

# NATIONAL SENIORS

**AUSTRALIA**

Port Macquarie Hastings Branch Inc

**CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER**

MAY 2025

## **Presidents Report**

Hi all. Well, the end of this is approaching fast. I think over the year so far, we have given you a good selection of activities to enjoy, with more to come.

I am sorry that we couldn't attend the functions last month, but Sue and I will do our best to attend as many as possible. You lot are the best medicine for both of us and will always treasure that.

It was nice to read the feedback and photos of the BBQ boats and the "Hippies" up north trip. Special thanks to Teresa and John for the work they put in to make it all happen.

We will have news for you at the General Meeting regarding Pickleball, Insurances, and progress in regard to Melbourne Cup and Christmas functions.

I would also remind members that we need nominations for next year's committee to fill the positions of Activities and most importantly, Secretary. As these positions have been well planned ahead by James, and reporting to Lesley made easy, these are not arduous tasks, but they need to be completed for the future running of the branch and its members.

Keep enjoying, and supporting each other.

President Bill.

## **What's in this Newsletter**

President's Report

June Birthdays

BBQ Boats Outing

April Meeting Guest Speaker

Happy Hippy Ballina Trip

Photos and more photos

## **Upcoming June Activities**

Monthly Meeting

M500 Club

Magic Mystery Car Tour

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## **JUNE BIRTHDAYS**

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Carol Dawson  
Robin Harkin  
Graeme Lundstrom  
Donna Munro  
Mary Murray  
Alan Randall  
Judy Stace  
David Wells





## BBQ Boats on the Hastings River

What a beautiful day May 7th was, the first day without rain for as long as I can remember. A very pleasant 24 degrees and a great crew of National Seniors onboard BBQ boats to traverse the travails of the Hastings River.

Well, it was perfect for the first 10 minutes, and then, yes one of our two boats decided they wanted to get oysters for lunch.



I think you are all starting to know where this is going.... you're right, oysters are in shallow waters and the boat had a bit more depth than the shallows.

Our boat being captained by Blackbeard himself, Capt. John Urquhart, was a bit hesitant at first to go near them and offer assistance, but with the rules of the sea and after a brief discussion with the captain and crew, we said, "bugger it" we will give them a hand.



Luckily, we had a recognized Marine Rescue person onboard, Phil Gardiner, who had a wealth of knowledge in these things and we managed after much shouting to get the wayward boat and crew out of the shallows. I hear we are looking for new crew members for the next BBQ boat outing.



But all jokes aside, it was a wonderful day, we had the BBQ fired up, the wine bottles open and laughs and smiles all round, can't wait for the next boating trip, get onboard you never know what's going to happen... so exciting.

Ron Mitchell





## GUEST SPEAKERS: Jenny Wall & Rachel

Jenny Wall, the Welfare Officer, and Rachel, the Nurse, both shared insights on Parkinson's Disease.

Jenny, who has been living with Parkinson's for two decades, provided a firsthand account of the challenges and experiences associated with the condition. On the other hand, Rachel delved into the symptoms of Parkinson's and explained the underlying mechanisms of the disease. She emphasized the individualized nature of Parkinson's, highlighting the crucial role of dopamine in brain function.



Rachel elaborated on how the interruption of dopamine in the brain leads to various symptoms, such as tremors, rigidity, speech difficulties, swallowing issues, and constipation. To address these challenges, medication and dopamine replacements play a vital role in enabling individuals to function more effectively. These treatments aim to alleviate the symptoms and improve the quality of life for those living with Parkinson's.

Moreover, Rachel underscored the availability of local services designed to support individuals affected by Parkinson's. These services encompass a range of options, including exercise groups, speech pathology sessions, yoga classes, boxing programs, and social support groups. By engaging in these activities, individuals with Parkinson's can enhance their physical well-being, communication skills, and overall quality of life. The community-based support services offer a holistic approach to managing Parkinson's, catering to the diverse needs of each individual.



### Quote of the day

*'I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'*

- Maya Angelou



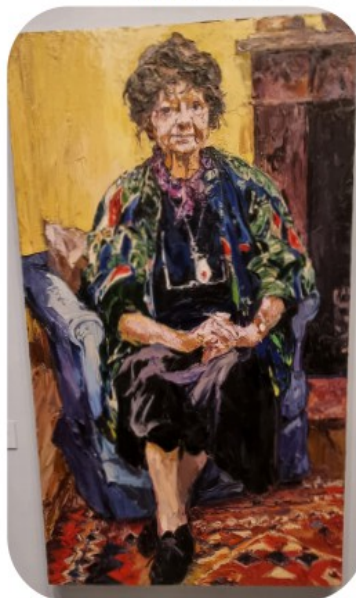
## Ballina 'Happy Hippy' Tour

Wed May 21st We left Port at 7:45 for Coffs Harbour Holden Motor Museum. The rain was torrential, but we arrived safely. There were 32 members from Port Mac - National Seniors on this trip. The Cartoon Gallery was located in a comfy WW2 communications bunker. The cartoons were themed around AI and electronic devices. My favorite featured Jesus saying, 'OMG 12 followers already... this could go viral'. A variety of Holden cars, dating from 1948 onward, were on display. The 1948 model could only be unlocked from the passenger side, forcing you to climb over to drive. Brian, a museum guide, provided great information on the vehicles. We enjoyed morning tea at Brock's Cafe, featuring delicious homemade cakes and slices. It was a pleasant start to our trip. That evening, the group arrived at the Ballina RSL Club in the town center. It was a lovely club, the dinner was satisfying, and we had fun reconnecting.



