

National Seniors

Australia

ADELAIDE EAST BRANCH

AE NEWS – August 2025

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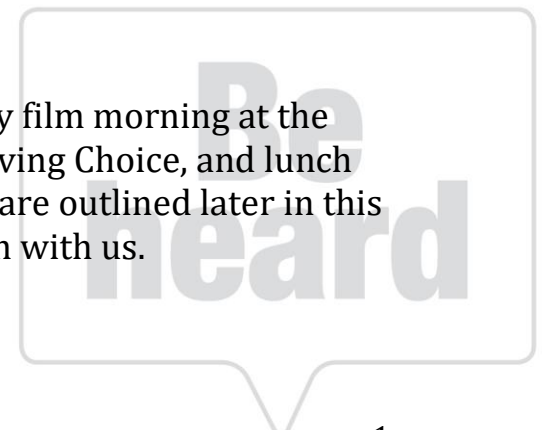
### A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT, WENDY STEWART

There is a lot to report since our May Newsletter. Due to major renovations at our normal meeting venue, Kensington Gardens Bowling and Tennis Club, we have relocated to the Glenunga Croquet Club for the remainder of 2025. I was on holidays for the first meeting at the new venue but from all accounts, everything worked out well. Thankyou members for being understanding and supportive.

I was also absent for the State National Seniors Australia Forum. From reports about the general sessions and the meeting with branch delegates, it became very evident that National Seniors Australia has changed its focus and is operating on a business rather than a collaborative model. It has changed its structure and now there is no official State representation. I hope that they can effectively reflect and lobby about the concerns of seniors. One way for members to keep them abreast of our concerns is to participate in their surveys and to suggest areas of particular concern.

In recent months, we have had some interesting guest speakers and events. Our speakers and their topics were: **Helen Bills**, 'Interesting Historical things in Burnside'; **Chris Burns**, 'The Work of the Hutt Street Centre'; our August 18 speaker will be our Branch Secretary, **Helen Thomas**, whose topic is, 'In the Wake of the Anzac Nurses (Greece and Turkey).'

Our events have included the regular monthly film morning at the Regal Theatre; several musical evenings at Living Choice, and lunch at the Kensington Hotel. Some future events are outlined later in this newsletter; I hope that you will be able to join with us.



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The upcoming Branch Annual General Meeting in September will be very important, as we need to constitute a Committee to keep the Branch going. We need volunteers to step up and offer to fill positions. At the moment I have nominations for Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Officer, and Guest Speaker Organizer. Gary is also willing to continue as Newsletter Editor. The main vacancies are President, Vice President, and Events Coordinators. I am willing to support a person to take on the role of President. Please seriously consider nominating as the future of the Branch depends on these positions being filled.

I know that members enjoy our meetings, events and being kept up to date with important issues and developments, but that cannot continue without the roles being filled.

We are always very happy to welcome new members, so please encourage others to come along to a meeting.

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### **A WORD FROM THE EDITOR, GARY BYRON**

Welcome home, Wendy!

Our President and her Committee have done a sterling job over the past year. I am sure that we are all grateful for that. However, it is now time for others to step up if we are serious about keeping our Adelaide East Branch going. Our Branch is the second such branch to have been established in the eastern suburbs of Adelaide.

Unfortunately, the previous branch went out of existence some time ago, partly because of lack of support from members. In more recent times, two more SA branches have closed down, leaving 5 to carry on. National Seniors Australia does not enjoy a high level of recognition in South Australia, particularly since our own Ian Henschke, Chief Advocate for NSA, no longer fills that role. It is now up to us and the other 4 remaining branches to address this and work together to

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reverse the trend of declining NSA membership and further closure of branches in our State. Are we up for the challenge?

AE News will continue to be published while the Branch exists. A variety of topics is one of the underlying aims so that it fulfills the need for conveying news to members, supporting the social fabric and activities of the Branch, drawing attention to NSA information, core issues and activities and also, meeting the challenge that seniors sometimes face in achieving a stimulating, life-long learning focus.

