

National Seniors

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ADELAIDE EAST BRANCH

AE News – August 2026

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A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT, WENDY STEWART

We are halfway through the calendar year and in the final quarter of our Branch year. We have had a busy and interesting time as a branch and have welcomed some new members. The NSA State Forum was held in July. I have written a separate report for this Newsletter. National and International events and decisions have affected everyone. The Aged Care system continues to flounder even though some changes have been implemented. The Federal budget included actions that could negatively affect seniors. I hope that you are navigating your way through it all.

In recent months we have had some interesting guest speakers. Our own member, **Alan Miller** gave a detailed and moving presentation about Harefield No. 1 Auxiliary Hospital in World War 1; **Rose Vallen, Sue Whiley and Peter Goers** told us about the history of the Repertory Theatre Company and previewed their upcoming shows, and in July **Catherine Leo** talked about her passion for photography and shared some of her stunning photos with us. Our August guest speaker will be **Chris Garwood** who will tell us about the history of women's cricket.

Our outings have again, been varied and interesting. During History Month a group of us visited the Capri Theatre where we heard about the history of the building and had many of the Art Deco features explained. Following that we saw and heard the magnificent organ. A few weeks later we enjoyed lunch at The Lion and a tour of the David Roche Museum. A very large group attended the Arts Theatre to see 'The Gentleman Who Came to Dinner'.

The upcoming Branch Annual General Meeting in September will be very important, as we need to constitute a Management Committee in order to keep the Branch going. We need volunteers to step up and offer to fill positions. At the moment I have been told that our Membership Officer, Guest Speaker Organizer and Newsletter Editor are willing to continue on in their roles. That leaves vacancies at this stage for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Events Coordinator. Anyone willing to join the Committee for the first time will be supported by outgoing office holders. Please give serious consideration to nominating as the future of our Branch depends upon these positions being filled.

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I know that members enjoy our meetings, events and being kept up to date with important issues and developments, but that cannot continue unless these important roles are filled.

As a result of the Bowling Club installing new A.V and sound equipment, we had redundant equipment of our own, which we gave to the Modbury Branch as they were in need of it. We could not sell it as it was purchased with grant money.

Finally, we are always happy to welcome new members, so please encourage others to come along to a meeting in the near future.

Wendy Stewart
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A WORD FROM OUR EDITOR, GARY BYRON

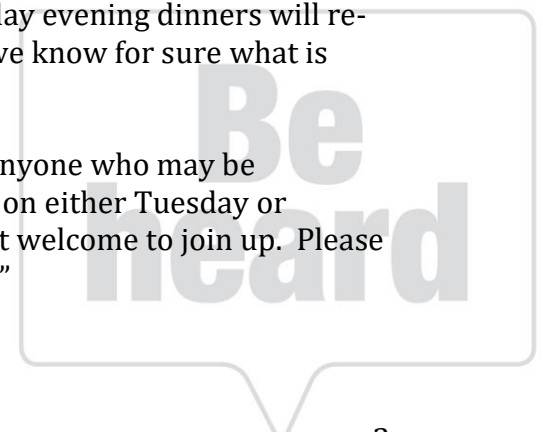
This edition of AE News is somewhat lengthier than usual. There is obviously much to tell. Some of the information is quite relevant and important in terms of the NSA core mandate; some of it is of broader interest and/or topical, while some of it is of a lighter nature. Hopefully, readers will find the contents interesting, relevant and entertaining.

As President Wendy Stewart has indicated, we must be able to continue to constitute a Branch Management Committee. It is not inherently onerous but it is legally necessary. If we fail then so does the Branch. It is up to each and every one of us to ensure that this does not happen. In any event, some fresh minds bring fresh ideas and also enables those who have been doing the good work for our benefit, to have a break. **A 'Nomination for Management Committee' form that you may use is set out on the last page of this Newsletter.**

It is pleasing to see the upgrade of and renovations to, the Club facilities. We have been treated well by the Club officials and are fortunate to be able to carry on our activities in such an excellent and welcoming environment.

Some members have been asking when the Club Friday evening dinners will recommence. We will organize something as soon as we know for sure what is happening

The 2026/2027 Bowls Season is fast approaching. Anyone who may be interested in playing in the social Night Owls events, on either Tuesday or Thursday evenings during the Season, would be most welcome to join up. Please speak to me about it if you would like to "give it a go."



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NATIONAL SENIORS AUSTRALIA SA STATE FORUM – Wendy Stewart

[The State Forum was organized jointly by the NSA Head Office and the State Zone 110 Committee. Gary Byron and myself are our Branch's delegates on the Zone 110 Committee].

The State Forum was held on July 23rd at the Marryatville Hotel. There were approximately 120 people in attendance, many of whom were not NSA members and others who were NSA members, but not Branch members.

The presenters were:

Chris Grice, National Seniors Australia Chief Executive Officer
Karen Furnivall, National Seniors Australia Community Engagement Officer
Senator Ann Ruston, Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing
Dr. Victoria Cornell, Gerontologist and Flinders University Researcher
Myself representing the five local NSA Branches.

Our Branch had 8 members in attendance as well as 2 prospective members.

I have circulated the pdf version of the presentations and also included it at the end of this report. The NSA presentations are very detailed, so I will only give some brief comments about them. The slide that was used as my backdrop included some incorrect information. I had no input into it and have reported the errors.

