

National Seniors

AUSTRALIA

PORT MACQUARIE HASTINGS BRANCH

ConnectionS/Newsletter
September 2026

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2026 –2027

President - Joan Lundstrom
Secretary - Judith Clegg

Vice President - Teresa Iwinska
Treasurer - Erica De Carlo



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our last meeting was very well attended with 65 members and five visitors who will hopefully join us soon. We are a great organisation so spread the word to neighbours and friends.

Our visit to Birdon Marine was a huge success and we were amazed that such a significant multinational company has been established in Port Macquarie. Hopefully next year we can we can arrange another visit for all those who missed out.

Enjoy the lovely Spring weather.

Joan

What's in this Newsletter..

President's Report

Editor's Note

News of Members

Branch Events

Be connected

Birthdays

Editor's note

What gorgeous spring weather we are enjoying! The sunshine and warmer days have made it a pleasure to spend more time outdoors.

Our two events this month brought plenty of enjoyment, laughter and good company. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make them so memorable.

Here's to more sunny days and happy get-togethers as spring continues.

Judith

Visit to Birdon Shipyard - Port Macquarie



Yesterday, 26 National Seniors members visited Birdon Shipyard and discovered a remarkable Port Macquarie success story. Founded by Jamie Bruce in 1977, Birdon began with local roots in commercial dredging and marine contracting before growing into a multinational group supporting the Australian Defense Force and expanding into the United States defense market. Jamie Bruce is Birdon's CEO and Tammy Bugler is its CFO. Both are grandchildren of founders Jamie and Dawn Bruce, and the company still maintains its head office in Australia.

When we arrived, we were welcomed by several staff members and then taken to the boardroom, where Jane gave us an overview of Birden's work.

It was impressive to hear how much business the company does, especially in the United States, where it builds and maintains a range of amphibious and specialist craft, including Ancillary Surface Craft (ASC).



BRANCH EVENTS



These are advanced landing craft designed to support amphibious operations. Bridge Erection Boat (BEB) - This craft provides tactical floating-bridge and rafting capability in austere and combat environments. Motor Lifeboat (MLB) - Birdon is undertaking a Service Life Extension Program for the United States Coast Guard's Motor Lifeboat fleet. Through the program, Birdon is modernising the proven platform with new propulsion, control systems, and structural upgrades while preserving its durability and crew safety. After our excellent boardroom talk, staff members took us through the factory areas. We were not allowed to take photos, but the tour gave us a strong sense of the scale and complexity of Birdon's operations.



The whole area is huge, with many large buildings and a large slipway. On the slipway was Island Trader, the supply ship for Lord Howe Island, which was receiving maintenance. We also saw a ferry from the Hawkesbury River crossing.

Young Endeavour II is a beautiful ship with a barquentine rig, 14 sails across three masts, an overall length of 52 metres, and a beam of 9 metres. The ship was built from start to finish at Birdon and is expected to be launched in around six weeks.

It was an exceptional day for our members, and we felt privileged to be part of it. We finished with a lovely lunch at Abundance Nursery, which gave everyone a chance to reflect on a memorable visit.

..... Ron Mitchell



National Seniors Friendship Lunch Club

Out to
Lunch!

It is planned to hold a luncheon for members to be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month - meeting at 12 noon. Ann and Max Cross are organising these friendly gatherings to give members an opportunity to get to know one another a little better in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Come along, enjoy a meal and good company, and make new connections with fellow members.

**The first luncheon will be on
Tuesday 22nd September
at Settlers Inn
where the variety and cost of meals is appealing.**

If you would like join in the camaraderie, please put your name down at the September meeting or contact Ann or Max on 0435 753 366.



A Visit to the Cartier Exhibition National Gallery of Victoria

Stepping into the Cartier exhibition felt like entering a different age of opulence. Behind the glass, diamonds flashed like stars, while emeralds, sapphires, and rubies glowed richly. As I moved through the galleries, I discovered the stories of the many famous women who had commissioned jewellery from Cartier. Necklaces, tiaras,

bracelets and brooches showcasing the tastes and personalities of such celebrities as Elizabeth Taylor, Wallis Simpson, Princess Margaret and our own Dame Nellie Melba. The experience became even more magical when movie clips began to play, showing Cartier jewellery shining on screens across the eras.

By the time I reached the final gallery, I was overwhelmed by the beauty and overt opulence – a reminder that fine jewellery is not just precious stones but a relection of both maker and wearer.



..... Judith Clegg



**A FUN AND INFORMATIVE WORKSHOP FOR SENIORS
THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER AT 10.00AM**

Technology is changing rapidly, and while it brings wonderful opportunities, it can also bring new challenges. Join us for a friendly and easy-to-understand workshop designed for seniors.

