

# National Seniors

## AUSTRALIA

PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS BRANCH INC

### PRESIDENTS REPORT

Hi All,

From a personal point of view, I am glad to see the end of April. Saying that, I would like to thank all members for their support and best wishes to Sue and myself. Sue is on the way back to better health after the last stint in the Base Hospital.

May will see a guest speaker you should not miss as her subject is pertinent to all of our members. We also have great fun activities in Players Theatre, the BBQ Boats, and of course, The Ballina Trip, which should be loads of fun.

We have made contact with Glenfern Community regarding our use of their Pickleball Court on a regular basis. By the time of our May meeting, we may have more news for you.

As it's getting towards the end of the financial year, It is important that we look to locking in a new committee. We desperately need someone to take on the task of Secretary as well as a few coopted positions for other roles that are important to the smooth running of the Branch.

Please, if you can help, give me a call and we can chat.

**President Bill.**

## ConnectionS/Newsletter May 2025.

### MAY BIRTHDAYS

**Kevin Barnes**

**Karen Carrick**

**Anne Jackson**

**Joan Lundstrom**

**Christine Parkes**

**Cathryn Randall**

**Jeanette Symons**

**Dee Watkinson.**



## YOUR 2024/5 COMMITTEE

Bill Wendt.	<b>President/ Speaker Seeker</b>	0407 565 049 bssharp@bigpond.net.au
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Sue Gardiner	<b>Treasurer/Public Officer.</b>	0413 029 445 sjbaikiegardiner@gmail.com
Phillip Gardiner	<b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	0413 124 505 phillipgardiner@inet.net.au
Ron Mitchell.	<b>Membership/ Web Master.</b>	0414 278 605 rjmitch4@bigpond.com
Linda Philp.	<b>Welfare.</b>	0413 306 112 Lulu23.lp@gmail.com
Lee White.	<b>Newsletter.</b>	0412 151 290 Lee.white109@gmail.com

## YOUR NEXT COMMITTEE

There are several positions that need to be filled on Your new committee.

We are looking for a **Secretary** to replace Lesley Cooney who has done a great job over the past few years. This is not a difficult job and Lesley will be there to assist you.

We also need a **welfare officer**.

Please, we need these positions filled so give it some thought.

## Vaccination Reminder

**This note will serve as a reminder to keep the following vaccinations up to date.**

**Influenza  
Covid 19  
Shingles  
Tetanus**

**It important that as we age, we not only protect ourselves, but also our family and friends.**

## PAYING FOR AND ATTENDING ACTIVITIES

The amount of work carried out behind the scenes to create and organise our activities is a lot of work.

It is up to the person who enters their name on the activities sheet to **pay by our new credit/debit card facility or cash at each meeting when booking your activity or pay into our Bank Account as soon as possible after booking the activity.**

This is so we can inform the restaurant, hotel, park, BBQ boats, guess who's coming to lunch; whatever activity, how many will be attending. If only 6 show up to a restaurant that has scheduled its workforce to handle 20 (this has happened) it puts a real bad light on the National Seniors.

If you do need information on any activity the name to contact is on the activity sheet.

Unfortunately, refunds can only be given in exceptional circumstances.

These are our bank details.

Regional Bank Port Macquarie

Acct Name. National Seniors Port Macquarie Hastings

**BSB 932.000**  
**ACCT 100548607**

These bank details are on your activity sheet.

## ANNE'S BOOK REVIEW

**Subject: The Naturalist's Daughter - Author Tea cooper**

Two women, a century apart, are drawn into a mystery of the classification of the platypus. Working with her naturalist father Charles Winton, the discoveries they have made could turn the scientific world on its head. Rose travels to England in 1808 to present their scientific discoveries to the prestigious Royal Society. In 1908 Tamsin Alleyn was given a mission to travel to the Hunter to retrieve an old sketchbook of debatable value gifted to the Mitchell Library. Whilst there she meets a young antiquarian bookseller and lawyer who has his own agenda when it comes to the book. The deeper they delve, the more intricate the mystery becomes. An engrossing narrative.

***By Anne Jackson***



# KEMPSEY MARKET & EUNGAI BUFFALO FARM

On Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April, 20 of our members set out on a bright sunny morning to Kempsey to visit the monthly market. It was nice to catch up with other members, some shopping, some just looking, while all were being pestered by candidates in the upcoming election looking for votes.



It was then a short 30-minute drive to Eungai, the latter part on 6kl of unmade road covered in potholes. Having made it, we all settled into a nice lunch featuring products made from buffalo, including ice cream. The burgers and pizzas were great as were the many other selections on the menu. The wine and beer topped off a fun and entertaining lunch. We were also entertained by 2 peacocks who strutted around the tables. The service was great, and we all agreed that it was well worth the trip.



Well done again James.

**By President Bill.**



## OUR GUEST SPEAKER = BLAKE STONE

Our guest speaker for April was Blake Stone, Operations Manager at Billabong Zoo.



Blake gave us an insight into various aspects of the running of our much-loved local zoo. We learned lots about the number of species of animals and birds at the zoo, where they were sourced from and in some cases where some are sent to including several other zoos around Australia. It was interesting to also learn about feeding habits together with the enormous cost in obtaining a variety of different foods. Some local fruit and veg outlets save unused stock which is picked up regularly by Blake and his team. Blake also explained how they keep the numbers in check by de-sexing programs. They are also in the throws of bringing new

animals in from zoos including Taronga in Sydney. The zoo is a family run business employing 35 full-time staff all trained in handling specific areas such as big cats, reptiles, roos, dingos, meercats, and of course the various breeds of birds.

