

National Seniors

AUSTRALIA

PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS BRANCH INC

FROM THE EDITOR

After a successful AGM where all protocols were followed, we said goodbyes to our fantastic 2023/24 committee and welcomed a new team for the coming 2024 year.

As you will see by the Presidents report, we had a fun-filled and very prosperous year at our branch.

It was interesting to see the enthusiasm shown at the planning forum run capably by Donna Munro. Members present, were in close agreement as to the future direction of our branch. The input from the members told us that the path we are undertaking is working well and very little, if any, changes need to be made.

Three longstanding committee members in Teresa Iwinska, Lee Brown, and Erica de Carlo have taken a well-earned rest from the committee. They have done so much for the branch and the new members filling their positions have a lot to live up to. Saying that, we have some new faces putting their hands up to fill vacancies.

EDITOR BILL

ConnectionS/Newsletter

August 2024

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Wendy Aggett

Myrna Bristowe

Ann Cross

Erica De Carlo

Pat Heaton

Fred Hynes

Gyllian McNaught

Frank Liddell

Steve Watkinson.



Whoever said "All
you need is Love"
forgot about Coffee.

Coffee, Quotes and Me

2023-2024 PRESIDENTS REPORT



Wow what a big year it has been for everyone. A change of venue from the East Port Bowling Club to the Port Macquarie Golf Club. A move that we had to make due to renovations at the East Port Bowling Club and it has been a move that most members have enjoyed.

Firstly I want to thank our committee for the great work that they have achieved in making this branch an environment that is supportive, educational, and entertaining. I am very thankful to our committee for supporting and backing each other up and making sure all the work gets done. The enthusiasm and energy from our committee members to make this Branch a great place has been inspiring.

Vice- President. Dee Watkinson has been Vice-President, our Publicity and Promotions Officer, looking after gifts and M'Ceeing a number of functions. Dee has been very generous with her time and the thought that she puts into everything that she does. Thank you Dee.

Secretary. Lesley Cooney took up the challenge of being our secretary and organized our Mystery Car Rally. Many thanks for helping to ensure all our official work gets done.

Treasurer, Membership Officer, Welfare Officer, Public Officer,

Speaker Seeker, Front desk welcomer newsletter committee

member, grant writer and baker. How many jobs can 1 person do and do well? Erica can, ask Erica for help and she is always there, always reliable. Erica is a very hard working member, who always contributes regardless of her other commitments. She is always there to support anyone in need. Erica has had an enormous workload and I thank her for the enormous energy that she has put into this Branch.

Activities Officer. Lee Brown our **Activities Officer**, what a wonderful array of activities Lee has organized for us. I am always surprised at the range of activities that Lee manages. Lee has been particularly enterprising this year by generating new money making activities. Her activities are varied and well attended. Lee is also our Be Connected guru, organizing grants and workshops. Thank you Lee.

Newsletter Editor. Bill has taken on the Newsletter with gusto. It is large and he has managed to get a number of members contributing. Well done on a great Newsletter and for being generous with your time and skills with your knife sharpening and donation of money to the Branch. Thank you Bill.

One thing About Me and Lucky Number Organiser. Linda Philp. Linda has managed to get a number of members to share part of their lives with us. It has been so interesting to learn more about each other. Linda has instigated our Lucky number event allowing us to have some money to offset some of our running costs. Important work Thank you Linda.

Activities support

Thank you to Ron Mitchell who joined the committee a few months ago and has been great in supporting the sign up of activities. Thanks Ron.

IT Support and Chairing our Silver Anniversary Sub-Ctee

This position isn't a committee position and I wanted to thank Lynda Walters for taking on the challenges of supporting our speakers with their technical needs and keep our website updated. Lynda also chaired our Silver Anniversary Celebration Sub-Committee and was excellent in keeping us all on track. Thank you LYnda.

I would also like to thank Joan Lundstrom, Joan Mitchell and John Urquhart our greeters, Alan Philp our Luck Number organizer and photographer. Pam and Gavan and David Johnston for welcoming members at the front desk, Christine Parkes and Duncan Wyndham who back-up for 500 Card Club, Helen and Walter Lutz and Marlene Davar

PRESIDENTS REPORT CONTINUED

who help with activities and Graeme Lundstrom, Steve Watkinson and David Johnston who help out quietly in the background. As well Donna Munro who directed our play and is running our Planning Forum.

A big thank you to Trevor for making the Tic Tac Toc puzzles and donating the proceeds to our Branch and James MacAdam for his work on the committee.