Fortunately, we have a great group of members at Adelaide East. May the Branch continue to prosper and grow. The future is in our hands!

### **NATIONAL SENIORS FORUM, SA**

The State/Zone 110 National Seniors Australia Forum, held on Thursday 24 July, 2025, is to be discussed at the Branch meeting on Monday 18 August, 2025.

### **WHAT'S DOING?**

Just a reminder of Branch events that have been, or are currently being organized to take place in the near future:

August –

27<sup>th</sup> – film at the Regal Theatre – ‘Kangaroo Island’

September –

TBA – Music at Living Choice

24<sup>th</sup> – film at The Regal Theatre - TBA

October –

TBA – Music at Living Choice



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10<sup>th</sup> – Parliamentary Tour and afternoon tea – 1.30 pm

29<sup>th</sup> – film at The Regal Theatre - TBA

November –

TBA – Music at Living Choice

20<sup>th</sup> – Christmas lunch at Tiros, Regency Park TAFE at 12 pm

26<sup>th</sup> – film at The Regal Theatre - TBA

## INSIGHTS

Continuing our glimpse into the life and times of members of our Branch, we present two more interesting contributions in this series.

The first is **Alan Miller**. He says:

“I was born in Wembley, UK, and spent all my single life in England. I met my wife through a walking club. In due course, six weeks after we were married, we flew to Adelaide as “Ten Pound Poms”. We then built a house at Hope Valley where, over the next 35 years, we brought up our children.

I was trained in England as a Mechanical Engineer in the oil industry and worked for Shell for 10 years after we came to Adelaide. The rest of my career was spent with the SA Gas Co., and its successors.

My wife didn’t drive until much later so the children got used to using the bus to go to school and then graduated to bikes for high school. My eldest daughter rode her bike when she started work in Adelaide and persuaded me to join her on a Jubilee 150 from Hawker to Adelaide. This got me back on my bike after 20 years and we then did several Annual Tours together, with Bicycle SA as well as tandem rides with blind riders. Meanwhile, I had acquired a penny-farthing and started riding this in parades and social rides, which my daughter continues to do today.

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After most of the children had left home, we moved up to Aldgate on 1 ½ acres of gum-studded land. Since moving here, we became involved with the Camellia Garden at Stangate House in Aldgate; our local Catholic Parish, and walking in the local area, as well as a fortnightly stint of delivering Meals on Wheels out of the Stirling kitchen. I still keep up these activities, even though I have now moved to a smaller house in Mount Barker.

Walking and reading seem now to take up all of my spare time when I'm not keeping up with family and friends, both here and overseas – and going to National Seniors meetings of course!"

Great stuff, Alan! Now, from **Chris Campbell**, who says:

"I like to think of myself as a 'country girl', as I was born and grew up on a fruit block in Barmera, in the Riverland, with an idyllic childhood: carrying a hoe to help with irrigation; driving the tractor down those rows of vines at harvest time, and apricot cutting. Entertainment was spent either on the River Murray or Lake Bonney fishing, swimming or water skiing with my brother's six children.

I spent two years at boarding school in Melbourne, then my parents retired to Adelaide, so I was moved to Girton in Adelaide. After a brief stint at Adelaide University to study social work, I changed to Wattle Park Teachers College. My first few years of teaching were in Melbourne before I took off to see the world – hitch hiking with three Adelaide friends and staying at Youth Hostels around the UK and Europe. Two of those friends returned to Adelaide but my friend Margaret continued on to Greece, when ventured across to warmer

Israel for Christmas; New Year in Cyprus before taking a Russian ship to Egypt for more sights and adventures. We continued through Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. We were required to renew our visas Lybia and had 'occasion' to meet Gaddafi who had only been in power for 6 months! Returning to the UK, I joined a Contiki camping trip to the USSR (as it then was) and the Scandinavian countries.

