

National Seniors

AUSTRALIA

Perth Western Suburbs WA

BRANCH NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2026

Meeting Venue: Our Branch meets at 9.30am for 10.00am on the second Thursday of each month, (except December & January), at Mount Claremont Community Centre, 109 Montgomery Avenue, Mount Claremont WA 6010.

Bank Accounts: Westpac Bank in name of National Seniors Australia Perth Western Suburbs Branch;

General BSB: 036 063 Account: 257852

Music BSB: 036051 Account: 649381

Tours BSB: 036051 Account: 649402

When making payment, please identify by your name & type of payment – e.g., “June Meeting”, “Concert”, etc.

Website:

<https://nationalseniors.com.au/about/branches/perth-western-suburbs>

Acknowledgement of Country

The Members of Perth Western Suburbs Branch of National Seniors Australia wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Whadjuk Noongar Nation, on whose Lands we conduct our meetings, and pay our respects to the Noongar Elders past and present.

BRANCH OFFICERS & COMMITTEE FOR 2025/2026

President:	Joseph Lieberfreund	0429 809 080 joseph@airbell.com.au
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I had hoped that someone would offer to take over editing this Newsletter, but as no one yet has been so kind, I'm temporarily back in the "hot desk" for one more issue ! It's not a difficult job, but you must be experienced in use of MS Word documentation, insertion and editing of photos – assistance is offered !

We do need articles from you members – your interesting past or present occupation, travel experiences, etc. Please email to me before end of each month for publishing in following month's edition.

In conclusion, I wish all members a very happy, healthy and enjoyable 2026.

Derek J Cockle

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Welcome everyone to the 2026 year of NSA Western Suburbs Branch !

We head into the new year with an agenda that includes superb speakers, music, restaurants outings, tours, various interest groups, our usual invigorating morning tea and other initiatives that will make our Branch a vibrant and interesting group to belong to !

In addition, we have partnered with Grant Thornton to help us in financial aspects of superannuation and retirement planning and Western Suburbs Cares who provide home care services. They will be present at the back of the Community Hall during the tea break and at the conclusion of our meetings to take your questions and set up appointments for anybody who wants to avail themselves of their services.

In November we hosted the ebullient Sabrina Hahn as the opening speaker of our Gardener's Interest Group which was a delightful morning filled with questions, friendly banter and good humour with a liberal sprinkling of common sense about gardening.

We had a wonderful Christmas Lunch at the UWA Club Restaurant in early December which was booked out; a great raffle, a terrific quiz and good food and wine which marked a terrific event which everyone enjoyed.

Later in the same month we held our Christmas Concert at the Taryn Fiebig Concert Hall with the biggest attendance we have ever had with over 300 people coming to that event.

I particularly want to welcome and shout out to our cohort of brilliant volunteers who do so much to make all of the work we do possible.

Our Committee is a hardworking and dedicated group of wonderful people who give so much of their time to the success of our group. We as a Committee undertake to keep prices of all activities as low as possible.

Our next Branch general meeting is on Thursday 12 February which will be addressed by Denise Beer who will speak about the Fab Four Beatles and their influence on modern music and culture. See below.

Membership inquiries are always welcome. Looking forward to seeing you all on 12 February !

Joseph Lieberfreund Branch President.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thurs 12 February – Branch Meeting
“The Beatles” – speaker Denise Beer.



Denise is very interested in the local community and has spent most of her life working for not-for-profit organisations across many areas of disadvantage. She is a currently director of the Bayswater Branch of the Bendigo Community Bank.

She joined U3A Swan Hills region in 2013 and was Chairman for two years, edited the “Inform” magazine for just over two years and was elected President of Perth U3A in April 2019.

On retirement she has been fortunate to spend a lot of time travelling, which aroused an interest

in history and has given her a wonderful source of information from which to put together a variety of talks.

This was what inspired an interest in the Beatles, resulting in her presentation of *“The Beatles: Yesterday to Today”* which will be the Beatles story from its formative days through the Beatlemania phase, their breakup and follows them through until today. This includes a number of their well-known hits where you will be encouraged to singalong and tap your toes !

RECENT EVENT REVIEWS

Branch Meeting Thurs 13 November 2025

Initial Speaker - Daniel Jones of “Western Suburbs Cares” spoke on the latest changes to the Commonwealth Government home care support system which was recently passed into law. This is being replaced by the new *“Support at Home”* program from 1 November 2025. Copies of his presentation can be provided by request.



Geoffrey Thomas

Main Speaker was the ever-popular Geoff Thomas, former West Australian aviation & travel journalist and former editor of *airlineratings.com*, who brought us up to date with an illustrated talk on *“All things Tavel & Aviation”*. He also gave us a very amusing brief autobiography which was detailed in his recently published book *“My Crazy Aviation Journey”* copies of which were available for purchase at \$15. Many were sold and kindly signed by Geoff. Copies of his screen presentation are also available upon request.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Thurs 6 November – Special Meeting - Sabrina Hahn - who spoke on how to maintain your garden when your knees and back are wearing out; make changes to the garden so that your garden looks beautiful without physical strain, deal with pest and disease issues in a changing climate; keep what looks great in the garden in summer and how to keep it that way. At the conclusion of her talk, she was inundated with member questions, which she answered in detail and at length.