Chris Grice gave details of the main policy areas and the outcomes of NSA's various submissions and campaigns. The areas outlined were Cost of living; Retirement Income; Health; Banking, and Aged Care. In regard to the proposed abolition of the Private Health Rebate, NSA has a petition on its website calling for Parliament to reject the change. If anyone is concerned about this issue, please sign the petition. The easiest way is to click on the link to the slide in the pdf or go to the NSA website. It is in the Advocacy section listed as Health Costs.

Karen Furnivall spoke about the personal savings that can be obtained by using NSA products such as the Play, Save, Eat Ap; Good Guys Commercial, Travel and Insurance.

Senator Ann Ruston informed us that she is leading a campaign to halt the proposed changes to the Private Health Rebate. The changes, she said, have not passed Parliament and the Liberals are calling for a Senate Inquiry. The changes proposed would have a great negative affect on Seniors, especially those with a higher level of cover. Many would have to cancel their cover, which would put more pressure on the Public Health system, which is already under stress. She feels that the implementation of the Support at Home programme was a

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disaster. 100,000 people have been assessed but cannot access care. 98,000 are waiting

to be assessed. She is also lobbying to have the AI algorithm that is used to assess people for the Support at Home Program, to be improved and for more human assessors to be involved as too many people are being wrongly assessed. Human intervention can now over ride decisions. Already, 1,000,000 people have asked to be reassessed. The planned integration of the 850,000 people in the Commonwealth Home Support Program into Support at Home will only exacerbate the problems, she says.

Dr Victoria Cornell detailed the results of the consultation 'Ageing Regionally', which was funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. Six face-to-face and two online consultations were held. A report has been developed and forwarded to the Department and will be publicly available on the NSA website. It will be used by NSA for advocacy purposes and potentially, as a basis for further research.

I made a brief presentation giving venue and meeting details of our 5 local branches and their activities. I encouraged existing members to support their branches, and non-members to consider joining.

A meeting was held with Committee members after the Forum. **Chris Grice** explained the role of the NSA Holding Company that has been formed. Its role is to attract businesses that have an interest in seniors to merge with NSA under a financial arrangement so that NSA can make money. No businesses have joined to date. Other questions were asked about the Constitution. Chris assured us that we remain covered by the Constitution. Chris also gave some details about the operation of the social branches. They do not have formal committees and are not incorporated. However, they still require people to do the organizing. They cannot have a Treasurer. Outings that involve a charge need to be arranged through NSA Head Office, who then set up the event on Ticketek. I do not see the advantage of changing to a social branch and think that we should remain as we are. Obviously, we need to continue to fill the positions on the Branch Committee, in order to do that.

This was the first Forum that I have attended. Overall, I think it was quite successful. However, there were some organizational issues that could have been better. Hopefully, we may gain a few new members following this event. If members have questions, please feel free to contact me.

[On 29 July, 2026, President Wendy emailed to Branch members a pdf of the slides used in the Forum.]

[NOTE: President Wendy also emailed Branch members on Sunday 9 August, 2026 drawing attention to an excellent article by Noel Whittaker, 'Five numbers

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you need to know to choose aged care', published in the Sunday Mail of that date, at page 60 NEWS.]

ADELAIDE EAST BRANCH MEMBERS' WELFARE

Another reminder that Beryl Lester is our Branch Welfare Officer and is keen to hear from members who may need assistance and support, or who may know of other members who do. It is important that no member should be overlooked when they are ill, grieving after the death or illness of a friend or family member, or are experiencing some other serious adversity. While mental and physical health issues are perhaps, more prevalent amongst older people, anything of a negative nature that is causing anxiety or loss, is included.

Beryl's contact details are: mobile 0421 087 454, and email: nsaadelaiddeast@gmail.com

RESHAPING THE FUTURE OF AGEING – Julie Lewis

On 22 July, 2026 I attended the conference 'Reshaping the Future of Ageing', presented by the Australia Day Council of South Australia. The event was introduced by Malcolm Cox, Chairman of the Australia Day Council of SA and brought together joint 2026 SA Senior Australians of the Year, Malcolm Benoy and James Currie, and the 2026 Senior Australian of the Year, Professor Henry Brodaty AO. Deb Tribe (ABC radio presenter) was the MC and Moderator.

Malcolm ('Mac') Benoy was the first speaker. He is a volunteer citizen scientist in the area of meteorological history. He spoke about old age starting in one's sixties, when many are financially secure and socially relaxed. He retired, built a dream home...and found himself significantly depressed. It was only after some time when he started volunteering with both the Red Cross and the Bureau of Meteorology ('BOM') four days each week, that he regained his sense of well-being, through structure, purpose and social connection. His work at the BOM involved rescuing climate history, digitalizing it and seeing how data methods have changed from the days of the telegraph to using AI. His thought for the future of ageing is that the offering of services and abilities free of charge should become more mainstream. That is, in the way that Men's Sheds are for those with manual skills, there should be an SA Volunteer incubator ('SAVI') for those who can share their knowledge. What could be achieved!

The next speaker was **James Currie**, Sound Designer, who has contributed to more than 146 feature films over a four-decade career, both locally and internationally, including some of Australia's most noteworthy films such as 'Breaker Morant', 'The Lighthorsemen', 'Wolf Creek', 'Bad Boy Bubby' and 'My Name is Gulpilil'. His career in film happened by mistake when he started training as a composer at the Conservatorium of Music and then was guided into

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sound design. James spoke of the impact of sound on human beings – how sounds of music can take people back to previous time in a way that words may not. Sound, he says, is fundamental to “being” and becomes part of our soul; it can make people feel good, and can promote memory and well-being. He stressed the importance of mentoring as it provides energy, re-invigoration, regeneration and hope for the future.