Back to Melbourne, I taught for another 2 years. Then on a New Zealand bush walking holiday. I met my future husband who was an

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English traveller. Eventually, we married in Japan, returning to Adelaide three years later to 'settle down'.

A couple of children later, I moved into a TAFE job teaching and/or assessing skills for Adult Literacy and English as a Second Language to migrants and eventually, to refugees, for about 25 years.

My family continues to celebrate Christmas at Barmera where a nephew now owns and manages the Barmera property, growing sweet potatoes, turmeric and garlic for the Adelaide Farmers' Market, as well as continuing with grape growing.

I still see myself as a traveller, having ventured back into Asia, China and Tibet, Cambodia and Myanmar."

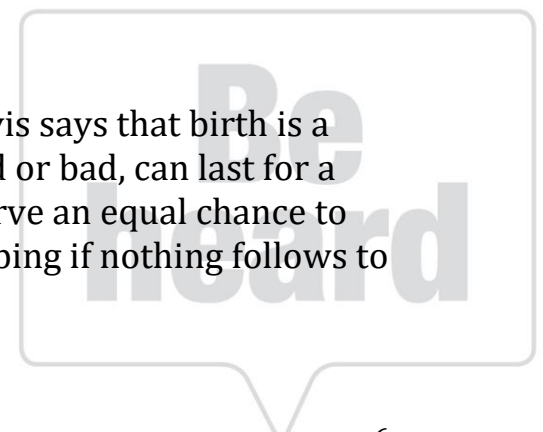
And from where and when, you may ask, did Christine's love of travelling arise. On reflection she puts all of this into context, thus:

"For most of my working life I worked with/for students from other countries, assessing, teaching English and helping them find jobs and listening to their stories; early migrants like Italians, Yugoslavs and Lebanese who could speak English but not read or write it. Then Australia had waves of refugees like Vietnamese, Cambodians and later, Poles, Syrians, Afghanis, Iraqis, Burmese, Bhutanese then a mass of so many different African countrymen. All running from war torn countries and horrific killings, and some of whom had been living in refugee camps for over 20 years.

Now I've retired, I realise that I miss them and the sharing of their stories; receiving that small feeling that you're helping people, that is, doing something worthwhile."

Maybe more than you realise, Chris.

In his little book, 'On Life's Lottery'\* Glyn Davis says that birth is a throw of the dice and the consequences, good or bad, can last for a lifetime. He says, "If you believe people deserve an equal chance to prosper, this game of chance is deeply disturbing if nothing follows to even up the inherent unfairness."





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Clearly, Chris has evened up the odds for many; diluting the shadow hanging over their existence and which otherwise, would undoubtedly have impeded their opportunity in life and consequently, similarly impacted their next generation.

Good one, Chris!

\*Glyn Davis, 'On Life's Lottery', Hatchette Australia, 2021, at pages 4 and 5.

### A WISE MAN ONCE SAID...

"When the debate is lost, slander becomes the tool of the loser." - Socrates.

"I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots." – Albert Einstein.

"No matter how educated, talented, rich or cool you believe you are; how you treat other people ultimately tells all." – Anonymous.

"A ship is always safe at shore, but that is not what it's built for." – Albert Einstein.

"Complaining about a problem without posing a solution is called whining." – Teddy Roosevelt.

### A CALL TO ACTION ON ELDER ABUSE.

"World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), on 15 June, is a powerful reminder that elder abuse is a serious issue, and one that affects far too many older Australians, often in silence."

So said Dr Brendon Radford, Director of Policy and Research at National Seniors Australia (See his article in the *Connect Newsletter*, 13 June 2025). He goes on to say, "Yet eight years on from a major inquiry into elder abuse, resulting in 43 recommendations for

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government, very little has been done to protect older people from harm.”

National Seniors Australia made a substantive submission to the inquiry by the Australian Law Reform Commission in 2016 and has continued to call for action as recently as early June, when NSA representatives appeared before a Queensland Parliamentary committee to discuss the issue.

