

National Seniors

AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE NORTH-WEST BRANCH

NEWSLETTER

June 2025

Meeting at 1.30 pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month at
Lockleys Baptist Church house, 244 Henley Beach Road, Underdale (parking at rear)

COMMITTEE

President	Brian Mibus (0417 887701)	Committee	Jeanette Molde
Vice-President ..	Trevor Molde (0417 838740)		Heather Dowling
Secretary	Kathy Hancock (0432 101372)		Jenny Mathews
Treasurer	Mavis Smith	Newsletter.....	Trish Mibus (0407 605091)
Activities Coordinator	Annie McCall		

2025 CALENDAR

DATE All dates are Wednesdays	ACTIVITY	AFTERNOON TEA
June 25, 1.30 pm	GUEST SPEAKER – MFS – Fire Service – safety	Heather Dowling
July 9, 12 noon	Lunch – Findon Hotel – Christmas in July	
July 23, 1.30 pm	GUEST SPEAKER – Robin Jarman	Jeanette Molde
July 24, 9.00 am – 1.00 pm	SA National Seniors Forum with Chris Grice, National Seniors CEO – Kent Town Hotel (includes morning tea)	
August 13, 12 noon	Lunch/Outing – Semaphore Gardens	
August 27, 1.30 pm	GUEST SPEAKER – Alison Hicks - Genealogy Society plus plant swap	Trish Mibus
September 10, 12 noon	Lunch – Plant 4, Brompton	
September 24, 1.30 pm	GUEST SPEAKER – Sarah – Scrapbooking Family Trees	Jack and Jan Dixon
October 8, 12 noon	Lunch/Outing – West Beach SLSC	
October 22, 1.30 pm	GUEST SPEAKER – Mataan Dunning (Fiducian Finances)	Katherine Papanikolas
November 12, 12 noon	Christmas Lunch for everyone – Lockleys Hotel	
November 26, 1.30 pm	GUEST SPEAKER – Discussion	Carole Smith

Our May Guest Speaker – Robert Beer, The Bee Man

Bees and Varroa Mite – What does it mean for us?



- Varroa mite is an insect that targets bees in their hives. In Australia, it began in NSW and spread to Victoria and Queensland. They will decimate 60% of hives in Australia and all feral colonies living in trees, and houses, as well as feral honeybees in unmanaged sites. The US and England have had Varroa mite for 56 years and have lost 40% of their hives but still manage to produce honey and survive. It takes up to 15 years to get the mites out of the hives.

- Robert and other beekeepers are forming groups to talk and train others. They have become aware that beekeepers in other countries are surviving by letting the mites take a natural course - like getting measles as a child where the body attacks the virus and we don't get it a second time.
- In other countries, bees have become sensitive to Varroa mite and given time they get to know which hives have Varroa mite.
- It is currently a learning experience. In the first 10 – 15 years beekeepers will lose bees. Some will survive and beekeepers will try to nurture them. The group is going to try to identify which bees will survive.
- Varroa mite in hives will be reflected in the price of honey and other byproducts of what bees will do, ie pollinate fruit. Big almond plantations on the Victorian side of the River Murray have been affected and the cost of almonds has risen by \$10 kg recently.
- The Varroa mite is attracted to the honeybee. The queen bee lays 2,000 eggs per day, 240,000 in 4 months. Honeybee hives have up to 60,000 bees, which is a lot of food for Varroa mite.
- There is no evidence that Varroa mite affects native bees. Native bees only lay 15 eggs in Autumn with food in the cells; they hatch in Spring. They live in wood, the ground or fibre nests. There is not enough food for the Varroa mite so they don't target them.
- We can make Bee Hotels from a fruit case on end, put 4 legs on it and divide into squares, fill the bottom with mud, put holes that go uphill and allow to settle. In the next two squares up put wood with different size holes up to the size of your finger and cover with grass or cardboard.