Professor Henry Brodaty AO spoke next. He is a globally recognized brain health and dementia researcher. He is a psychiatrist. His father was diagnosed with dementia at the age of 52 and died five years later in 1979. This led the Professor to help found Alzheimers Australia, starting in 1982 in NSW and later becoming nationalized as Dementia Australia in 2017.

He observed that ageing is becoming more popular – more people are doing it these days! Some supporting facts were detailed by him:

- Birth rates are declining and the ability to support older generations will decline;
- Australians gained 25 years of life span in the 20th century;
- Currently there are 20-25% of 70-75-year-olds and 5% of over 75-year-olds in paid employment. This will increase;
- 1:6 people are aged over 65 years – 2/3 of them are on a pension or part pension. This will increase to 1:4 people;
- Alzheimer’s pathology builds up over 20 or so years before it becomes symptomatic.

A ticking time-bomb!

In any event, his message is that it is never too late (or too early) to do something about delaying dementia. He states, amongst other things, that brain health is influenced by our choices in life, so “Be physically active. Be mentally active. Be Socially active.”

What followed in Professor Brodaty’s presentation was quite detailed and deserves closer and more extensive attention. We will publish those details in a stand-alone article in the November, 2026 edition of AE News. As the Professor states, “Dementia is a societal problem, not an individual problem.” The question is then, what planning and action is required to meet the challenge?

Thankyou Julie, for submitting this valuable report.

SCAMS AND SENIORS

Older people are thought to be particularly vulnerable when it comes to scams, although recent reports seem to suggest that this may not always be the case

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these days having regard to their life experience, maturity and well-developed instincts. The negative element appears to be however, that seniors are apparently inclined to be a little over confident or reticent at times and do not often seek a second opinion when in doubt. It pays to be alert at all times; better to be sure than sorry. In a recent media release, Chris Grice, CEO of National Seniors Australia said:

“It is incredibly important to help keep seniors ‘scam safe’. The scam environment is forever evolving and changing, so it is imperative that seniors engage in their communities and learn from others what sort of scams are out there, to best identify and protect against them.”

(See also ‘Stay One Step Ahead: Your Essential Guide to Scam Protection’ published by National Seniors Australia).

Scams have undoubtedly been around for many, many years, in a variety of forms, and perpetrated by numerous kinds of individuals and organizations. Scamming seems to be a terrible thing when the criminals are at it. It is apparently something else when “respectable” members of the business world use scam-like tactics to mislead and seduce their customers, as you will have noted in the media in recent times, for example putting prices up, then, in say 3 months-time, reducing them to the original amount and advertising them as a “discount”. Is this tantamount to scamming? What do you think?

Clearly, we still need to remain alert as new and devious ways of relieving us of our money seem to be continuously emerging.

For instance, in the New Daily, on line on 7 June this year, reference was made to scamming and the “criminal industry.” It was brief and not all that detailed, but nevertheless, very alarming. It stated:

“Earlier this year, authorities found something extraordinary inside a Cambodian scam compound – a fake Australian Federal Police office.

There were Australian flags, AFP-style logos and desks stated to look official – all part of a six-storey compound used by scammers impersonating police forces from around the world. It was a reminder that the scam messages Australians receive are often connected to a far more sophisticated and exploitative criminal industry.

Figures show Australians reported more than \$2 billion in scam losses last year, and a recent UN report has detailed how people are trafficked into scam centres, held against their will and forced to target strangers.”

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No details were given in this article as to how people were enticed into this situation, but it is known that tourists are a common target and those who fall into the trap are not treated gently while held in custody, particularly if they raise any objections to carrying out this criminal enterprise.

Branch Update – National Seniors Australia – more about scams

In the 'Branch Update' received on 16 June, 2026, Karen Furnivall, Community Engagement Officer at NSA says, "Our latest research on online scams highlights the ongoing need for vigilance and supports our **Keep Scam SAFE campaign**."

What is published in this edition regarding scams is essential reading, emphasizing as it does, the importance of exercising caution at all times. (It also demonstrates the importance of reading material such as this, published to members by NSA. The material is sent to members to assist them understand the risks they face on a daily basis; it is too late to take this in after we are scammed. Forewarned is forearmed!)

Online scams continue to impact many Australians, including seniors. The Branch Update indicates that NSA research found that about one in three older Australians have experienced an online scam or identity fraud, with a further 4.4% being unsure. The article goes on to say:

"Those facing financial hardship or poor health were more likely to be affected. Common scams included unauthorized bank transactions, fake online purchases, impersonation scams, investment fraud and identify theft. Encouragingly, many victims received support from their banks, with more than 70% recovering all their lost money. NSA encourages older Australians to stay vigilant, report scams promptly and follow the Scamwatch message: 'Stop. Check. Protect'. Join NSA's **Keep Scam SAFE campaign** to learn more."

Another article, "**How scammers use social engineering**", is also interesting reading. It says:

"Scams are not about targeting people who are 'less tech-savvy' or less intelligent. They succeed by exploiting human emotion, timing and trust, often through impersonation of trusted organisations, professionals, or even romantic interests. Scammers carefully rehearse scripts and use sophisticated social engineering, including AI-generated images, deepfakes and fake websites, to build credibility and urgency.

