

National Seniors

AUSTRALIA

PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS BRANCH

ConnectionS/Newsletter
September 2025

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Spring has arrived!! It is also a great time to travel and many of our members are off



overseas or on trips around our great country. Graeme and I are off to the UK for six weeks but will be back in time for the October Meeting.

So, all you travellers enjoy your adventures and those who are at home enjoy the lovely spring weather, the blooming flowers and beware of the swooping magpies!!

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A DONATION FROM THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME



At a Regional Australia Bank function in the Westport Club, our newly-married couple, Judith and Keith Reichenbach, gratefully accepted \$70.27 on behalf of the Branch. This donation was part of the Bank's Community Partnership Program. As we have held accounts with the Bank for many years, we have been a recognised participant in the program since it started.

The Program is powered by bank members who wish to support community organisations. We received this

money because, when some of our members opened a S3 Community Partnership Account with the Bank, they chose to forego interest in order to nominate us as the community organisation they wished to support. This year, the Bank calculated 1% p.a. on the average account balance of these members and donated this amount to the Branch. The Regional Australia Bank has given away \$2.8 million of their pre-tax profits this year with this program. **A VERY BIG THANK YOU** to all our participating supporters whose generosity led to this donation.

SPEAKERS' CORNER



Our guest speaker for August was Mr Robert Dwyer, State member for Port Macquarie.

Robert was a very engaging and informative speaker, relating his previous experiences, as General Manager for the Laurieton United Services Club, and about the many charities with which he has been - and still is - involved. He has actively supported nearly one hundred organisations, focused on youth, sports, and homelessness; he remains an active member of the hockey, surf-lifesaving and Rotary communities.

Robert mentioned his fourteen-year association with Leslie Williams and how he received 'the tap on the shoulder' when she was resigning. He has now been in Parliament for one hundred and forty-seven days, made forty-six speeches, met most of the Ministers and has, and will, make sure Port Macquarie's voice is heard. He is getting a lot of support from both Port Macquarie and Sydney in his new role.

In discussing pressing matters affecting Port Macquarie, Robert updated the meeting regarding the Wright's Road Intersection, proposed changes to the Donut, progress on housing affordability and availability and concerns about energy supplies.

Questions from the floor resulted in some information about the Ocean Pool, land allocation, mobile phone coverage, new housing subdivisions and lack of supporting infrastructure.

Robert was thanked for his attendance by Max Cross and ended by reminding us that he is available for consultation through his office or Social Media and encouraged everyone to follow his e-newsletter to keep up-to-date with Port Macquarie news. (**Judith Clegg**)

SOMETHING ABOUT ME

The latest member to tell us something about her life was Suzanne Burrows. As part of a family with a strong social conscience, Suzanne was imbued at an early age with the desire to help others. She, and not her brother, was the one who often gave up her bed when her family took in those in need.



After a holiday job in the Communist Bookshop in Sydney, Suzanne chose another way to serve others. She studied Industrial Relations (IR) at a time when women in IR were few and far between, and was then offered a job with the Liquor Trades Union as an IR assistant. She credited this job as giving her the skills of attention to detail and discipline that stood her in good stead in the many IR roles she went on to play. She shared with the group some of her more memorable or important experiences such as:

- Helping a distraught bank employee, "Mary", who, while on maternity leave, found herself

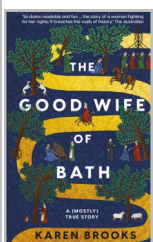
SPEAKERS' CORNER (cont.)

pregnant again, the second baby due before the end of her first leave period. Maternity leave had only just been introduced and only for those who had worked twelve months "continuous" service: it did not cover this particular situation. Mary, with the help of her area manager, found an ingenious and practical way round the problem, leaving the courts to decide the issue.