All these people have done a wonderful job in supporting activities and members and make our Branch successful. So thank you so much.

Planning Forum Feedback

At our Planning Forum last year there were comments about the difficulties with the venue and as we have moved to the Golf Club these issues have been resolved.

There were suggestions for additional activities and Lee was able to take most of these on board. Varying the days of activities has also been implemented. Most of the suggestions for speakers were executed, but as we have only 9 speakers each year we have ideas for the next year.

Our branch has 136 members, we average about 56 at meetings and 30 at the lunch after each meeting. Ten years ago our membership was under 50 so well done everyone in enabling us to flourish.

Highlights over the last 12 months

Our Silver Anniversary Celebration dinner was a very happy successful event. Great work from Lynda Walters, Lee Brown, Erica de Carlo, Dee Watkinson, Bill Wendt, John Urquhart and Keith Reichenbach.

Our activities, have been excellent and varied in particular 80 members came to our Xmas party, 55 to our Melbourne Cup function and 84 to our February meeting.

Obtaining a Be Connect grant enabling us to conduct a computing workshop and buy equipment. Well done Lee and Erica.

Obtaining a grant from Hastings Co-Op for equipment. Many thanks Erica Raising \$2250 for Willing and Able

Most importantly have a budget line item with \$1362 to support members activities. The Branch is in the best financial position that it has ever been.

I want to thank my wonderful husband John, who continues to support me, no matter what. He is always there for me no matter what I am dealing with, he is there through the highs and lows and is able to put a different perspective on things, particularly when things 'Get to Me'.

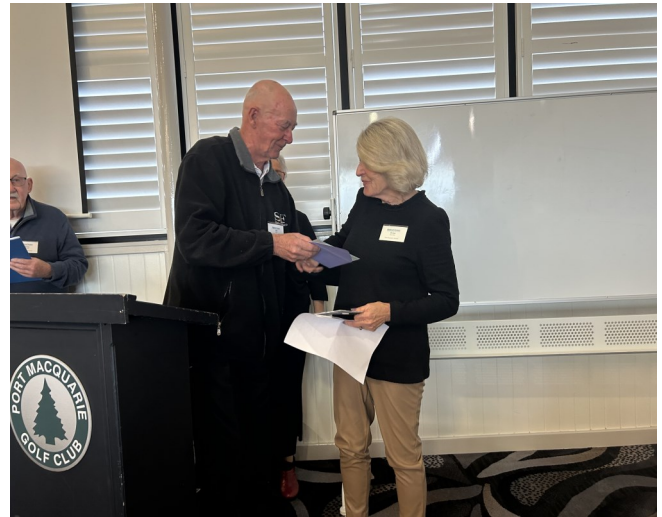
PRESIDENTS REPORT CONTINUED

A kind hearted, dependable, intelligent and loving supporter, thank you John.

Finally thank you everyone for making my role enjoyable, stimulating and challenging, its been a wonderful experience being your President. Thank you and my very best wishes to our new president Bill and his committee.

Teresa Iwinska

President 2023-2024



Presentations were made on behalf of the members by Lee Brown to Teresa, and by incoming president Bill Wendt to Erica for her 12 years of service on the committee, both greatly deserved.

IN-COMING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well, here we are in the new year. I am pleased to have been nominated and voted in as your President for the coming Year. I am also pleased to be involved with a new committee that will be as committed as myself in continuing along the same path as we have had in past years. As stated in the editorial, the Planning Forum told the story. I will ensure that we produce as many activities as possible to keep you all entertained over the coming year, both at meetings with good speakers, together with activities that you have enjoyed.

As the newsletter had no mention at the Planning Forum, and has been accepted as "newsy and interesting", I will continue to edit and put it together with your continued contributions when asked for at our monthly meetings and activities. There will be some significant changes to the format as there will be in other aspects of the branch, but I know you will see some exciting new initiatives from your new committee. We know you will enjoy the planned year ahead.

Bill Wendt

YOUR 24/25 COMMITTEE.

At the first meeting of your new committee get-together, it was decided that in the interest of all members, the list of your executive committee usually listed on the top right-hand corner of the front page would be shown at the top of page 2 of the newsletter. This will be displayed follows.

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One Thing About Me

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The reason for the change is that we feel that this new format will give members a chance to go straight to the committee member with information and any new ideas. This is particularly important for promptly reporting welfare issues.

Your Committee

The
Hope
Community

Those who attended the Planning Forum at the AGM were presented with several worthy charities that we could assist in the coming year. Last year we donated \$2250. to Willing and Able. The vote for The Hope Community was over-whelmingly voted in after talks from Linda Philp, James McAdam and John Urquhart.