- Varroa mite are 2.4mm wide shaped like a crab, 1.5mm front to back. Female bees go into the brood cells with the Queen's eggs, feed on royal jelly. In 3 days the eggs hatch, in 9 days the larvae are sealed in the cells and pupate for 12 days. The Varroa mite know this and go into the cells on the 7th day before cells are sealed, aggravate the pupae belly and create a wound. The mite and her babies feed on this; in 30 hours the mite lays eggs; the first is a Male mite, then the Female 3 days later. She lays at least 5 eggs. Not all hatch, Males hatch after 5 days, Females after 8 days. At day 12 they hatch 1 Male and 2 Female who mate, and the females repeat the process of laying eggs.
- In a worker bee cell, a 6mm bee pupates in 12 days; in a Drone cell a 5mm bee pupates in 15 days. Varroa mite can tell the difference in cells and prefer the Drone cells as more mites hatch.
- The strategy is to put a top bar of wood over the top of the hive, break off the bottom. Drone cells are produced, the Varroa mite use these and you can freeze them to kill them with no chemicals.
- Many countries co-habit with bees without destroying, such as in South Africa where they began. Originally there were 2 varieties of bees which inbred with Varroa mite and they carried the mites to other countries e.g. Europe and England. Beekeepers used chemicals to help bees survive but have moved to no chemicals to keep the hives alive.
- Experiments are being done where they wash 300 bees from a hive to see if they find Varroa mite. If they find 5 mites they need to use chemicals which will only kill the mites and have no effect on bees but leaves a residue in the wax and honey.
- Robert used to take bees to almond orchards in Willunga. Almonds need good pollinators and bees are the best source, but the bees don't particularly like almond pollen. The floor of the almond grove is kept clean so the bees will pollinate the trees. After a few weeks the bees are looking for something of better quality. Robert would then take the bees to Hamley Bridge to canola fields to fatten them and then to the Adelaide Hills to pollinate cherry orchards.
 - Bees return to their hive at night and can only be transferred from one place to the next at night.



- Common native bees are smaller and blue banded. There are 30 varieties of native bees in South Australia, 2,000 in Australia. Carpenter bees bore into wood and were seriously decimated in the Kangaroo Island bushfires. Honey bees are attracted by the perfume of flowers and hover before going in.
- Rosemary is pruned and taken to Monarto to feed the bees.
- A worker bee lives 63 days - 21 days from egg to hatching, 21 days in the nursery and 21 days as a forager.
- Once a bee stings it dies. Swarms can get a belly full of honey and move on. The best honey is from Salvation Jane, blue gums and eucalypts like pink gum.
- There is a beehive in the Museum.

Reform delay backed, but home care action needed now

*Reprinted from National Seniors Website
nationalseniors.com.au/stories/media-release*

NSA supports the aged care reform delay to get it right but calls for urgent action to fix home care now.

National Seniors Australia (NSA) supports the government's decision to delay implementation of the new *Aged Care Act* to 1 November 2025 but calls for the immediate release of additional home care packages to ease home care wait times.

NSA chief executive officer, Chris Grice, said while the peak consumer body supports a delay to the aged care reforms to ensure providers are ready and consumers are informed, the 83,000 people waiting for a Home Care Package can't be forgotten.

"NSA supports additional time to ensure a smooth transition to the changes, but we are running out of time for vulnerable Australians desperately waiting for support at home," Mr Grice said.

"National Seniors Australia is calling for an immediate increase in the number of Home Care Packages to reduce the wait list to approximately 25,000 people by 1 January 2026.

"We keep hearing about the delivery of 'once in a generation reforms that put older Australians at the centre of their care.' They are inspirational words, but they are meaningless for the 83,000 people living in the community waiting for care."

While the wait list has steadily decreased since June 2019, wait times have shot up again since 2023, with almost 83,000 older Australians now waiting for a Home Care Package.

"The government's response to the final report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety in May 2021 assured us, "the respect for senior Australians is, and must be, a national priority".

"This once-in-a-generation opportunity was reaffirmed by the current government with the same passion prior to the election," Mr Grice said.

"Clearing the home care wait list was one of the many recommendations of the Aged Care Royal Commission, one National Seniors Australia has always seen as a top priority for the Federal Government.

"The government's delay of the reform start date is a practical move. Delivering more home care packages urgently is another."

Anna Townend

Media and Corporate Communications Manager, National Seniors Australia

South Australian National Seniors Forum

Thursday, July 24, 2025

9.00 am – 12 noon

Kent Town Hotel, 76 Rundle Street, Kent Town

Guest Speakers

Chris Grice

National Seniors' CEO

Karen Furnivall

National Seniors' Community Engagement Manager

Morning tea provided.

RSVP is essential - Register your attendance at
www.eventbrite.com/e/nsa-seniors-forum-learn-connect-keep-safe-tickets

*If you want to stay for lunch (at your own cost),
bookings need to be made directly with the Kent Town Hotel*



Adelaide North West National Seniors enjoy lunch at the Palais Hotel, Semaphore