



Meets at 9.30am for 10.00am on the second Thursday of each month at Mt Claremont Community Centre, 109 Montgomery Avenue, Mt Claremont

Postal Address: PO Box 2068, Subiaco, WA 6904

### 2018/2019 Officers

President	Geoffrey Jones	0400 214 458
Vice Pres.	David Thomas	0418 448 933
Treasurer	Terry Middleton	0417 171 844
Secretary	Colette Nathan	0427 084 847
Membership	Marion Laws	9387 8383
Editor	Terry Middleton	
Layout	Garry Mann	
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## FROM THE EDITOR'S TURRET



David Cohen of the Post

The Thursday April 11th Branch Meeting attracted an attendance of 95 who were entertained by Journalist David Cohen, of the "Post" newspaper. He gave an incisive insight into the history and workings of a community newspaper, and his rounds since graduating

as a "Brentwood Boy" to mingling with the rich and famous of the western suburbs. His humour mixed with healthy cynicism provided us with a feel-good morning outcome. About a dozen members partook of a Chinese banquet at the Pearl River Restaurant, City Beach on April 4th, and at \$25 it was very good value considering the quality of the fare.



Pearl River Dineout

Your editor, accompanied by Marion Laws, journeyed to the Great Southern in early April, especially to visit the National Anzac Centre and Field of Lights at Albany, and also to refresh on the scenic delights of the south coast and forested hinterland from Albany to Windy Harbour. The

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Thursday May 9th 10am** Monthly Branch Meeting with guest speaker Wayne Bradshaw, presenting on the Fathering Project, a WA initiative that has attracted \$5.4M Federal funding to take it Australia-wide. Maybe hone your Grandparenting skills.

**Thursday May 16th 9.00am sharp** Excursion from Mt Claremont to New Norcia via morning tea stop at Bindoon. Tour of the Benedictine museum, Chapel and other facilities followed by lunch at the hotel and return via Gingin. Cost \$50.

**Thursday May 23rd 6pm** Dinner at University Club, UWA, Hackett Drive, as guest of Helena Coleman. Choice of main course – meat, seafood or vegetarian, please specify, plus salad, tea/coffee. Book by May Branchmeet, cost \$40 – cash only.

**Thursday June 13th 10am** Monthly Branch Meeting. Speaker TBA.

**Wednesday June 26th 9.30-12.00 noon** Health check and information meeting for all comers with multi-function health checks carried out by REACH nursing students with registered nurse supervision. Also, stalls will be provided by Heart Foundation, Arthritis & Osteoporosis WA, Cancer Council, Stroke Foundation & Diabetes WA; plus presentations by Fitness Guru David Beard and Dr David Thorne on Palliative Care. Morning tea will be provided through the morning. Cost \$10.

**August 28th – September 1st** The tentative trip to Geraldton for the NSA Zone 114 Conference, plus a tour of the district, is still being worked on.

## OBITUARY

The passing of longstanding member Ken Bulline is sadly noted.



*ANZAC Spirit by Bruce Lucas*

National Anzac Centre at Princess Royal Fortress, Mt Adelaide, is truly a national icon for both Australians and New Zealanders. The interactive exhibits are first class and the experience of following your allotted serviceman makes it all come alive. Besides the graphic displays, perhaps one of the most poignant artworks is the metal framed sculpture of a Light Horseman watering his horse, somewhere in Palestine. It was created, in copper, by local metalwork craftsman, Brad Lucas, and titled Anzac Spirit.



*Field of Light by Bruce Munro*  
*Courtesy of National ANZAC Centre*

The Field of Light display by Bruce Munro of 16,000 stalk mounted lights, eerily changing colour, along some several hundred metres of the road up to Mt Clarence, was also a unique sight to behold.

The leading article of the May newsletter is by Graeme Piggott, President of the Kalamunda Branch of NSA and Chairman of Zone 108 (Perth metro). In a time of change he reflects on where we have come from, where we are going to and of the need for people to continue coming through as officials to regenerate the branches.

It should be mentioned that a new constitution is being drawn up for the branch to meet WA Department of Commerce requirements and this will be distributed as soon as it is available, hopefully before the May Branch Meeting. A Special General Meeting will need be held to ratify this, possibly

as an adjunct to the June Branch meeting. It is envisaged that a name change from Floreat & Districts Branch to Perth Western Suburbs Branch will be made, to more closely reflect our total catchment.

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## **ZONE 108 – REFLECTIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, APRIL 2109**

I make no apology for the fact that I have aired my thoughts on Branch membership before but a new phenomenon is happening before our very eyes, one which we are powerless to stop. Most Branches experience tough times when leadership roles can't be filled but another dimension has been added to the dilemma causing Branches to close the door on operations.

National Seniors Association came to Perth in 1997 and some 10 years later the number of Branches had increased to double digit figures, peaking at 19 by about 2009. The incentive driving 65 year olds of that era was infectious; inasmuch that it was capable of affecting the attitudes of others. They were keen as mustard and enthusiastic about growing the Branch which they had so willingly formed.

Things have certainly changed in the intervening years, notwithstanding the fact that we are all a lot older with some ageing better than others; which in turn affects the circumstances in which we live. That's the "other dimension" to which I referred in the first paragraph - and Perth Branches now number considerably less!

The common cause of Branch closure used to be the fact that members were reluctant to nominate for a Management Committee role; pure and simple. However, another invasive factor in this day and age is that "we're all growing older together" and that's the root cause of our dilemma. Encouraging younger 65 year olds to join Branches is a formidable problem and finding the panacea, to reverse this trend, is high on Sandra Philpott's "things to do" list and here is a lady of vision that may just find a way. Already, after a relatively short time on the job, we are witnessing an increase in national membership with many innovative perceptions starting to bear fruit. I might add that Sandra is well supported in her endeavour by a highly efficient and professional group; small in number but big on ideas.