Most of the patronage at the zoo is from visitors passing through, and the use of road signage which is very effective. They are always looking to improve the zoo and have recently added a fully licensed function area being served by 3 qualified full-time chefs.

Blake and his family are very aware of the benefits of being active in the community, always willing to put on special shows around Port Macquarie and surrounding areas. He also thanked the team at Hastings River Cruises and Ken Little Fruit & Veg for their support.

Lots of great questions were happily answered by Blake. Thanks and a presentation were made to Blake by Allan Randall.



**By President Bill.**

# Getting Involved in National Seniors Advocacy

At the April Branch meeting a question from the floor was tended by a member. Essentially the question as I understand it was to enquire as to how we as members of National Seniors raise issues that impact on us or that are of concern to us.

Issues can be raised by members and relayed to Head Office in a number of ways. These include;

- By participating in the on-line National Seniors social survey. This is an annual survey that involves the National Seniors Research team developing the survey and analyzing the results. The analysis culminates in the publication of reports and is the primary information guiding our advocacy and budget submissions at both the state and federal government levels. The Research team who are professionally qualified employ rigorous analysis and ethics processes. Recent reports include *'Social Connectiveness and Isolation,' 'Elements of Ageism,' Older Peoples Financial Wellbeing and Preferences' and Dementia 'Experiences Planning and Worry'*. Please participate in the annual social survey it is important.
- By raising issues at a Branch level. In the past this has been part of our Planning Forum where members have raised issues such as *'loneliness,' 'dental care,' 'working in retirement,' 'age care,' pensioner payments,' 'cost of living' and concessions'*. Our Planning Forum report is sent to Head Office each year.
- By contacting Head Office direct. Members are encouraged to raise issues with Head Office via the NS Web site or by contacting members of staff directly. NS have a membership/Branch liaison person Karen Furnivall who is always very helpful. The membership team can be contacted on 1300 76 50 50
- By being part of one of the various *Policy Advisory Groups*. These groups are normally state based but provide an opportunity to be part of the debate on specific issues. Outcomes from these debates are sent onto the Director Policy and Research.

A great way to keep abreast of issues impacting older Australians is to spend time on the National Seniors Web site. There is a myriad of good information to glean through including services provided, research reports, Branch news etc. Our web site is linked to the NS main website so check out both websites. Ron is doing a great job with our Branch website.

**By John Urquhart**

## THIS MONTHS TRIVIA QUESTIONS

- 1. What kind of animal is a Scottish Fold?**
- 2. What was Daniel Craig's first James Bond Movie?**
- 3. The Wife Carrying Championships is held in Finland where the prize is the winner's wife's weight in what?**



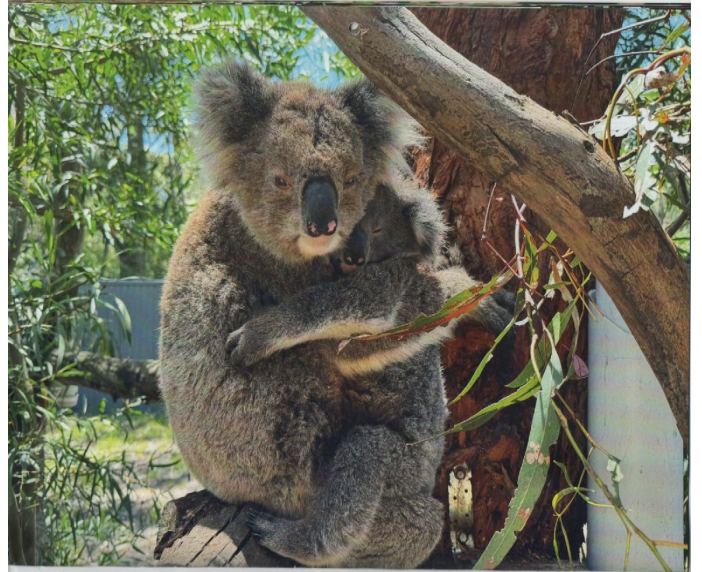
## 'Guulabaa,' which means 'Place of Koala'

Eighteen intrepid National Seniors took off on another adventure today (17/4/25) and visited the new Koala conservation breeding program and hospital centre called 'Guulabaa,' The centre is located just west of the Billabong Zoo turnoff.



Marie our tour guide took us on a 1 hour tour, she was excellent at explaining all the interesting facts of the breeding program and how they have 18 prospective Koalas for breeding, 8 females and 10 males, they have 53 Koalas in total. Once the joeys are around 18 months the mother says you're on your own now. If all is OK with the offspring, he/she is released into the wild.

Marie also pointed us out to the Koala's at the centre, they were Phil, Nero, Trish, Casper and Benny. It is beautifully setup for viewing with timber decks all around. There were lots of people there, a large group of kids were trying out the Wild Nets, felt like having a go myself.



After Guulabaa we headed back into town to the old Koala hospital for a guided tour. As they are moving all the Koalas to the Guulabaa centre in a couple of weeks there was not a lot to see, although there were still a few Koalas there. The old hospital is going to be completely rebuilt with a new state of the art hospital. Good luck to them and their endeavour's, they are a very dedicated group of people and most are volunteers.



After the tour we had an hour or so in one of the beautiful old rooms at Roto House for a lovely lunch. Very enjoyable, everyone had a great time.

**By Ron Mitchell**