The seriousness of this issue is demonstrated by WEAAD, which serves to raise awareness, encourage action and promote respect and dignity for older people across all communities.

Progress has stalled according to Dr Radford, “because of the difficulties in getting state and federal jurisdictions to work together. One of the examples of the failure of our disjointed political system.”

However, he goes on to point out that preventing elder abuse is a shared responsibility. He says, “Whether you’re a family member, neighbour, health professional, or simply part of your community, you can help ensure older Australians are treated with the respect and care they deserve. Elder Abuse Action Day is more than symbolic; it’s a call to action. A call that state and federal governments should also hear.”

If we don’t speak up and make our voices heard, it is likely that the current state of affairs will continue. The problem is insidious because to a great extent it is not reported or else it is simply overlooked. But for the victims of elder abuse, it is very real.

What to do? First of all, refer back to Dr Radford’s article to refresh your memory. Then, support the efforts being made by National Seniors Australia and others to get some positive action. Raise it with your local state and federal members of Parliament. Doing nothing is not an option if we are serious about confronting the issue.

Further to this, an article, ‘New Awareness Campaign to Safeguard Older People’s Rights’ was published in the SA Seniors Card newsletter, *Weekend Plus*, on Friday 20 June 2025. The opening



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statement was, “A new awareness campaign is reminding South Australians of the links between older people’s rights, ageism and abuse and mistreatment.”

The article goes on to say, *inter alia*, “How we think and feel about older people influences how we act towards them and ourselves as we get older. Ageism has serious and far-reaching consequences for people’s health, wellbeing and human rights, and ageist attitudes can exclude older people and make them feel invisible.”

Finally, it offers the following, valuable advice:

“Community members can check their own attitudes and beliefs about older people and discover ways to challenge ageism, using the Age Positive Communications Toolkit and Bystander Action for Ageing Well Training. Access them at [www.dhs.sa.gov.au/tacklingageism](http://www.dhs.sa.gov.au/tacklingageism) and learn more about ageism\*, the rights of older people and how to guard against elder abuse.

If you suspect abuse or mistreatment of an adult who may be vulnerable, you can contact the Adult Safeguarding Unit on 1800 372 310 for free, confidential advice and support or to make a report.”

\*BTW, a new report produced jointly by the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Australian Human Resources Institute, ‘Older and Young Workers: What do Employers Think’, is the fifth such national survey of employers and HR professionals. It found almost one quarter of HR professionals now classify workers aged 51 to 55 as “older”.

Robert Fitzgerald, Australian Age Discrimination Commissioner, a former Productivity Commissioner, says that the country must acknowledge that it is an ageing society and must embrace [and not resist] employing older workers. He says:

“The tragedy is that so many employers still have biases and stereotypes; make recruitment decisions bases on age, and there is an in-built prejudice. We won’t solve the productivity problem that Australia has unless we increase the labour force participation rate

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significantly. This is an economic and social imperative for the nation.”

National Seniors would say that this includes letting pensioners work without adversely affecting their pensions!

## HOMELESSNESS

The Branch meeting on 21 July 2025 at our temporary venue, the Glenunga Croquet Club, went well. Our decision to temporarily vacate our usual venue, the Kensington Gardens Bowling and Tennis Club, while major renovations are being carried out, proved to be the right one. Thanks to President Wendy Stewart, we were not left homeless and her choice of temporary accommodation was spot on.

Our Guest Speaker, Chris Burns, Chief Executive Officer at the Adelaide Hutt Street Centre, spoke in practical terms, as well as from the heart, about the great work of the Centre in assisting members of the community who, for a variety of reasons, are less fortunate than us, and who need a hand. He mentioned in glowing terms the wonderful support given by their volunteers and the ongoing financial assistance provided by business and individuals, alike.

Chris spoke about various aspects of the Centre’s activities, including the heart-rending issue of homelessness, with an emphasis on the plight of the vulnerable and in particular, of women – including those with children and also, of older women.