People enter their retirement years now with a seemingly different frame of mind than those a decade or so ago. I guess that I'm a bloke who 'wears one's heart on one's sleeve' and I get quite passionate about putting forward matters as I see them before

considering the thoughts of others. I simply don't have time when compiling this document to canvass the thoughts of others and quite frankly, other people's thoughts would probably turn this 'one pager' into a document that you wouldn't want to read! There's no doubt that today's retirees have other agendas when it comes to commitment, which includes looking after grand children, holidaying and being flexible to do other things; volunteering seems to be losing its appeal - it's mostly about "me". It's quite amazing the number of excuses some people will find not to be involved.

I understand that retirees may argue that "we've worked hard for all of our paid working life" and it's now time for some well earned respite. Rightly so and I recall taking the first two years of my well earned retirement to catch up on all of those household maintenance tasks that I had been putting off, before looking for something more mentally demanding and more socially stimulating; and that's when I found National Seniors. It seems that today's retirees' balk at taking that next step and that's the problem that Sandra Philpott and her team will address. It may be that people need more than the satisfaction of volunteering for volunteering sake. Maybe people today have more mercenary thoughts about "what's in it for me" so, the membership cost needs to be offset by the number of benefits to be derived from joining.

All not-for-profit organisations are facing the problem of diminishing membership; it's a global phenomenon. We are so fortunate to have been born in an era where being community-minded was considered commendable and joining an organisation both rewarding and satisfying.

*Graeme Piggott*

## LETTER OF APPRECIATION

The following is the text of a letter from Donna Snow, the principal of Wembley Primary School, to June Steen-Olsen, following the receipt of a donation of \$200 from June and other Branch members in support of needy children's extracurricular activities financing:

*Dear June*

*On behalf of the students at Wembley Primary School, who you have so generously supported to access extracurricular activities, we thank you for your initiative and care.*

*At times, a number of families in our school community experience financial difficulties and hardships due to a number of varied and complex reasons.*

*The gift presented by you and your friends in the Seniors Group, in the form of a \$200 cheque, has ensured two young children have had the privilege to engage in an incursion, excursion and the House and Interschool swimming carnivals so far this term.*

*I have discreetly informed their parents that this donation was made by you and your group of friends. They were beyond grateful as it has assisted to release the financial burden that school fees and charges bring them.*

*I congratulate you on reaching out to us at Wembley Primary School and on your continued service to your community. I look forward to nurturing our partnership into the future.*

*Yours sincerely  
Donna Snow  
Principal*

## THE INQUISITIVE MIND OF A CHILD

Why are they selling poppies, Mummy?  
Selling poppies in town today.  
The poppies, child, are flowers of love,  
For the men who marched away.

But why have they chosen a poppy, Mummy?  
Why not a beautiful rose?  
Because, my child, men fought and died  
In the fields where the poppies grow.

But why are the poppies red, Mummy?  
Why are the poppies red?  
Red is the colour of blood, my child.  
The blood that our soldiers shed.

The heart of the poppy is black, Mummy.  
Why does it have to be black?  
Black, my child, is the symbol of grief,  
For the men who never came back.

But why, Mummy, are you crying so?  
Your tears are giving you pain.  
My tears are my fears for you, my child,  
For the world is forgetting again.

Author Unknown

## PET STORY – MEMORIES OF A TRUE COMPANION

Six months after war was declared in England in 1939, my mother told me that my German Shepherd dog, Judy, would have to be put to sleep because finding food for her would be too difficult there being very little food for people let alone animals. At that time, I was 11 years old and Judy was six months younger than me. She had been my friend for as long as I could remember. When my brother and sister were babies she had guarded them when they were sleeping in their prams in the garden. If they threw a toy out of their pram she would pick it up and put it back in the pram. My brother and sister had been evacuated to safe areas in the country while I stayed at home with my mother and Judy was my only companion. I pleaded with my mother not have Judy put to sleep and she eventually agreed but I would be responsible to find food for Judy. I was lucky the local butcher agreed to save meat or bones that had fallen onto the sawdust covered floor during sales and I would wash them and cook these together with the peelings from the vegetables I had prepared for mother to cook when she came home from the munitions factory every day. Left over toast crusts served as biscuits and Judy survived on this diet for the duration of the war and lived until she was seventeen and a half years old.

During the war we had periods of sleeping in our beds, rather than the garden air raid shelter, and Judy slept beside my bed but she seemed to know

when German planes were coming before the air raid warning and she would put her nose between the sheets rubbing her nose on my hand as if to say wake up it is time to go down to the shelter. One night, when my mother and I visited my grandfather, who was the local publican, the Germans decided to make our town the target. It was decided that Uncle Jack, a 6' 4" Royal Marine on leave, should go to our home to collect night clothes for us. However, Uncle Jack had not returned after an hour, and bombing had finished, so mum decided to go home and find him. When mother opened the front door she found Uncle Jack lying on the floor inside the front door with Judy standing over him. Apparently Jack had taken the wrong key to open the front door and decided to enter the house through an open window. As Judy did not know Jack, and as she was protecting our property, she baled him up but would not have hurt him as long as he remained still.

I have had several pets during my life but Judy has remained with me for ever.

*June Steen-Olsen*

### ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

I try to find good in every situation.  
Wait. That was a typo. I meant "Food".  
I try to find *food* in every situation.

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