PRES

National Seniors AUSTRALIA
Perth Western Suburbs WA

BRANCH NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 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 2026/2027

President:	**Joseph Lieberfreund**	0429 809 080
	joseph@airbell.com.au	
Vice Pres:	**David Thomas**	0418 448 933
	david@r2rservices.com.au	
Secretary;	**Rod McLaren**	0412 678 050
	mclarenr66@gmail.com	
Treasurer:	**David Thomas**	0418 448 933
	david@r2rservices.com.au	
Membership:	Position vacant – volunteer required	
Committee Newsletter:	**Derek Cockle**	04107 939 420
	djcockle@bigpond.com	

Committee: At least **four** volunteers required !
Please offer your help to Branch Secretary Rod McLaren

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Members

As this will probably be the last Newsletter for 2026, I can take a rest for a couple of months !

I would like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a very enjoyable Christmas with your family and loved ones and very best wishes for a happy and healthy 2027.

I look forward to your company at our next Branch meeting on Thurs 12 November and at some interesting meetings planned for the New Year.

As always, your ideas for future events, speakers, etc are always welcome !

Derek J Cockle
Editor

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



It's hard to believe the year is almost over, but not at NSA Perth Western Suburb ! We have our Branch meeting next Thursday with Professor Houghton as the main speaker and yours truly as the initial speaker, where I will present a talk on the Indian Ocean Dipole and how it affects WA's weather.

On Thurs 8 December we have our Christmas Lunch at the beautiful UWA Club, and on Mon 21 December the magnificent Christmas Concert at the Winthrop Hall where we have preferential pricing at $15 per person. Carols, Christmas Classical Music and to top it all, Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" with a 70-piece orchestra, 30 voice choir and 4 soloists – our most ambitious concert yet ! Do try to come.

Tickets for both events will be available at our meeting on Thus12 November, cash or card at the Events desk at the rear of the hall.

We are planning for interesting speakers and events next year, and we may have an extra emailed Newsletter in December to keep everyone posted.

For all those that contributed to last meeting's morning tea, a hearty thank you ! Please continue to bring you contributions to make it a feature of our meetings and reduce our costs.

Our funding is looking strong at the moment, and we may be able to reduce door fees back to $5 for members in the new year – what inflation? 😊

Joseph Lieberfreund
Branch President.

TREASURERS REPORT

As of 31 October, bank balances were:

- **General Account** – "Free" cash available for general expenses, (other than concerts, tours or social events), is $8,859 after payment of all outstanding invoices.
- **Music Account** - $1,702 - prepayments for Endeavour concert.
- **Tours & Social Account** – $710 – prepayments for Christmas lunch.

BRANCH COMMITTEE

Since re-election at the AGM on 10 September, your Committee headed by President Joseph with Vice-President and Treasurer David Thomas, Secretary Rod McLaren and co-opted member Derek Cockle, have met on 17 Sept and 2 Oct to plan Branch meetings and activities for the new year, as listed later.

We have now purchased two new electronic Square terminals, one to record Branch meeting door entry fees **only** located at our front entry desk and the other to be located at rear of hall to receive registrations and payment for concerts, social and other meeting or events. We will be seeking volunteers to train and operate these terminals, which we hope will then relieve President Joseph to meet and greet our members and visitors.

At our latest Committee meeting we reviewed the cost of our meetings, particularly the cost of catering and, thanks to the recent contributions by members, we have been able to reduce costs to the extent that in the new year, we may be able to reduce the member branch meeting fees back to $5 per person, but non-member fees would remain at $15 per meeting. This will be put to members at our February 2027 Branch meeting.

Derek Cockle has taken over from Marion Laws the role of Branch Representative on the W.A Branch Network Forum, but we still need several more volunteers to help in Branch management particularly :

- Membership Secretary
- Speaker Co-Ordinator
- Tour/Social organiser
- and at least three other Committee members.

Offers to assist, but not necessarily to be on Committee, should be directed to the President Joseph or Branch Secretary Rod McLarten.

RECENT EVENTS

Thursday 8 October – Branch Meeting



Greg Massam

Three people from Western Suburbs Cares gave an overview of three volunteer programs they are running:

Vivienne Forbes spoke about the Aged Care Volunteer Visitor's Scheme, where volunteers regularly visit older people living in their own home or in nursing home, and that would benefit from a friendly visitor.

Avril Rivers spoke about the Compassionate Connectors program, where volunteers help older people in the community access local services.

Greg Massam spoke about a new Home Share program that is being developed. Older people with a spare room at home and that would benefit from the presence of someone else in the house are put in contact with appropriately vetted people in need of accommodation.

For more information, please contact Western Suburbs Cares on 9319 0999.

Following our coffee break, our guest speaker was **Dr. Nick Beeching** who members may recall give us an amusing address last August. This time his talk was entitled **"Vaccines for Seniors – For or Against ?"**.



Dr Nick Beeching

Summarising his talk :

- Vaccines have saved millions of lives and eliminated smallpox;.
- Polio should be next;
- When diseases become rare, no-one remembers the fear and tragedy caused by preventable illnesses;
- Vaccine avoidance has always been with us, but disinformation has been amplified through social media, often financially driven;
- Compliance with public and moral responsibilities has reduced;
- Vaccines available in Australia are much safer than the diseases they prevent, especially for older people.

Copies of Nick's presentation are available by request to Editor Derek Cockle

Thurs 29 October – Bentley Pines Lunch

The award-winning Bentley Pines Training Restaurant at South Metropolitan TAFE continues to provide an exceptional live training environment for students preparing for hospitality careers. During the recent luncheon, hospitality and cookery students demonstrated impressive skills in menu planning, budgeting, purchasing, preparing and serving food and beverages, while events students supported menu presentation and advertising.