- Working with managers and employees to write job evaluations for the new Modern Industrial Awards. Suspending normal workplace hierarchy during committee meetings was challenging for both sides. Some, though not all, managers thought that they knew best. She also discovered that women frequently underestimated their skills and experience in the workplace.
- As a union representative, taking part in particularly-quick industrial agreement negotiations, when she just "happened" to hear, with her head stuck in the paper towel dispenser, the discussions going on between managers in the adjoining male bathroom.
- Studying for a Graduate Diploma in Education, specialising in Adult Training and Development, and being offered a job with the Federal Health Department, training hospital staff to overcome prejudice and improve HIV/AIDS standards of care. Using the format of the popular ABC program "Hypotheticals", she mediated panel discussions before an audience of hospital/medical staff. Her job was to make sure that key messages were understood, about what HIV/AIDS is, how it could be caught, and how to protect oneself within a hospital setting.

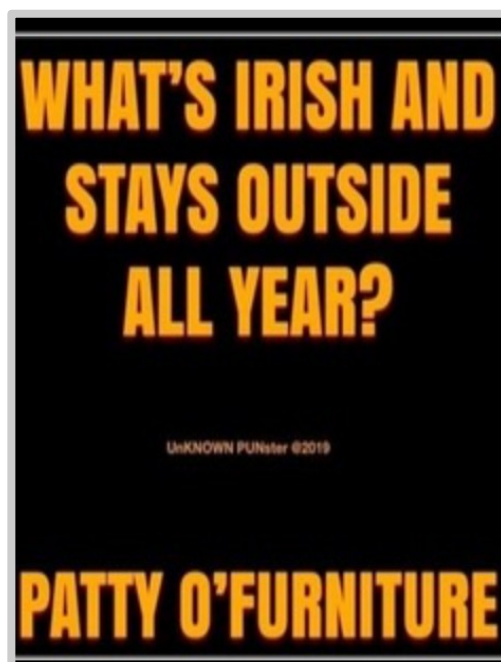
After she and partner, David, an air-traffic controller for the Air Force, retired they moved from Canberra, seeking a warmer climate and, like many, chose Port Macquarie. With David's death, she is in a new phase of her life, including joining National Seniors where she has received a very warm welcome. Thank you, Suzanne, for the chance to get to know you better. **(Lynda Walters)**

The Good Wife of Bath - Author Karen Brooks



This is a funny, clever re-telling of Chaucer's "Wife of Bath" from The Canterbury Tales; set from 1364 onwards, it gives a maligned character her own voice.

When married off, aged twelve, to an elderly farmer, Eleanor quickly realises GOD is not on her side. Born under joint signs of Venus and Mars, both lover and fighter, she will not bow meekly to fate. Aided and abetted by her trusted sister and the counsel of Geoffrey Chaucer, after five marriages and several pilgrimages, she continues to pursue control of her own life. This is an assessment of what happens when male power is left unchecked. An amazing feminist slant on a classic tale. Enjoy. **Anne Jackson.**



BRANCH EVENTS

One of the highlights of the National Seniors year is the "Guess Who's Coming to Lunch" event. The purpose of these get-togethers is for members to meet others they might not have had the chance to get to know yet. It's been found, in the past, to help newer members, perhaps only recently moved to Port, to find others who share things in common, whether it be hobbies, work or travel experiences, likes and dislikes. On the 27th August, four hosts invited twenty-three participants to lunch at their homes. Below are some of the highlights as shared by members who took part.



Mara, Carol and I were warmly welcomed by hosts, Delyse and Alan, with a cheese, biscuit and strawberries plate whilst waiting for everyone to arrive. First course was a prawn cocktail with a lovely sauce. After much conversation, we were served a beef olive roast lunch, an unusual dish we hadn't experienced but was an old favourite, I believe. After a comfortable break, we had a delicious tiramisu and strawberries dessert. Our hosts really held a wonderful conversational and friendly lunch that we all enjoyed

together. Thank you, Delyse and Alan. **(Anne Jackson)**



"Guess Who's Coming to Lunch" has become one of Phillip and my favourite fun National Seniors' experiences and lunch this year lived up to all our expectations. Jan and Frank were so welcoming to Suzanne, Denise and us and they went to a lot of trouble to give us an elegant afternoon that revived memories of the long ago dinner parties we held when we were young and used all the lovely wedding presents we had been given. They set the table with beautiful china and crystal and silver cutlery (polished by Frank)

and served four courses of delicious food, culminating in the most decadent dessert. We were having such a good time that we would probably have been there well into the evening but Phillip was on call as Duty Watch Officer for Marine Rescue and had to leave to help with the search for a young man who had gone missing at Shelley Beach. Jan and Frank, thank you and we will continue our interrupted conversation later when we can return your hospitality. **(Sue Gardiner)**



