposed wires or loose connections.

Only use one appliance per power point and turn off when not in use.

Gas heaters must be vented adequately, because the carbon monoxide produced when the gas is burnt is odourless, colourless and deadly. Have your gas heater serviced regularly by a qualified tradesperson to ensure there are no carbon monoxide leaks.

Safety tips –

- Heaters should be placed on a flat and level surface.
- Never use a gas heater or BBQ made for outdoor use, inside your home.
- Always supervise children and pets when heaters are in use.
- Keep heaters clear from items that might burn. A minimum of 1m clearance from clothes, bedding, furniture, curtains and other combustibles is recommended.

LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL

When I was in my younger days,
I weighed a few kilos less,
I needn't hold my tummy in
To wear a belted dress.

But now that I am older,
I've set my body free:
There's the comfort of elastic
Where once my waist would be.

Inventor of those high-heeled shoes
My feet have not forgiven:
I have to wear a nine now,
But used to wear a seven.

And how about those pantyhose –
They're sized by weight, you see,
So how come when I put them on
The crotch is at my knee?

I need to wear these glasses
As the print's been getting smaller:
And it wasn't very long ago
I know that I was taller.

Though my hair has turned to grey
And my skin no longer fits;
On the inside, I'm the same old me,
It's the outside that's changed a bit.

MASSIVE WIN ON ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

State and territory governments have agreed on minimum housing standards to make housing more 'accessible'. Accessible housing design helps meet the needs of people with mobility restrictions related to age or disability.

After years of lobbying, state and territory members of the Building Minister's Meeting (BMM) met on 30 April 2021 and agreed to update the National Construction Code (NCC) to include a minimum level of accessible design elements.

National Seniors has been advocating for this change as part of their ongoing Better Housing campaign. Many other ageing and disability organisations have been agitating for this important change as well through the *Australian Network for Universal Housing Design*. This advocacy ramped up recently, through the *Building Better Homes* campaign to push the issue in the lead up to the BMM meeting. Harnessing the power of older Australians, National Seniors helped play a role in this win – an outcome we should all be proud of.

Wins like these show the importance of supporting National Seniors advocacy campaigns and the value of your membership.

What does it mean for you?

While you love the home you bought when you were younger, age is making it difficult to maintain as you get older.

Evidence clearly shows that unsuitable housing is an underlying risk factor leading to injury, hospitalisation, and premature entry into residential aged care. Yet finding alternative housing, that meets basic accessibility standards, is fraught. Most new housing does not include basic accessibility

features unless it's age specific housing, such as retirement villages, which may not be of interest.

This is because standards for accessibility have been voluntary under the agreement reached in National Dialogue on Universal Housing Design in 2010. This agreement led to the development of the *Liveable Home Design Guidelines*. Under the Guidelines, there are a series of levels – Silver, Gold and Platinum – with different accessible design features required to obtain accreditation for each level.

The Ministers have decided the seven minimum accessibility features from the Silver standard will be mandatory in the NCC. This includes:

1. A safe continuous and step-free path of travel from the street entrance and/or parking area to a dwelling entrance that is level.
2. At least one, level (step-free) entrance into the dwelling.
3. Internal doors and corridors that facilitate comfortable and unimpeded movement between spaces.
4. A toilet on the ground (or entry) level that provides easy access.
5. A bathroom that contains a hobless shower recess.
6. Reinforced walls around the toilet, shower and bath to support the safe installation of grab rails at a later date.
7. Stairways designed to reduce the likelihood of injury and also enable future adaption.

The Ministers have also agreed to publish a voluntary gold technical standard, with individual jurisdictions deciding if they want to make the gold standard mandatory. Each state and territory will work through the implementation process to set timeframes for the adoption of these changes to minimise impacts on the building industry.

Campaign for better housing is not over.

The National Seniors *Better Housing Campaign* isn't over. The campaign aims to improve housing options for older Australians, enabling them to age safely and comfortably in the place of their choice.

A key focus of the broader campaign is improving options to enable seniors to downsize should they need, or want, to. Downsizing is not about having a smaller home, but about finding a home that is more suited to your needs. As you get older, you may need a new home that:

- Is easier to take care of
- Is closer to your family or services

- Provides access to different lifestyle options, or
- Is simply safer or easier

Aside from the focus on accessible design, National Seniors is also campaigning for stamp duty concessions for seniors in the mainland states that don't already offer one (QLD, WA, SA and NSW).

EXERCISE BOOSTS IMMUNITY AND MAKES VACCINES MORE EFFECTIVE

Key Points from a new study:

- Physical inactivity is responsible for more than five million premature deaths every year.
- Activity strengthens the immune system.
- An active person is 50% more likely to have a higher antibody count after the vaccine.

Experts agree that COVID-19 is here to stay, just like other infectious diseases, such as the flu. We will need to continuously manage and protect ourselves against it. Vaccination is an obvious step to take. And in the long term, exercising the body is one of the best ways to boost your immunity.