Investment scams exploit hope and excitement through fake trading platforms and fabricated profits. Relationship scams use loneliness and affection, often building long-term emotional connections before requesting money. Threat and penalty scams rely on fear and urgency, pushing people to act quickly on fake fines or legal claims. Recovery scams then target victims again with false promises to recover lost funds.

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The key defence is to recognize emotional manipulation. 'Stop, Check, Reject' anything suspicious."

All good advice!

Finally, President Wendy emailed the COTA Winter Newsletter to our Branch members on 30 July, 2026. It contains a lot of valuable information and advice for seniors. An item relevant to the subject of scams is the reminder that:

Scams Awareness Week runs from 24 – 28 August, 2026.

COTA advises that Services Australia's Scams Prevention and Engagement Team is partnering with COTA and invites us to register for a joint, free 60-minute webinar on Monday 24 August, 2026, commencing at 12 noon and concluding at 1 pm AEST. [Note: SA is half an hour behind AEST so it will be necessary to log in before 11.30 am ACST on 24 August].

Before that date, you need to register in advance for this webinar - simply use the 'REGISTER FOR WEBINAR' link in the COTA Newsletter, sent to you by President Wendy.

REINING IN GROCERY COSTS

For those who may have missed it, on 13 July, National Seniors Australia brought to our attention, action that has been taken to rein in grocery costs. Brett Debritz, Communication Specialist at NSA wrote:

"You may see a welcome change in your grocery bill this week, as laws aimed at stopping 'excessive' pricing by the country's biggest supermarket chains come into effect.

The reforms, effective from 1 July, are designed to ease cost of living pressures and improve fairness for shoppers, including seniors living on fixed incomes.

Under the new rules, it is now illegal for very large supermarkets such as Coles and Woolworths, to charge prices that are considered 'excessive' compared with the cost of supplying a product plus a reasonable profit margin.

The law targets retailers with annual revenues above \$30 billion, meaning smaller supermarkets and independent grocers are not affected.

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Assistant Minister for Competition, Andrew Leigh, said the changes are intended to protect Australians from artificially inflated grocery prices and to ensure a fairer marketplace.

The Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) will oversee the regime and investigate potential breaches.

Penalties for doing the wrong thing are significant. Supermarkets found to be overcharging face fines of up to \$10 million, three times the benefit gained, or 10% of their annual turnover, whichever is higher.

However, the legislation doesn't determine exactly what constitutes 'excessive' prices.

Nevertheless, the Federal Government says the measures are designed to discourage unfair pricing and ensure that companies properly justify their costs.

Previously, Australian businesses were largely free to set their own prices.

The ACCC notes that high prices alone are not illegal if they reflect genuine costs such as wages, transport, or supply shortages.

As well as overseeing the new law, the ACCC will continue to enforce existing rules that require businesses to be truthful about pricing and not mislead customers about discounts or the reasons for price increases.

The reforms follow ongoing concerns about grocery prices and the dominance of the two major supermarket chains, which together account for most food sales in Australia.

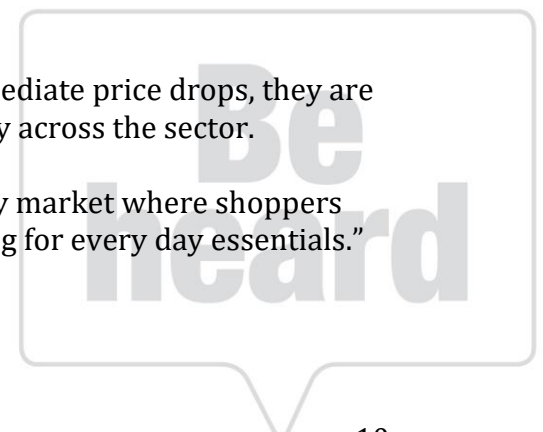
Limited competition has been cited as one reason prices can remain high, particularly during periods of economic pressure.

For older Australians, even modest increases in grocery costs can quickly add up. [This is likely to be more so for those who are on low, fixed incomes].

The Government says these changes are intended to provide great confidence that the prices being charged are fair and based on genuine costs rather than excessive profit-taking.

While the new laws are not guaranteed to bring immediate price drops, they are expected to improve transparency and accountability across the sector.

Over time, this could lead to a more balanced grocery market where shoppers feel more informed and better protected when paying for every day essentials."



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HOW TO REMEMBER SOMEONE'S NAME

This article, published in the 'Good Weekend' magazine at page 5, of 'The Sydney Morning Herald' on Saturday 18 July, 2026, resonated with me, as a person who for much of my life, has had a dreadful memory for names.

"Names are just abstract words when you think about it," explains Tansel Ali, a four-time Australian memory champion. He says that it is not surprising that so many of us are bad with names: they have no meaning when we first encounter them. Understanding that this is not just an ageing problem, but rather a wider, chronic problem (well, for myself at least), I read on.

"His big hack, and the one that famously helped him memorise two entire *Yellow Pages* telephone books in less than a month, is to create visual associations." Says the writer, Jonathan Seidler. "For example, Ali says, 'Each time you see someone called Sandra, you might see sand in her hair, which will become the trigger for her name'." Ali adds that the best part about creating image associations is that they can compound with new information. For instance, someone called Steve (a fairly common name) may tell you that he has three dogs, so they are in that imagined scene with him.