Coincidentally, National Seniors Australia’s ‘Branching Out’, Winter Edition 2025, contains a sad but provocative article, ‘Left out in the cold’, by Nadia Howland, about this very subject. Nadia sets the context in her introduction, “With living and housing costs spiralling, an increasing number of older Australians – particularly older women – are experiencing homelessness. Our Generation [sic] looks at how we can address this concerning issue.” She goes on to say that it is not a new problem and that according to the Australian Bureau



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of Statistics (ABS), the overall rate of people (aged 55 and over) experiencing homelessness increased from 25.8 to 29 per 10,000 people between 2006 and 2016.”

Nadia’s excellent article is timely and compelling; a “must read” for all NSA members, either on line or reading the hard copy version.

Guidance as to how we can donate to help those who are struggling to keep themselves safe and housed, concludes the article.

### **A WORD IN PARTICULAR, ABOUT HOMELESS AND TROUBLED CHILDREN**

24<sup>th</sup> July, 2025 was ‘Kids Helpline Giving Day’. Perhaps most of us did not notice.

Thousands of young people across Australia are reaching out for help. Many of them are homeless, confused, desperate and so lost. And obviously, so vulnerable. Kids Helpline is always there trying to answer every call. But support is needed to ensure that no child in crisis goes unheard.

Kids Helpline is available for free, every minute of every day, but right now, they can only answer three of every five contacts. Sadly, some kids are missing out. This is not because the demand is not real or the need is not urgent, but because Kids Helpline simply does not have the resources to answer every call.

Anyone who may be inclined to help can contact Yourtown, which runs the Kids Helpline, on (07) 3368 3399 or by email at [support@yourtown.com.au](mailto:support@yourtown.com.au) If you do so, let them know that you are a National Seniors Australia member from the Adelaide East Branch in South Australia – just so they know that we care.



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## DEMENTIA IS NOT INEVITABLE

This important and encouraging point was made in *Connect Newsletter* of 30 May 2025.

In the article prepared by John Austin, Policy and Communications Officer, National Seniors Australia, it is revealed that Dementia Australia says its research shows that there has been a “sustained and profoundly concerning lack of awareness and understanding about dementia in the community.” This he says, includes most of us believing, mistakenly, that dementia is a normal part of ageing.

This is disturbing and appears to demonstrate not only insufficient attention to the issue generally, but perhaps a degree of community complacency notwithstanding the prevalence of the disease.

John Austin goes on to say, “To counter this and other misunderstanding, Dementia Australia is calling for government funding to support greater public awareness about brain health, combined with more targeted and effective support for people affected by dementia.”

Low awareness contributes to discrimination, stigma and isolation. Critically, poor understanding actually creates barriers to timely diagnosis and access to ongoing medical and social care, according to one very relevant commentator.

The obvious solution is to raise awareness of dementia and educating people about what they can do to reduce the risk of dementia, this being of paramount importance for all Australians. The point is well made in the context of the following data estimates:

- In 2025 there is an estimated number of 29,000 people living with younger onset dementia, expected to increase to an estimated 41,000 people by 2054.
- 1.7 million people are involved in the care of someone living with dementia.



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- At least half of the people living in permanent residential aged care have dementia.

Dementia is insidious, but it is very encouraging to learn that it is not necessarily inevitable.

### ANOTHER (BRIEF) WORD ABOUT SCAMS

The National Seniors website includes an excellent section titled 'Scams Awareness' which contains detailed information not only about the scams you may receive, but also what you can and should do about them if you do receive them. In addition, NSA provides a free e-guide, 'Stay One Step Ahead: Your Essential Guide to Scam Protection' that you can download.

Hard copies have been printed and, if you ask NSA, you may be able to obtain one if you cannot or do not wish to, download the e-guide.

### MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BEST FRIEND

One of the most difficult things to do in life is to have your dog put down, even if it is the kindest and most merciful thing to do. Scott Phillips, Chief Investment Officer at Motley Fool Australia was faced with this very sad situation recently, when his 11-year-old German Shepherd, Abby became so ill that there was no alternative. In concluding this news to his investors, Scott offered the following profound advice:

"Be the person your dog thinks you are. If we all did that, the world would be a much better place."