Learn how to spot scams, recognise suspicious messages and emails and stay safer online. We'll explain some of the common tricks scammers use and share simple tips to help you protect your personal information and money.

You'll also discover how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a useful and enjoyable tool in everyday life. See how AI can help you write a letter, plan a holiday, answer questions, create pictures, find information and even have a bit of fun!

No technical experience is needed. Bring your questions, your curiosity and your sense of humour. This is a relaxed opportunity to learn, have a cuppa and discover how technology can work for you — safely and confidently.

Come along and learn how to:

- 🛡️ Recognise common scams and avoid being caught out
- 📱 Stay safer when using your phone, email and the internet
- 🤖 Discover what AI is and how it can help you
- 🛠️ Use AI for everyday tasks and creative ideas
- 🔒 Protect your privacy and personal information
- 💡 Feel more confident using today's technology

Bring your questions and discover that technology doesn't have to be complicated!

..... Teresa Iwinska



More than one way.....



A woman bursts out of the examining room screaming blue murder and in her highly agitated state she nearly knocks over the director of the clinic, who stops her and asks her what on earth is the problem. After she tells him what has happened, the man sits her down in a private room to relax, while he marches down the hallway to confront the woman's young physician. What is wrong with you?" he expostulates. Mrs. Miller is 60-years-old, has six grown children and nine grandchildren and you tell her she is pregnant?" The young physician continues to write his notes and without looking up at his superior, says nonchalantly: "Yes, I did tell her that. And now you tell me ... does she still have chronic hiccups?"

BRANCH EVENTS

GAMES DAY



Friday 21st August...perfect weather for a Games Day at Sancrox Reserve! A fabulous assortment of activities were set out on the oval and tennis courts, thank you to Lee, Nicola, Trevor, Joan, Graeme and Alan Randall.

A further group of eager National Seniors arrived at 10am..ready for the high jump, long jump, javelin, 5000 metre run..oh but wait...that's not what it involved! Of course...morning tea first. Then Lee divided us into teams of four and we headed off to 'compete'. 10 minutes at each of the games stations to gain as many points as possible.



Who ... me?



There were petanque balls to get into a circle, frisbie throwing, golf balls to hit into tiny spaces, skittles to knock down, cornhole where small bean bags are aimed at a board and quoits, for which we all decided the stick was too far away for enough successes.

Who knew we could all be so competitive! And wasn't the lunch break welcome! A selection of picnic and BBQ foods saw everyone laughing, chatting and mingling, almost an event in itself.

BRANCH EVENTS



GAMES DAY



Time for the results. The team with the most points was Nicola, Trevor, John and Teresa. Wynne Eldridge was the top scorer for her team, Graeme Lundstrom was the top scorer overall. Magnificent trophies and confectionary were awarded by our President Joan. The winning team's box of Roses chocolates were shared with everyone...go that sugar hit!



BUT...Well done to all 20 members of National Seniors, who had a blast of a day.



Note to others for next year....it's a lot of fun; it's not difficult and a great way to catch up with people. The social side of things always takes precedence!

..... Dee Watkinson



CAREFLIGHT CHARITY PRESENTATION

Last year, the charity we supported was Careflight. They were delighted to receive our cheque for \$2,433 presented by Joan to their representative, Gary Hawkins. We really enjoyed Gary's very interesting talk about his role as a patient transport driver.

BE CONNECTED ON LINE

Get on the Internet to watch an online safety presentation. Type beconnected.esafety.gov.au into your browser. Choose free classes, then online safety presentations.

Thursday 15 September at 3pm -

APPS FOR YOUR SMART DEVICE

- what an app is
- where to find and download an app
- which apps might be helpful and interesting
- tips about managing your apps

Thursday 24 September at 3pm -

DATA and PUBLIC WIFI

- how to get the best value from a mobile data plan
- tips on managing your data allowance
- how to keep your data costs down
- how to use public Wi-Fi safely

..... Lee Brown



September Birthdays

Morva Belot	Robyn Richardson
Wynne Eldridge	Peter Wells
Phil Gardiner	Bill Wendt
Michael Hall	Leonie White
Trevor Read	Len Yates

Happy birthday, one and all.



to everyone who helped put together this
Newsletter:

The Newsletter Team - Lynda, Denise, Erica
 President's Report - Joan
 Members Events - Dee, Ron
 Members News - Ann & Max, Judith
 Be Connected - Lee, Teresa
 Birthdays - Ron
 Photos - Ron, Dee, Judith



Judith