Ali concedes that this method can be a lot of work for your imagination. He says that while you are learning these skills it will take a bit of time but like any other discipline, your memory requires training, and the more you train, the quicker you will become proficient. Merely repeating someone's name three times after you first hear it, just does not work, according to Ali. He says, "You're just repeating abstract information, something that doesn't make sense, so you're not really remembering it."

Seidler concludes, "If we want this problem to skip a generation, Ali believes the modern trend of giving our kids unusual names may actually work in our favour." Ali states that the most memorable names are the ones that are unique, not the more common ones. Seidler suggests, "Maybe Elon Musk was on to something when he named his child 'X AE A-Xii'!" Mmm - not so sure about that!

INSIGHTS

John Cheesman's contribution to 'Insights' was published in the May edition of AE News; or rather, the first instalment was published. The remainder of his article is published in this edition. It is quite lengthy and detailed, as well as uniquely absorbing!



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We were left last time with these words from John:

“Then apparently, I fell about 3 or 4 metres from the first floor onto the rock-hard ground. Why? No one knew! No one saw me fall. In due course I was found unconscious, bleeding from my eyes, nose and ears. Someone raced to fetch Doctor Joseph Solomon, an ex-US Marine Corp Medic, who lived close by.”

So, what happened next? John resumes his story...

“Long after the accident Dr. Solomon related how a couple of weeks earlier, during his early morning Bible time, he had a premonition that there would be a terrible accident on the building site. So, he ordered a special stretcher and all necessary life-saving medicines and equipment. It was all delivered just days before my accident.”

He was soon by my side.

Amazingly, he knew one of the top American neurosurgeons, Dr Austin Lamberts, at Grand Rapids Hospital, downstate and they communicated for two days, with Dr Solomon doing all possible to stem the bleeding and stabilise me. But, without critical, immediate surgery I wouldn't survive. The Great Lakes were frozen and roads impassable. So, he called the Strategic Air Command Airforce Base Commander in North Michigan. Soon, a helicopter arrived and airlifted me to hospital. Following CT scans and computer assessments (not then available in Australia), I was on the operating table.

Dr Lamberts found the whole of my right frontal lobe and part of my parietal lobe had been torn from the cranium supporting tissues, the frontal lobe impacting on my eye and nasal passage, and I was still bleeding slowly. He stemmed it and painstakingly moved the parietal and front lobes back to their positions, but still unattached. For many days, my life hung in the balance.

Dr Lamberts reported to my parents in Adelaide that I was deeply somnolent, unresponsive and in critical care.

Then, a week or so later I imagined myself on the ceiling of a white room, looking down at my body lying on its back, in a bed. People clad in white, surrounding it. They seemed to be engaged in earnest discussion. I couldn't hear them. Alongside of me was a white, roundish tunnel with no end to it. I was curious to know where it led. I watched the people. Should I investigate the tunnel or go back into my body? Suddenly, I found myself looking up at a man. ‘What am I doing here?’ I asked. He exclaimed, ‘John, you are back! Thank God!’ It was the surgeon, Dr Lamberts. ‘Where am I? What am I doing here?’ ‘You’ve had a terrible accident and a major operation.’

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In intensive care, I found that a steel brace had been strapped around my midriff and lower back. It was not to be removed. The fall had compressed my spine by more than half an inch from the waist down; four discs were pulverized, and three vertebrae damaged. Amazingly, the spinal cord had not been broken. I wore a back-brace permanently for many years. Now, here I am eighty-eight years old, still needing to occasionally wear a brace as a protective measure. Also, I had error of parallax. My eyes are divergent. For many months I had to wear an eye patch, alternating eyes daily. My memory had been erased of some months prior to the accident. I found many aspects of my thinking and actions wanting.

I learned that the frontal lobes are integral to motor functions, problem solving, spontaneity, memory retention, language, judgment, impulsiveness and emotional control, verbal and non-verbal behaviour and social behaviour. Also, the lobes are home to one's personality, which can undergo significant changes following an injury to either or both frontal lobes.

In my case the nerves were damaged so the eye movement and synchronization had altered.

As recovery progressed, Dr Solomon contacted a leading Professor of Ophthalmology, Dr Henderson at the University of Michigan. He was one of the first in the world to use computer-aided microscopic analyses and precision surgical techniques. Rigorous tests were performed along with computerized photographic images and videos of eye movements. The operation was performed while viewed by his faculty students. He removed my left eye ball with the optic nerve still intact and precisely cut and repositioned the muscles to correct the error of parallax. Amazingly, it resulted in my complete recovery, eventually with 20-20 vision.

Over several years my damaged spine grew itself together as a solid mass, still with the spinal cord intact from my belt line to the coccyx.

Thus, through all of these incredible live-saving procedures performed by skillfully trained medical professionals working together, I was given a second chance at life.

Soul searching during recovery: Why was I saved? For what purposes? How could I ever repay the debt? Where and how was I to begin to move forward with so many unknowns? I resolved to 'start life again' with a promise to myself that I would repay this great debt by being of service to, and working for, the well-being of others.

My Mother flew to visit me early in my recovery. Never before had she travelled alone or been overseas. She brought with her the healing salves of love and compassion. She did not want to leave until I promised to return to Australia. I

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promised! In January 1961 I was deemed sufficiently recovered to fly. In February 1961 I returned home to Port Noarlunga.

During the next seven years, aided by a mature-age Commonwealth scholarship, I undertook study part-time and obtained a university degree in Building Technology. I gained employment with Kinnaird, Hill, de Rohan and Young Pty Limited. And most importantly, I found and married the love of my life, Wendy.