Sounds like a good investment!



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## A WORD ABOUT JAPANESE WALKING

The general consensus is that walking is good for us. And going for a walk every day is very beneficial. In recent months, the Media have been talking about Japanese walking, which costs nothing except for the wear and tear on your walking shoes, and which is suitable for seniors (and others) who may not be accustomed to daily exercise.

It is not about maintaining a high level of intensity throughout. It is described as “turning walking into a workout”. It can be done in half an hour. You simply walk for three minutes at a slower pace. Then you walk briskly for three minutes to increase your heart rate, (without overdoing it), lengthening your stride in the process if you can. And so on for half an hour each day. That’s it!

It is great for improving leg strength, heart function and energy levels. Half an hour each day is all you need. Japanese researchers developed this fitness regime some time ago and it is now quite popular in that country.

The latest research suggests that there may be other health and fitness benefits too, including improving brain function. That remains to be seen. However, persistence will undoubtedly pay off and perhaps even encourage and enable participants to work

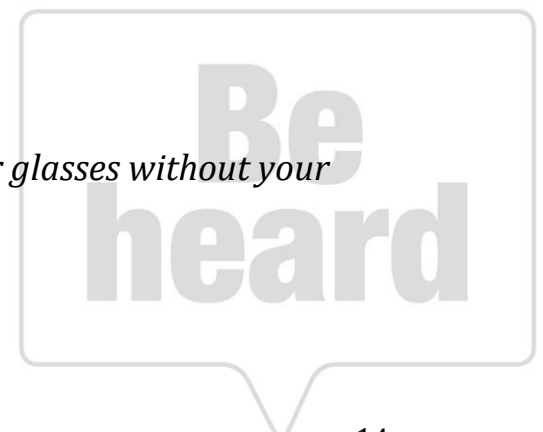
towards a more demanding fitness regime, which may produce even greater results over the longer term.

While it may be worth a try, it is highly recommended that you ensure that Japanese walking is right for you by consulting your GP before taking it up.

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Frustration is when you are trying to find your glasses without your glasses!

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## MORE AUSTRALIAN ICONIC INVENTIONS

Here are three more Australian iconic inventions:

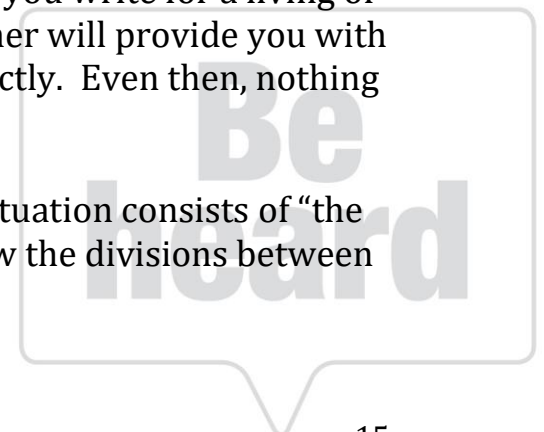
1. The electronic pacemaker. The pacemaker was developed by Dr Mark Lidwill and Edgar H. Booth in 1926. The original device was plugged into a 'lightning point' and an insulated needle was plunged into the heart. It was used in 1928 to revive a stillborn baby in Sydney. The original pacemaker was used as a launching pad for modern, insertable pacemakers.
2. The Hills hoist. This was invented and manufactured by Lance Hill in 1945, in Adelaide SA. It has been a common sight in most Australian back yards over many years. The idea for the original design came from Hill's wife who wanted an inexpensive replacement for the old clothesline that she had been using for drying clothes.
3. The Black box flight recorder. This was invented by Dr David Warren in Melbourne in 1958. It was (and is) used universally to capture an aircraft's instrument readings and to record crew members' conversations to determine what issues occurred in the course of a crash.