The Western Suburbs National Seniors Group, comprising 24 members and guests, thoroughly enjoyed the event. The luncheon was warmly received, with many praising the excellent food and the welcoming atmosphere. The students and staff made the afternoon even more special with their professionalism and enthusiasm.





Vice-President David Thomas & Sharon Thomas

Special thanks to Adoloph de Sousa for organizing the luncheon and helping make it such a memorable experience for everyone.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 19 November - T Box Café at Mt Claremont Golf Course

Our regular afternoon tea at this pleasant venue will continue with Judith Laurie acting as host. Please register your attendance by email to judithmlaurie@bigpond.com or mob: 0408 935 667 so that she can book sufficient tables and chairs at the café. This is an ideal opportunity for members and guests to catch up for a chat and to discuss and hopefully come up with some ideas for speakers and topics for Branch meetings in the new year.

Please note that no T Box Café meetings will be held in December or January due to the busy holiday period.

Branch Meeting – Thurs 12 November - "Loneliness" by Stephen Houghton

Our guest speaker will be Professor Stephen Houghton who is a registered psychologist and Director of the Centre for Child & Adolescent Related Disorders at the University of Western Australia.



Professor Stephen Houghton

Stephen will discuss loneliness and the effect that feeling lonely can have on physical and mental health and how the experience of loneliness and its impact can be lessened.

Health experts have linked the distress of feeling lonely to premature death and loneliness is expected to reach epidemic proportions by 2030

Note – As usual, due to Christmas/New Year holiday period, there won't be any Branch meetings in December or January next year.

Mon 21 December – Endeavour Homes Christmas Concert

A major Christmas concert is being held at Winthrop Hall at UWA which is being organised and financed by Endeavour Homes.
The large 50-piece a2 orchestra and choir will be performing Beethoven's monumental 9th Symphony.

NSA members have a priority booking in the front rows at a special price of $15 per person, payable to NSA Music account.

Branch Meeting - Thurs 11 February 2027

Member Derek Cockle will be giving an illustrated talk on his recent holiday on Norfolk Island, including its history and interesting features. He will also bring members up to date

on the rebuilding of STS Leeuwin tall ship following the disastrous dismasting accident in August 2024.

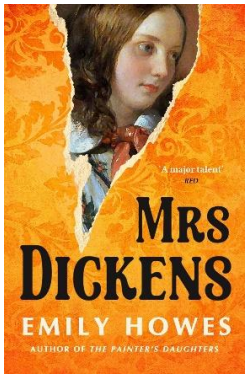
Branch Meeting – Thurs 11 March 2027

It is hoped that speakers from Royal Flying doctor Service will give presentation on the history and work of this important national wide organisation. They will bring some of their merchandise for sale and will welcome donations !

VIDEOS OF BRANCH MEETING SPEAKERS & CONCERTS

Thanks to Jeane-Pierre Hericher, our member photographer and to Larry McIntosh our internet expert, videos of some of our Branch meeting speakers and concerts are now available by searching YouTube via your browser and when you are in YouTube, type in " NATIONAL SENIORS WESTERN SUBURBS" to take you to our channel https://www.youtube.com/@nationalseniorsperth

BOOK REVIEW- "Mrs DICKENS" by Emily Howes. The Orion Publishing Group, London 2026 434 pages
Reviewed by Marlene Wilson



Mrs Dickens is historical Fiction written by Emily Howes. It is beautifully descriptive of life in Victorian England and of a woman who has been forgotten and one who lived in the shadow of her famous husband, Charles Dickens.

Catherine Hogarth married Dickens when she was twenty-one. She was born in Edinburgh and was softly spoken and pretty, he called her "mouse". The early years of their marriage was happy, and "Kate" as she was called tried to live up to Dickens' exacting standards and hectic lifestyle.

The novel tells the story from Kate's point of view and that of her trusted servant Anne Brown. Kate bears Charles ten children and one dies at infancy and as the household expands, they move quite often and Kate has to deal with the practicalities as he is often absent. Anne becomes a friend and confidant.

As Dickens became famous, he grew cruel and abusive to Kate often demeaning her in company. In his forties he began having an affair with an eighteen-year-old actress Ellen Ternan. As divorce was almost impossible, he divided their bedroom with a wall and later forced Kate to move to another property. He published a statement in a newspaper claiming Kate was an unfit mother and had doctors examine her with the purpose of committing her to an institution. She was forbidden contact with her children for years until they were old enough to make their own choices.

Charles Dickens who spoke so eloquently about the poor and disfranchised is hard to reconcile with this cruel abusive husband, but Kate never publicly denounces him. I highly recommend this wonderful novel of a woman who history has forgotten but I for one will never be able to forget.

Editor - Our thanks to Marlene for her continuing monthly book reviews.

BRANCH MEMBERSHIP & DOOR FEES

If you are an occasional visiting non-member and would like to reduce the cost of $15 to 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.** Member entry fee is then presently only $8.00 per meeting.

The member annual subscription is only $49.50 per person, $80 for a couple, or discounted for two years to $88 or $143, three years $120 or $180, five years $220 or $325).

Please note – Payment for seats at all our music concerts should be made into our **separate Music Account** at Westpac Bank - BSB: 036051 Account: 649381 ***and not to our General Account.***

Members may be interested in the undermentioned event organised by Floreat Salvo's. Registration is essential to Malcolm Goff on 0418 906 478 or to gary.armstrong2@salvationarmy.org.au



PHOTOGRAPHY AND PRINTING OF OUR NEWSLETTER

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

We also thank the office of Churchlands MLA Basil Zempilas for printing our Newsletters and Branch meeting flyers !

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