One day, Malcom Kinnaird came to my drawing board and looking at me straight in the eyes, said, "Cheesie, you don't want to spend your life at a drawing board...what do you really want to do?" "Be a construction and project manager, Malcolm", I replied. "OK", he said, "I'll send you to Melbourne to work on a major project with one of our project managers."

Determined to approach everything with ambition, planning, energy and discipline, Wendy and I left for Melbourne. It was the first of many complete changes of direction in our life together. My life as a project planner, construction manager and project manager began and rapidly grew. Being very active in the Australian Institute of Building (AIB) I was involved in upgrading the Building Technology Degree course and drafting of the Building Science Degree course.

During the 1970s I was the Institute of Building SA Chapter President and for seven years, a Federal Councillor. Also, while working in Melbourne, I was the Institute's representative on the draft Australian Building Regulations Committee. I am an AIB Retired Fellow and retired Associate Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management. With these Institutes I constantly worked part-time to attract young people to the Building Industry Degree courses and industry, including through part-time lecturing at Adelaide University and the Australian Institute of Management.

Managing projects in Melbourne, SA, the Northern Territory, Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Canberra and Manila in the Philippines kept us on the move...with the children in tow.

As a post script, jumping forward to 1986 while living in Manila, I flew to Hong Kong to see a Chinese, Adelaide University Medical & Surgical Post Graduate, who was a specialist in ear surgery. Wheeled into the operating theatre wide awake, the specialist showed me on the computer screen, the cartilage growth impacting my ear drum. Then I was anaesthetized. The removal operation was completely successful. The specialist explained that it appeared to result from deformation of the middle and inner ear that had been pushed upwards during the 1960 accident.

Then in 1997, I came to Adelaide from the Philippines for a nasal operation, apparently resulting from 12 years accumulation of deleterious residue from Manila's dense air pollution.

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Following scans, he remarked that the nasal condition clearly had its origins in the 1960 accident and also advised me that the results of my mental capacity tests were above average for my age. It was not what he expected. He showed me the scans, pointing to where the whole of my right frontal lobe and part of the parietal lobe were missing. I should no longer have been able to function unimpaired. It could only be that the functions of these lobes had been retained and must have been progressively transferred as the lobes died, through some surviving strings between the damaged lobes to other parts of the brain. Incredible!

Chasing and being invited to take on projects in other states and overseas has meant that during over 50 years of our marriage in Australia and the Philippines, we have moved almost 40 times.

We have designed, built and lived in two homes, and purchased, lived in, modified and extended another nine of the ten of them. We have three incredible children, two natural-born sons, one who is an ANU Associate Professor and the other a company managing director. Our Filipino daughter, who would have died had we not adopted her when she was 6 months old, graduated from Unley High and won several tertiary scholarships. She has three degrees; she is a Professional Occupational Therapist, and she is a lawyer. Always, Wendy and I have striven to put their needs and welfare before work commitments. We have Thai and New Zealand born daughters-in-law and a French son-in-law. All are now Australian. We have three grand-children. Our extended family lives in Canberra, Bendigo and Melbourne.

We returned to Adelaide to retire in early 2000 but then extended my working life for a time, working as a Contracts Administrator and Site Supervisor with my brother's company, Cheesman Architects.

Neuroscience now considers that the brain's frontal lobes are involved in nearly all behaviour, and the parietal lobe is involved in sensory information, spatial awareness, touch and temperature, and that some functions of the brain seem to be transferable. I am living proof of these claims!"

Comment: If life is a journey John, you have undoubtedly encountered more rough patches than most; but you have succeeded, nevertheless. An incredible story!

BTW: This is the only member Insight contribution published in this edition of the newsletter. It is intended to return to the publication of two member contributions in the November, 2026 edition.

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A WORD ABOUT GRAPES

Much of the news, issues and topics for discussion is not always of a positive nature. However, in the November 2025 edition, a discussion about almonds appeared, together with some encouraging words about the contribution they make to healthy living, which of course is of great interest to we senior citizens. Similarly, a discussion about grapes and the positive contribution they can make to the state of our health and well-being, is worthy of our consideration.

Emily Craig, writing in The Telegraph, London, and published online in The Sydney Morning Herald on 2 June, 2026, makes the point, "From improving blood pressure to enhancing cognition, grapes have been shown to provide significant health benefits." She goes on to say, "Humans have been eating grapes for more than 20,000 years, but it was much more recently, in the early 2000s, that scientists began probing their wide-reaching health benefits."

"The interest started with resveratrol – a compound found richly in red and black grapes – and the longevity and cardiovascular benefits," says Dr Zhaoping Li, Chief of the Division of Clinical Nutrition at UCLA Health, who has studied the fruit herself. Since then, grapes and the long list of nutrients they contain, have been linked to better brain, gut and even bone health."

Grapes have been shown to lower cholesterol according to Dr Li – both total cholesterol and "bad" LDL cholesterol. She explains, "The grapes seem to inhibit the liver, the body's main cholesterol creator, from making new cholesterol, while also preventing cholesterol absorption in the gut and reducing levels of especially harmful oxidized cholesterol, which is inflammatory." She adds that grapes also contain fibre, which helps flush cholesterol from the body. "This is good news for heart health, as lower cholesterol levels reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes."

Polyphenols, anti-inflammatory compounds found in fruit such as grapes, are also thought to bring extra benefits for heart health. Dr Li states, "They act as antioxidants in the body, meaning they deactivate harmful compounds called free radicals that circulate in our blood and damage our cells."

