

WELCOME – It was wonderful to welcome four new visitors to our March meeting and see a “sea of green” as members dressed to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day. Our guest speaker, Michael Beatty, OAM, provided very interesting stories on his media career and an impressive list of VIPs he has interviewed. He spoke of his role with the RSPCA and the wonderful work they do with domestic, farmed, and wild animals in Queensland. We were delighted to be able to present a donation of \$200 to the RSPCA following his presentation. We wish you and your families a wonderful Easter and hope you embrace everything the season has to offer.

BRANCH MEETINGS

Our next branch meeting will be on **Thursday 18 April** at the Coorparoo RSL Club. Arrival will be at 10:00am for a 10:15am start with guest speaker, updates on branch and national activities, raffles, and refreshments. The cost will be \$7.00 per person payable in cash at the door.

Our guest speaker will be Catarina Hebbard, Artistic Director of Indelability Arts, an organisation which provides creative opportunities for Queensland disabled and neurodivergent artists.

The remaining dates for 2024 are:

9 May	13 June
11 July	8 August (AGM)
12 September	10 October
14 November	

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Best wishes to the following members who celebrate birthdays in April. We hope you enjoy your special day with family and friends.

Karin Chambers	Elsie Debney
Sophia Feulbach	Lyn Potter
Bruce Purnell	

MORNING TEA CATCH-UP

Our next morning tea catch up will be on **Monday 22 April** from 10am at Easts Leagues Club. This is a great informal way to get to know fellow members outside the confines of a branch meeting.

The remaining dates for 2024 are:

20 May	17 June
15 July	19 August
16 September	21 October
18 November	

DAY BUS TRIP – IT’S A MYSTERY DESTINATION!

There are still seats available on our first day bus trip for 2024 on **Monday 25 March** departing the Coorparoo RSL club at 8:30am and returning at approximately 4:30pm. The destination is a mystery which will keep everyone guessing until we get closer to the venue for lunch.

Cost is \$75.00 per person which includes the coach, morning tea, a ‘surprise’ activity and two-course lunch including tea/coffee. Please advise any special dietary requirements at time of booking.

All bookings and enquiries should be made with Pat will on: T: 3398 8726; M: 0437 774 049; E: patsywill@gmail.com. Payment can be arranged on the day or by direct deposit to the Coorparoo National Seniors, BSB: 084 391; Account: 047949379. If using this method, please include your name so it can be matched to the payment.

CARE KITS FOR KIDS DONATIONS

Some suggestions of items listed below that can be brought to our monthly meetings for delivery to Care Kits For Kids. Most can be purchased at discount shops, and not everything needs to be provided each month.

April – Face washer, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush

May – Long pants, jackets, tops, beanies (sizes 0-16)

June – Underwear, socks (all sizes to 16)

July – Hair brush, comb, bands, clips, baseball cap

August – roll-on deodorant (no glass or spray), shampoo, conditioner (travel or small size)

September – Summer pyjamas, girls crop tops (all sizes to 16)

October – Reading book (all genres & ages), small soft toy or doll (no beads or stick on eyes)

November – Backpack, small lunch box

WINTER COAT DRIVE FOR CHARITY

We are looking for donations of winter coats/jumpers that will be provided to the women’s charity *4 Voices Global* to assist people in need during the colder months.

If you have a coat or jumper that you no longer wear that you would like to donate to this good cause, please bring it along to our 9 May meeting. All items should be in a good and clean condition.

COMMUNITY PANTRY DRIVE

We have started supporting a local community food pantry by supplying good quality non-perishable food items that can be passed on to help the needy and homeless in our area. Items such as biscuits, long-life

milk, juice, canned tuna/vegetables/fruit etc. that can be easily opened and doesn't need heating.

If you would like to assist, please bring items along to each meeting where we will collect and distribute them to a local organisation. Please ensure that all items are well within use by date.