Thursday had alfresco breakfast at the resort, weather and breakfast perfect, staff too.

After breakfast we visited the Margaret Olley Gallery in Murwillumbah, a major highlight of our trip. The gallery overlooks paddocks with cows, horses, and Mount Warning in the distance. The building design cleverly integrates windows to showcase the countryside artwork. Margaret Olley's Paddington residence and contents were moved and displayed in a way that feels like her home. The gallery features an original Monet painting from the Haystacks collection. They are raising \$600,000 for a Ben Quilty portrait of Margaret Olley, with nearly \$550,000 raised so far. The 2011 Archibald Prize winning portrait captures her in the final months of her remarkable life. If you're in the area, check out this brilliant gallery. We also had lunch there.





After the gallery we descended on Burringbar for a wine tasting at the Natural Wine Shop and a peek at old wares in the Old Wares & Collectables store. The stuff at the old wares shop is stuff that my grandfather threw out, but there is always someone looking for that 'thing' and they will probably find it here. The wine tasting unfolded splendidly; I didn't purchase any of the three as they were not to my taste. Yet, such is the nature of wine—varied in taste and preference, thank the stars for our differences!

Tonight, John and Teresa hosted a BBQ night at the resort for us. It was a great effort by them; they brought most of the stuff from Port. They are the type of people who always go the extra mile to help people, and I say thank you from all of us. Everyone had a great night and the BBQ was perfect.



**Friday** Another Alfresco Breakfast at the Resort, the weather has been perfect.

Around 9.45 we left Ballina for a tour at Zentvelds Coffee Plantation and Roastery in Newrybar. Discovered the process of growing, picking, and roasting coffee. Ideal climate, soil, and terrain are crucial. The plantation started in the 80s, and the daughter returned in the 90s. Rebecca began roasting in 1993, among the first female coffee roasters. Her enthusiastic tour makes you eager for more coffee. Excellent tour.





Our next stop was Summerland Farm, a remarkable Australian enterprise dedicated to employing individuals with disabilities. A few workers shared their experiences, including Benny, who took immense pride in his achievements after 41 years of service. The lunch was delightful, complemented by a charming dining area. Many attendees particularly cherished the expansive gift shop. Benny emphasized the importance of shopping to support the wages of all, encouraging us to contribute generously.



Back at Ballina, Joan and I did a bit of shopping in town.

Tonight is the momentous occasion...the Happy Hippy dinner. What an enchanting evening it has been! The festivities commenced with the customary group photographs, accompanied by a selection of wine for our table, as we admired the array of outfits on display. The creativity in costumes was remarkable; heartfelt congratulations to everyone for the effort you invested.

Next was the much-anticipated best-dressed competition, where the gentlemen showcased their attire, and the loudest cheers determined the victor. Trevor emerged triumphant, earning a delightful stash of chocolates. Following this, it was the ladies' turn to shine. Erica claimed victory in this round, dazzling us in her charming short dress paired with long boots reminiscent of Nancy Sinatra's iconic style in "These Boots are Made for Walkin'."





Then, we were treated to the National Seniors Allstars, a wonderfully diverse ensemble of entertainment. Laughter filled the air as we were regaled with jokes, poetry, and Tiny Tim's whimsical performance on his air ukulele, tiptoeing through the tulips. Mike captivated us with a heartfelt story and a rendition of "Ave Maria" on his guitar, while Karen entertained with humour and introduced a new dance, brilliantly demonstrated by Max, who illustrated the amusing way older individuals don their undergarments—it was uproarious, as we've all experienced such moments. Baz and Lynne channelled Sonny and Cher with their rendition of "I Got You Babe," while John and Teresa delivered an impressive performance of a country and western classic. Nicola revisited our recent trip through rhyme, and a myriad of other talents graced the stage, resulting in an evening filled with joy and laughter—truly brilliant.

As the evening progressed, it was time to indulge in our meal, which was nothing short of exquisite. Following dinner, we descended upon the dance floor, a veritable riot of energy! I found myself spinning across the floor with a partner before joining Trevor for a spirited dance. We embraced a medley of classics including the YMCA, Nutbush, and Macarena—you would have been proud of our exuberance as we kept the spirit alive.

Regrettably, the enchanting night had to draw to a close, and we retired to our beds, only to awaken the following morning in search of Panadol to alleviate our aches and pains. Yet, every moment was undoubtedly worth it.

**Saturday** well, the fun had to end, after breakfast we headed home. What a wonderful trip, Joan and I would like to thank all the members for making it so eventful especially for the effort from John and Teresa, can't wait for the next one.  
Ron Mitchell





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### From the Cartoon Gallery ...