Thurs 27 November – Tour of Fremantle Port Authority. This very interesting, guided walk attended by 24 members was conducted by Fremantle Port volunteers and commenced in the Port offices and visited many interesting historical features around the Victoria Quay area.



Fremantle Ports guide at Port Offices



Model of Orient Liner “Orford” in Port office



Our tour group at the Maritime Museum

Lunch was enjoyed after the tour at Gage Roads Brewery, with views of the passing ships in the Harbour.

Many thanks to Jennifer Allen for organising.

Tuesday 9 December – Christmas Lunch - was again held at the University Club Restaurant attended by about 65 members and guests who were welcomed by President Joseph and enjoyed a three course lunch with drinks. Father Christmas (Anton Riegger in disguise!), distributed gifts assisted by Membership Secretary Marion Laws.



President Joseph & Diana Ryan at the desk



Marion Laws & Father Christmas Anton



Member Christel Bouton



An extensive raffle with many donated prizes were won by several appreciative members. Many thanks to Joseph and all Committee members for their excellent organisation !

Sunday 21 December – Christmas Concert was held at the Taryn Fiebig Concert Hall. This was our largest concert to date with a 2 Orchestra of over 50 musicians conducted by Josh Spirek & Winthrop Singers Choir of 18. Our audience enjoyed a very extensive programme of 14 pieces including the music of well-known composers Mozart, Sibelius, Handel and Tchaikovsky and many others.

The concert concluded with several Christmas carols by choir and the audience. A very comprehensive coloured multi-page programme and extensive refreshments were all included in the very reasonable entry fees.



President Joseph introduction of programme



Standing ovation at end of concert



Winthrop Singers & Choral Director Ann Clarke

Congratulations to all the musicians and choristers and to our concert maestro Joseph Lieberfreund for the excellent organisation.

TOURS & SOCIALS

Thurs 19 February - Afternoon tea at T Box Café at Mt Claremont Golf Course – Usually held on third Thurs of each month, the first for 2026 will be from 2 pm. This gathering gives us time to chat and get to know new people, so everyone is welcome, especially newcomers to our group. Come alone or bring a friend.

BOOK REVIEW - “KINGMAKER” by Sonia Purnell - Published Virago Press, UK. by (2024). 512pages ISBN 0349014752

Reviewed by Marlene Wilson.



Sonia Purnell has written an amazing biography about Pamela Churchill Harriman, Winston Churchill's daughter-in-law. Pamela was born in 1920 to Pansy and Kenny Digby; her father was the 11th Baron Digby. The family owned a castle in Ireland (later burnt) with 34,000 acres, a Dorset mansion, with a yearly income of 1.8 million in today's money and a home in Belgravia.

Pamela was educated at home until she went to boarding school and was part of an elite social circle with servants and holidays abroad. When she met Randolph Churchill, Winston's eldest son, she was warned he was an alcoholic and philanderer who was constantly in debt. It was not a happy marriage but both Winston and Clemantine adored her, and she became Winston's confidant and he often sought her advice. Churchill called her his secret weapon during WWII, seducing Americans to the British side in the fight against Hitler. She had a son to Randolph, but they divorced in 1946 and she

had a fractured relationship with her son, Winston.

After her divorce she had many affairs and was involved with Prince Ali Khan, Gianni Angnelli and Baron Elie de Rothschild, which earned her the title of the greatest courtesan of the century. She moved to America and married Heyland Hayward, a Broadway producer, and moved in luxurious circles between New York and a country estate. After his death she married W. Averall Harriman, one of the wealthiest men in America. She became an American citizen and with Averall's money she donated large amounts to the campaigns of JFK and later Bill Clinton. They lived in Washington and entertained lavishly with guests such as the Kennedys, the Clintons and movie stars such as Frank Sinatra. In 1993 Clinton appointed her as United States Ambassador to France. By all accounts she educated herself for the role and did a great job.

However, her many affairs have written her off as a social climber, and courtesan, particularly in the UK. Purnell sees Pamela as so much more, and this is a fascinating insight into the life of a very influential woman.

Editor - Our thanks to Marlene for her monthly Book Reviews.

REMINDER & PLEA !

Please remember that Branch meeting fees have now increased – **Members \$8.00 & non-member(guests) \$15.00**. These increases are necessary to cover our increased cost of catering and Branch administration.

If you are an occasional visiting non-member and would like to reduce the cost of attending future meetings, please consider joining NSA – application forms are available at the front desk or online at the NSA website - www.nationalseniors.com.au.

The annual subscription is only \$49.50 per person, \$80 for a couple, or discounted for 2

years to \$88 or \$143, 3 years \$120 or \$180, 5 years \$220 or \$325).

Please make payment for all new subscriptions or renewals **direct to NSA Head office** in Brisbane via their website to obviate our Treasurer having to make transfers from our account to Head office. If you have any difficulty with this please pay in cash or by card at next Branch meeting.

A final plea – able bodied assistance in setting out tables and chairs prior to our meetings would be much appreciated – we meet at 8.45 am prior to meeting.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND PRINTING OF OUR NEWSLETTER

In conclusion, we would acknowledge and thank our photographer member Jeane-Pierre Hericher for his tireless work videoing our concerts & taking photos of speakers, etc. at our Branch meetings.

We also thank the office of Churchlands MLA Basil Zempilas for printing our monthly Newsletter and Branch meeting flyers – all much appreciated !