Grapes have been found to have other benefits also, such as improving gut health; improving brain health (the gut microbiome is directly linked to brain function) and, boosting bone and muscle health (new research at the University of Navarra found that people who eat lots of food rich in polyphenols, including grapes as well as berries and other dark fruits, seem to be ageing more slowly). 10 to 12 grapes, or a handful is a healthy quantity containing about 80 grams – the serving contains about 54 calories, 0.6 grams of fibre and 12 grams of sugar. As grapes are 80% water, it is also a hydrating snack.

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Dr Li warns that grapes do contain a lot of sugar and this could affect blood sugar levels, especially for people with type 2 diabetes. However, she adds, "Grapes can be a healthy swap, especially for less nutritious foods in your diet. If you have 100 calories worth of grapes, that is much better than the equivalent amount of cereal or snacks like cookies."

"Are grapes then, on balance, good for us or not?", we ask?

Dr Li says that regularly eating grapes, despite it being quite a high-sugar fruit, can really benefit your health. She states, "They are natural, contain a variety of nutrients and give you carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins. They also provide soluble fibre and phytonutrients such as resveratrol."

However, those of us who prefer our grape consumption to be taken in the form of good wine might be well advised to pause and take other important health considerations into account as well. Just saying!

'A BENCH OF BASTARDS'

'A Bench of Bastards' is the colourful title of an insightfully written history of Justices of the Peace and Magistrates in England and Australia. Its author is Michael Ward, former Magistrate in South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. Michael is a member of the Bowls Section of the Kensington Gardens Bowling and Tennis Club. He is a keen historian and is currently writing a history of England – no mean feat.

The Forward to Michael's book, 'A Bench of Bastards' is written by The Hon. Chris Kourakis, former Chief Justice of South Australia. He says, *inter alia*:

"Mr Ward's assertion of jurisdiction can be accepted for four reasons. First, for many years he was himself one of the bastards, and a good and well regarded one at that, serving in South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. Secondly, he has delivered his verdict only after assiduously collecting a substantial body of evidence drawn from many independent sources. Thirdly, he well understands the social, political and economic context in which the office of magistracy was born and thrived. Fourthly, and most importantly, he is motivated by a desire to ensure that justice is better administered to the battlers with whom he very obviously, and strongly, empathizes."

He goes on to say that the text is iconoclastic in a typically Australian style, which is direct and colourful. However, he counsels that the style should not distract

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from the important lessons which can be drawn from Michael's history of the magistracy.

Michael has a surplus supply of 'A Bench of Bastards'. He is offering them to our members for \$10 per copy; a much-reduced rate from the original purchase price. Good value indeed for a text of this quality and reputation.

Michael Ward is our guest speaker at the Annual General Meeting in September. On that occasion he will sign any copies that are ordered and purchased.

IMPORTANT: Orders may be placed by members, with me, at the August Branch meeting. I will require your name, the number of books required, your phone number and email address. Books so ordered will be available, upon payment of \$10 either at the August Branch meeting or at the conclusion of the AGM at our September Branch meeting. As indicated, Michael will make himself available to autograph all copies, as requested, immediately after the AGM.

PLANNED EVENTS REMINDER- Christine Campbell, Events Co-Ordinator

Movies

Join us for a monthly special screening of a new release for seniors on the last Wednesday of each month, at the Regal Theatre on Kensington Road. The cost is \$9.50 per ticket, which includes tea/coffee and biscuits. Doors open at 9.45 am, allowing time for guests to mingle. Screenings are:

26 August, 2026 - 'Holy Days'; 30 September, 2026 - movie to be advised; 28 October, 2026 - movie to be advised, and 25 November, 2026 - movie to be advised.

Coffee Morning

This event is scheduled for Tuesday, 18 August, 2026 and includes a visit to the Mary Mackillop Museum - cost \$10 - followed by coffee at the High Street Café. Location is 4 High Street/Phillips Street, Kensington.

Mystery Day Tour

The tour is scheduled for Monday 14 September, 2026 and is conducted by Aust-Wide Tours. Travel is in a luxury air-conditioned coach and the cost is \$55. This includes morning tea, coffee or Milo, with biscuits. Lunch is at own cost. The journey departs from 101 Muller Road, Hampstead Gardens at 8.45 am or from North Terrace, Adelaide at the bus stop in front of the Intercontinental Hotel at 9.30 am. Return at approximately 4.15 pm.

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Stangate House Gardens

Stangate Gardens is located in Euston Road, Aldgate. The event is scheduled for Sunday 27 September, 2026. This house and garden is a gorgeous and unique outdoor venue, often used for weddings. They have open days as well as hosting tours of the gardens to view the stunning array of camellias in Spring. Our Branch member, Ian Miller is a volunteer at Stangate Gardens and he can provide further details if you wish. Members will need to provide their own transport and car-pooling is suggested, unless otherwise advised. Suggested arrival time is around 11 am.

Christmas Luncheon

Tentative bookings have been made for the Marryatville Hotel, Kensington on Monday 14 December, 2026. Choices will be a seniors' meal at \$28: choice of main course (a la carte), ice cream and a drink OR a full Christmas lunch at \$45 (choice of 3 mains) plus trimmings, Christmas pudding and a drink. More details and booking confirmation to come.

All inquiries from Branch members are welcome – Chris.

Capri Theatre Visit

During History month some of our members enjoyed a very interesting tour of the Capri Theatre.