On a beautiful day that felt like spring had arrived early, Joan, Graeme, Robyn and Donna enjoyed fabulous company and a delicious lunch hosted by Ann and Max Cross. A menu of tomato and red pepper soup and a delicious provincial chicken casserole was completed by an apple and sultana tart with Ann's perfectly created short crusty pastry. A wonderful afternoon! **(Donna Munro)**

CLUB EVENTS (cont.)

What a day! Waking up to brilliant sunshine and a soft, warm breeze was the perfect start—and the day only got better from there.



In their rural hideaway, Judith and Keith

welcomed their guests early, giving everyone time to mingle and discover the fascinating mix of personalities that make up our local National Seniors. It was wonderful to see conversations spark and connections form so easily.

Over delicious stuffed mushrooms, the chatter flowed effortlessly, continuing through a beautifully prepared roast pork with all the trimmings. And just when we thought we couldn't possibly fit more - out came dessert, much to everyone's delight!

A heartfelt thank you to our gracious hosts, who poured so much care into every detail of the meal and presentation. Your warmth and effort was appreciated. The company was as rich and varied as the menu, and I must admit - it was hard to tear myself away when it was time to head home. Thank you all for a truly fabulous afternoon. **(Lee White)**

SOME I.T. CONUNDRUMS

A truck carrying Microsoft software has just overturned on the main road....

...that's the Word on the street.

What is the biggest lie anyone can tell?...

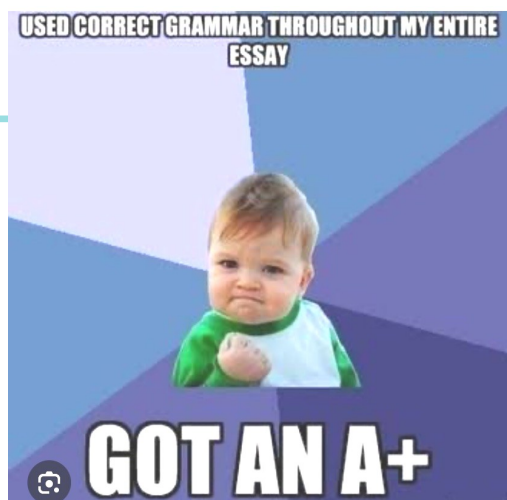
...."I have read and agreed to all the terms and conditions".

Why did the Power Point presentation cross the street?...

....to get to the other slide.

What do you call an iPhone that sleeps too much?...

....dead Siri-ous.



To everyone who helped put together this Newsletter:

The Newsletter Team - Denise, Erica and Judith
The Book Review -Anne Jackson
Club Events -Anne, Donna, Lee and Sue
Donations -Joan and Ron
Birthdays -Ron

Lynda ❤

MEMBERS' NEWS



September Birthdays

Morva Belot	Wyne Eldridge
Phillip Gardiner	Michael Hall
Trevor Read	Robyn Richardson
Peter Wells	Bill Wendt

Ron and Joan Mitchell celebrated their four-year anniversary of living in Port Macquarie with a delightful afternoon tea. Platters of tasty delights were offered alongside the requisite "bubbles".

Ron and Joan suggested that their celebration should raise money for our charity "CareFlight" so the hat was passed around. A very generous \$90 was raised to start our 2025-2026 nominated charity fund. While I'm sure they expect no thanks for thinking of our charity on this special occasion, I feel sure that our members would like to thank them anyway. So, thank you, Ron and Joan. **(Erica De Carlo)**

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