A study from 2018 found that physical inactivity is responsible for more than five million premature deaths every year. Now, a new systematic review of evidence shows that regular physical activity strengthens the human immune system, reduces the risk of falling ill and dying from infectious disease by more than a third, and significantly increases the effectiveness of vaccination campaigns.

The review found consistent and compelling evidence across six studies involving more than a half million participants that meeting the recommended guidelines for physical activity – 30 minutes of activity, five days a week - reduces the risk of falling ill and dying of infectious diseases by 37%.

This adds to the results of another new study conducted in the United States specifically on COVID-19. The effect is at least as strong, if not more so, than the effect reported for other risk factors of COVID-19 such as age or having a pre-existing condition such as diabetes.

Regular physical activity resulted in elevated levels of the antibody immunoglobulin IgA. This antibody coats the mucosal membrane of our lungs and other parts of our body where viruses and bacteria can enter. Regular physical activity also increases the number of CD4+ T cells, which are responsible for

alerting the immune system of an attack and regulate its response.

Also, vaccines appear more effective if they are administered after a programme of physical activity. A person who is active is 50% more likely to have a higher antibody count after the vaccine than somebody who is not active.

How physical activity wards off disease

1. It protects against risk factors of severe and fatal infection. Physically active people are less likely to develop obesity, diabetes, respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. Epidemiological studies have shown that COVID-19 and other respiratory infectious diseases are more severe for people who have these conditions.
2. Physical activity also reduces stress and chronic inflammation, in turn reducing the likelihood of adverse and fatal infections. Most COVID-19 and pneumonia fatalities have been as a result of uncontrolled inflammatory response.
3. Our immune system is stronger if we are physically active.

Physical activity helps make populations less vulnerable to infectious diseases and future epidemics and pandemics.

Review author, quoted in *"The Conversation"*, Professor Sebastien Chastin of Glasgow Caledonian University, says exercise should be used more urgently and effectively in fighting the current COVID-19 outbreak, and as a long term investment to prevent the devastating social and economic impacts this pandemic has had on society.

"Governments encouraged people to stay active early in the pandemic to cope with lockdown measures. There was a surge of interest in exercise immediately following lockdown in most communities. Unfortunately, this has not translated into positive change in activity levels" he said.

This is a dangerous trend that could make the population more vulnerable to infectious and chronic diseases in the short term. Left unchecked, it will also leave a damaging long-term legacy and increase the burden of disease and its associated social and economic cost. Underestimating the impact of physical inactivity could also exacerbate the unsustainable and unacceptable health inequalities highlighted by the pandemic. Generally, physical activity levels are lower in societies with greater economic inequalities, and this affects women most.

Sebastien Chastin is Professor Health Behaviour Dynamics, Glasgow Caledonian University. This article is republished from "The Conversation" under a Creative Commons license.



UPDATE YOUR DEVICES AND SOFTWARE TO PROTECT AGAINST CYBERCRIME

Cybercriminals, malicious programmes and computer viruses are always looking for vulnerabilities, which is why staying cyber secure is so important. One of the most common ways they do this is through exploiting weakness in software – also known as vulnerabilities. Much like a thief attempting to break into a home, cybercriminals will always look for the easiest way in. When your software is not up to date, it's like leaving a window unlocked.

By always updating software, you're essentially plugging any gaps the cybercriminals might try and get in through. Luckily, software developers are constantly releasing updates for their products, to fix any security concerns and improve functionality. Most software will ask you to update when a new version is released, and you should always do this when prompted.

The easiest way to stay on top is by turning on, or confirming, automatic updates where possible. An automatic update is a 'set and forget' feature that

updates your software as soon as it becomes available.

COVID-19 OLDER PERSONS SUPPORT LINE

Don't forget, if you need information and/or support as it relates to the current COVID-19 pandemic, there is a National Seniors Australia support team dedicated to members, so please call **1300 877 626** to speak directly to the team about your concerns.

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries please contact our Secretary, **Graham Tienan**, on Mobile 0407 736 453 or email nsacoorparoosec@gmail.com.

SMILE

EVER WONDER WHY...

- ❖ Why do supermarkets make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front?
- ❖ Why do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars in our driveways and put our useless junk in the garage?
- ❖ Why do banks leave vault doors open and then chain the pens to the counters?
- ❖ Why does the sun lighten our hair, but darkens our skin?
- ❖ Why don't you ever see the headline "Psychic Wins Lottery"?
- ❖ Why is 'abbreviated' such a long word?
- ❖ Why is it that doctors and attorneys call what they do 'practice'?
- ❖ Why is lemon juice made with artificial flavouring, and dish washing liquid made with real lemons?
- ❖ Why is the man who invests all your money call a broker?
- ❖ Why is the time of day with the slowest traffic called rush hour?
- ❖ Why isn't there mouse-flavoured cat food?
- ❖ Why didn't Noah swat those two mosquitoes?
- ❖ Why do they sterilise the needle for lethal injections?
- ❖ Why don't sheep shrink when it rains?
- ❖ Why are they called apartments when they are all stuck together?
- ❖ If flying is so safe, why do they call the airport the terminal?
- ❖ Why do people order double cheese burgers, large fries and a diet coke?