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MORE ICONIC AUSTRALIAN INVENTIONS

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Cochlear Implant (1978). Dr. Graeme Clark helped to research and develop a means for deaf individuals to hear. The Cochlear implant is also known as the bionic ear. The first bionic ear recipient was Rod Saunders who had lost his hearing at the age of 46. In 2008 Dr. Clark announced that he was developing a 'hi-fi' implant that would help users to perceive music and different voices in noisy environments.

IVF EMBRYO FREEZING (1983). Researchers from Monash University and the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne perfected the 'freeze-thaw' in-vitro fertilization technique in 1983. The first frozen embryo baby was born in Melbourne in March, 1984.

POLYMER BANKNOTE (1988). The polymer banknote was developed as a joint venture between the Reserve Bank of Australia, the CSIRO and the University of Melbourne, as a means of preventing forgery.

MULTI-FOCAL CONTACT LENS (1992). The multi-focal contact lens was invented by Queensland optical scientist, Stephen Newman. This particular type of contact lens works in the same way as bifocal glasses, which helps people focus on multiple distances through the same lens.

The final list in this series will be published in the November, 2026 edition of AE NEWS, unless anyone can dig up a few more and let me know by around mid-October, 2026.

MORE TRIVIA TO PONDER

The words 'kayak', 'level' and 'racecar' are palindromes meaning that they are the same whether they are read left to right or right to left.

If the population of China walked past you, 8 abreast, the line would never end because of the rate of reproduction (even with the impact of the one child per family policy introduced some years ago, but no longer in force).

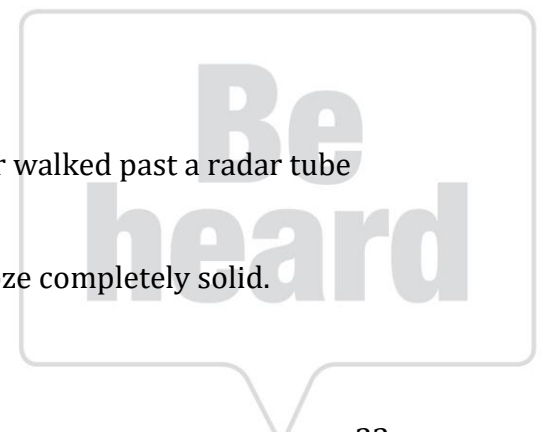
Leonardo Da Vinci invented the scissors.

Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite.

Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.

The microwave oven was invented after a researcher walked past a radar tube and a chocolate bar in his pocket melted.

The winter of 1932 was so cold that Niagara Falls froze completely solid.



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Winston Churchill was born in a Ladies' room during a dance.

Women blink nearly twice as much as men.

All of the ants in Africa are said to weigh more than all of the elephants.

The killer whale (Orca) is not really a whale species. It belongs to the dolphin family.

Are any of these incorrect? If so, let me know.

THE LAST WORD

A seasoned punter started out having a bad day at the races. He had not backed the winner of either the first or second race. But then, he noticed a Catholic priest walk onto the track and watched him bless the forehead of one of the horses in the third race. Lo and behold, the horse - a long shot - won the race.

Just before the commencement of the fourth race, the priest stepped out onto the track again, and blessed one of the horses. And it too, went on to win the race. The punter was amazed and very impressed.

Again, just prior to the fifth race, the priest emerged from the crowd and blessed another long shot. This time the punter cautiously placed a modest bet on the horse. And yes, it won! The punter was elated. "Wow!" he thought, "I'm going to clean up big time today."

And so, the punter watched the priest bless a long shot in the next three races. He placed increasingly larger bets and won each time without fail. He could not believe his luck.

"Only one race to go now. I had better make the most of this opportunity", he said to himself. He found an ATM, drew out every cent he had in the world and could hardly contain his excitement as he saw the priest emerge once more, just prior to the last race.

This time he saw the priest bless the eyes, ears and hooves of an old nag, the rank outsider starting at huge odds. The punter, shaking with excitement and expectation, bet every cent he had 'on the nose'. Alas, he watched in utter disbelief as the old nag came in a distant last, stagger and then drop dead.

In a state of shock, he confronted the priest and demanded, "Father! What happened? All day you have been blessing long shots and they all won! Then, in

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the last race the horse you blessed not only lost by a mile - it dropped dead! I bet my whole life savings on that horse so thanks to you, I am now destitute."

The priest nodded and replied:

"Well, that's the problem with you heathens. You can't tell the difference between a simple blessing and the last rites!"

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**ADELAIDE EAST BRANCH INCORPORATED**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MONDAY 21<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2026**

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## NOMINATION FOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (Rule 10(4) (a) and (b))

### **PART A - Nomination**

I, .....and I, .....

being financial members of National Seniors Australia and members of the Adelaide East Branch, do hereby nominate:

.....

who is also a financial member of National Seniors Australia and a member of the Adelaide East Branch, for election to the position of (tick the position for which this nomination is made):

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Committee members:

Membership Officer

Welfare Officer

Events Co-Ordinator

Guest Speaker Co-Ordinator

Newsletter Editor

of the Branch for the year 2026/2027.

SIGNED: ..... DATE: .....

SIGNED: ..... DATE: .....

### **PART B - Acceptance of Nomination**

I, ....., being the person so nominated, and being a financial member of National Seniors Australia and a member of the Adelaide East Branch, do accept this nomination.

SIGNED..... DATE .....

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