On a crisp and sunny winter morning, several members enjoyed a walk along our beautiful Port Macquarie coastal path. By design, the walk ended at Sails Resort where we were treated to an excellent buffet breakfast. Juice, fruit, cereal, hot food, pancakes and pastries were there to tempt us.

Marlene and Lee were able to make their own Eggs Benedict with smoked salmon and hollandaise sauce. Erica raved about the mushrooms. It was lovely to welcome back Jacob after his overseas trip to meet up with family in Switzerland.

After a lot of chatter and the obligatory group photo, we agreed it was another happy National Seniors activity.

By Lee Brown



"The Women"

Author Kristin Hannah

In 1968 Frances McGrath first heard the words "Women can be heroes" which changed her life. Having recently lost her brother in Vietnam she decided to join the Army Nurse Corps and follow his path. There she is overwhelmed by the chaos and destruction of war.

She discovers the true value of female friendship and the heartbreak that love can cause. The trauma of coming home to a changed America where they were rejected as VETs and not recognised for their courage. Suffering PTSD she undergoes months of therapy before she decides to buy a disused farmhouse in Montana where she establishes a retreat for VET women also suffering from trauma. A heartwarming story of women heroes.

By Anne Jackson

I SWEAR I THOUGHT I WAS JUST BUYING VIAGRA FROM THE CHINESE



THEY SAID "YOU GIVE US MONEY, WE FIX ERECTION FOR YOU"

Guest Speakers

Port Macquarie Animal Centre ü

Mrs York's Garden – Di Davison ü

Community Radio – 2 Way FM ü

Leslie Williams

Alex McNaught – Drones

Speaker from Observatory ü

Leanne Goodyear – Omnicare

Richard McGovern – Westpac Helicopter

Dave Reneke = Astronomy

Cameron Marshal – ABC

Palliative Care

Advocate for Aged Care (I'll ask Mavis's daughter Colleen, she's an administrative RN at St Agnes ... she might be able to suggest someone good)

Bare Funerals

Kylie (GI) Jones – exercise for seniors (balance)

Police – Community safety ü

U3A

I'd like to add 2 suggestions ...

Linked Community Services - Transport and Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme –

Margaret Craig 6583 8644

Choosing an Aged Care Facility – Sue Reid?

Activities

Short/overnight trips away – eg Hunter Valley

Quiz at meetings eg trivia / word and meaning

Maritime Museum

Douglas Vale

Art Exhibitions and Theatre nights

Open Gardens (eg Comboyne, Walcha, Wingham)

Day trips (Gladstone etc)

Christmas in July (eg Armidale, Walcha, Dorrigo)

Australia Day Celebrations

Slim Dusty Centre

Trivia Night

Trip to Sydney for Vivid or Theatre

Dinner Dance

Op Shop Dinner (outfits bought from OpShops)

Halloween breakfast or lunch – dress-up

Chilli Festival at Sawtell

Buffalo Farm Lunch

REFLECTION – Favourite Activity (ticks added as 'top 5')

Mystery Car Tour ü
 Melbourne Cup ü
 Players Theatre ü
 Hunter Valley Trip (etc) ü
 Day Trip (eg Nabiac) ü
 Guess Who's Coming to Lunch Christmas Lunch
 Dinner Dance
 BBQ Boats
 Artwalk
 Subsidised events
 Australia Day
 Christmas in July



IDEAS GENERATED BY GROUPS.

KEEP doing! (What do you think is working well?)	STOP doing? (What could be changed or improved?)
Breakfast at McInerny Park Ü	Nothing
Auction for CharityÜ	Mix up seating at meetings
Melbourne Cup DayÜ	
Guess Who's Coming to Lunch Ü	
One thing about me. Ü	
Meetings – followed by lunch at GC	
500 Club	
Sancrox BBQ	
Mini Golf	
Weekend away	
Newsletter	
Tenpin Bowling – perpetual Trophy	
Mini Break	
Christmas Party	
Once-a-Year Celebration – Dinner Dance	
HAVING FUN!	

A LOVELY GESTURE

It was lovely to receive a well put together folder containing various inserts of information on;

Branch Website Guide

Branch Toolkit

Branch Manual

Branch Suggestions for Improvements

Branching Out Newsletter

Other Stationery Items.

The 4 sets supplied by head office for the new elected committee members will be invaluable.