More to come in the November edition.

## PUNCTUATION - A POINTER: "A VERY USEFUL LITTLE CHAP"

People of our generation will remember the importance of learning how to punctuate properly. Alas, we have probably not retained all that we were taught. Punctuation has declined significantly in every day usage; more is the pity! Unless of course you write for a living or are an author. In the latter case, your publisher will provide you with a style manual and expect you to comply, strictly. Even then, nothing can be guaranteed these days.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, punctuation consists of "the special marks that are placed in a text to show the divisions between



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phrases and sentences or the [correct and/or appropriate] use of these marks.”

According to Wikipedia, “Punctuation marks are marks indicating how a piece of written text should be read (silently or aloud) and consequently, understood.”

It is said that correct punctuation plays a crucial role in enhancing the clarity, intonation, meaning and precision of our writing (Australian Education Research Organisation).

Commas and full stops are reasonably well understood. Not so the semicolon. According to the University of Adelaide:

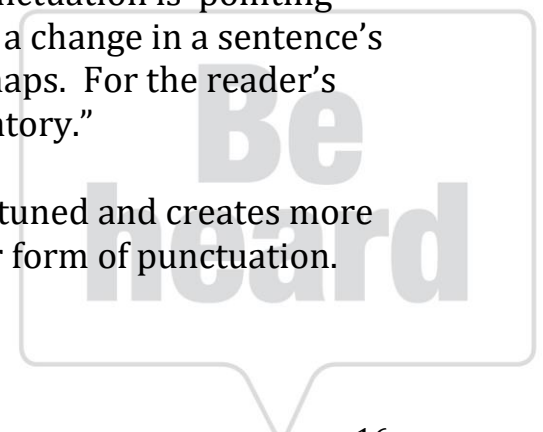
“The semicolon is possibly the most misunderstood and misused punctuation mark in English grammar. It’s useful to know that unlike a comma or a full stop, it is not necessary to use a semicolon; you could choose to avoid them. However, used correctly, the semicolon can bring both clarity and nuance to your writing.

There are two essential ways to use a semicolon. The first is relatively straightforward and separates a list of items in a sentence; the second separates independent clauses, while connecting them as related ideas.”

In the July 5-6, 2025 edition of ‘The Australian Weekend Magazine’, Nikki Gemmell wrote, at page 11:

“Abraham Lincoln declared of it, ‘I have a great respect for the semicolon; it is a very useful little chap.’” She goes on to say, “It’s a small ahem in the meaning of a sentence; a courteous pointer to a new thought. The old-fashioned word for punctuation is ‘pointing’ and the semicolon points out, most helpfully, a change in a sentence’s direction. A little side turn into wonder, perhaps. For the reader’s delectation. It feels intimate, personal, revelatory.”

A “very useful little chap” indeed! It is finely tuned and creates more nuance and precision than perhaps any other form of punctuation.



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That is if you know when and how to use it properly and to the best advantage.

For more detailed information you can go on line and see what the University of Adelaide has to say (*The University of Adelaide How to Use Semicolons*).

**Disclaimer:** No guarantee is given, one way or the other, as to the correct or appropriate use of the punctuation, in this article! 😊

## THE LAST WORD

The telephone rings and the lady of the house answers the call.

“Hello”, she says.

The voice at the other end replies, “Good morning.”

The lady asks, “Who is calling, please?”

“My name is Sanjit and I am calling from Microsoft.”

“Microsoft. Is that a city in India?”

“No madam. Microsoft is a computer organisation and I am telling you that there is a problem with your computer.”

“Oh dear” she says. “There is a problem alright! I don’t have a computer.”

“Well then, it must be your laptop.”

“I don’t have a laptop, either.”

“An ipad?”

“No.”



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“A tablet?”

“No. And as a matter of fact, I don’t have a telephone either.”

“Ahh Madam” says Sanjit sternly. “What you are telling me now is obviously a lie!”

“Yes, I know that”, she says, “But you started it!”

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