Thank you Karen Furnivall (HO)



WELCOME TO YOUR NEW COMMITTEE

On Friday 19th of July, 28 members met at the Soul of Seoul Restaurant at Sovereign Place. There was plenty of initial confusion regarding the Menu and the operation of the table BBQ's. With the help of owners Lina and David and their staff, we were assisted table by table on how the menu worked. All fears were allayed, and at the end of the meal, it was compliments all around. It was a great vibe and we had lots of requests for an encore. There were a few "sickies" and members with others who could not attend, but the ones who attended were still mingling outside long after the meal.

President Bill thanked all present who made this another well attended, great activity.



SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If you won't be in Port Macquarie to vote in the local council elections on September 14th due to travel etc., here are some helpful tips.

You cannot do an absentee vote

There are fines for not voting.

To notify the commission, there are a couple of options:

Phone the Australian Electoral Commission on 132326...you will then put in your postcode to be directed to a person who can do your **notification over the phone.**

Or...go to the website www.aec.gov.au

At the top it says...For Voters.

Click on that for a drop-down box and select Special Category Enrolment 9 boxes come up

The middle one has a plane on it if you are travelling overseas

Click on that to get Overseas for a Short Period of Time

There is an Overseas Notification form to fill out and submit

OR

If you are travelling within Australia but won't be in PMQ for the voting day

In the 9 boxes one says

Long Term Travelers in Australia and follow directions.

Take a screen shot as you will not get a confirmation email

By Dee Watkinson

2024 CHARITY AUCTION

This is just a note to inform you all that our Annual Charity Auction is set for

Wednesday 25th September

At The Lions Den, Hastings River Drive.

From 11am till 3 pm.

BYO Food & Drinks.

Admission Gold Coin (Hall Hire).

Auctioneer. Mr. Paul Cooney (an ex-auctioneer).

It is now a good time to get into your cupboards and garages and have a clean out.

Saying that, we will not accept books, crockery and glassware that is chipped or broken and prefer household goods in working condition. We ask that if you would not give any item to your best friend, please don't bring it along. As well as your contributions, there will be some great saleable items to choose from donated by a surprise source.

All proceeds will go to our 2024 charity, The Hope Foundation.

More details will appear in the next newsletter, but please put the date in your diaries.

Bronzed Blokes return from World Choir Games in Auckland.

Blokes Notes, competing in July at the World Choir Games in Auckland were awarded bronze standard for their performance in the 'Seniors of Equal Voices' category. It was the first time since the Games (held biennially) began in 2001, that they had been held in the Southern Hemisphere. For the Blokes, it was their first entry into an international competition. Their harmonies and song lyrics, together (in the finale, "Real Men") with stripping off their coloured vests and black shirts to reveal the Blokes Notes logo delighted the audience.

Others competing in the same category were female choirs from China, singing in their own language. Each of these choirs was beautifully dressed and precise in their delivery, but without any of choreographic moves that were a feature of the Blokes, 'quirky style' of songs chosen for this competition.

Their musical Director, Ms Leanne Johnson from Bonny Hills, said "we've had fantastic time sharing our music. This award recognises the dedication and commitment for 18 ordinary blokes to represent our local community on an international stage. I was delighted to see and hear what they have achieved".

Apart from the competition, they had accepted invitations to perform in Friendship Concerts organised in two suburbs. They also travelled to Hamilton where they joined the Male Voices Waikato for a special concert showcasing songs of each choir's repertoire. There were 'flash mob' moments in pubs, cafes and the Waitupo Caves as well as at the Te Puia Thermal Park. There a geyser erupted in the middle of their singing.

Robyn Richardson and Viv Howell, travelling as part of the support crew, said "Some moments were quite surreal. It was a lot of fun with so many wonderful performances in the Kaleidoscope concerts in Auckland, which featured the championship choirs, as well as the free concerts in and around Auckland itself and travelling with the Blokes 'on the road'.

As with the Olympics, the Opening Ceremony was a thrilling spectacle. Flag bearers of the 41 countries competing were introduced as they paraded into the Spark Arena with it's full capacity of 13,000 people. The spectacular staging and lighting effects gave the evening a 'rock concert' feel. Three nights later, the Awards Ceremony of the completed Open Section, was held at the same venue. The Music Director-Conductor and a representative of each Choir were seated on stage. The results for each category were announced and Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards presented. An exhilarating program of music rounded out the evening.

Australia was well represented in the Championship Choir Categories. The Adelaide's Festival Statesmen Chorus was crowned **Champions of the 2024 World Choir Games**, winning two gold medals and two World Championship trophies.

Ian Richardson