WELLBEING OFFICER

If you are, or know of any member who is ill, injured, or in need of help please notify Jan Jackson on 0411 987 174 so we can give our support where needed.

ENJOY READING?

Don't forget our book swap at each monthly meeting. There are some great books available for only a gold coin (\$2 or \$1) donation which goes towards our club charity donations. Donated books are all in good condition and can be swapped back another month.

DENDY CINEMAS COORPAROO

Thanks to our friends at Dendy Cinemas Coorparoo for providing complimentary tickets for use as raffle prizes again this year. Look out for these movies coming soon:

THE GREAT ESCAPER (drama); KUNG FU PANDA 4 (animated); GHOSEBUSTERS: FROZEN EMPIRE (fantasy); WICKED LITTLE LETTERS (comedy); GODZILLA X KONG: THE NEW EMPIRE (action); GOODBYE JULIA (drama)

If you love movies, why not join the Club! Become a member of Club Dendy to receive discounted tickets and candy bar items, exclusive offers, birthday rewards and much more. Visit Dendy Cinemas Coorparoo or online at dendy.com.au for more details.

TELL A FRIEND

If you hear a kind word spoken
Of some special friend you know,
It will fill their heart with sunshine,
If you only tell them so.

If a deed however humble
Helps you on the way you go,
Seek the one who's hand has helped you,
Seek them out and tell them so.

And if a friend has done a favour
One they didn't have to do,
Show them your appreciation,
And tell them what they mean to you.
(Constance Eileen Cummings)

YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

National Seniors Australia made a compelling presentation about its advocacy work at a meeting of the Parliamentary Friends of Seniors group in Canberra. Board members and senior staff of NSA have taken their advocacy on your behalf direct to Parliament House.

The Parliamentary Friends of Seniors is a nonpartisan group of MPs and Senators, co-chaired by Rebekha Sharkie MP, Federal Member for Mayo; the Honourable Bob Katter MP, Federal Member for Kennedy; the Honourable Richard Colbeck, Senator for Tasmania; and Dr Mike Freelander MP, Federal Member for Macarthur.

The meeting on 29 February was also attended by the Honourable Bill Shorten, the Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Federal Member for Maribyrnong; Shayne Neumann, Federal Member for Blair; and the Honourable Milton Dick, Member for Oxley and Speaker of the House of Representatives, who also made the meeting space available. Everald Compton, the founding Chair of National Seniors, also attended and spoke at the gathering.

As guests of the Friends, National Seniors Chair Ross Glossop and CEO Chris Grice spoke about NSA's work involving issues ranging from aged and health care to the Age Pension, retirement income, age discrimination, mature-age employment, housing, energy, and social inclusion.

In his speech, Mr Grice noted how Australia's population was ageing and would continue to do so over the next 40 years. "The number of Australians aged 65 and older will more than double, and the number aged 85 and older will more than triple," he said. "While these factors could be seen as problematic, they could also be seen as opportunities if we make the most of older people's potential capacity and contribution."

Mr Grice said older people contribute to our society economically, socially, physically, and emotionally. "Yet, for many older Australians, rather than approach retirement with confidence and optimism, they approach it with uncertainty and pessimism. Rightly so, they're concerned about outliving their savings (if they have them), about living well enough to stay out of residential aged care, receiving sub-standard care if they don't, and leaving a positive legacy for future generations."

He said these concerns and challenges "can be addressed only if parliamentarians, governments, industry, and the broader community work together.

Timely and considered action, together with informed and considered policies are critical to protect the changing needs of older Australians, and to promote their contributions – and this is why the Parliamentary Friends of Seniors is so important.”

NSA initiatives – Mr Grice used the Canberra gathering to draw attention to National Seniors’ 2024 Federal Pre-Budget Submission which “puts forward recommendations around cost-of-living, housing and health that provide direct relief coupled with longer-term policy reform to ensure we maintain our standard of living”.

He also introduced the Productive Ageing Institute – a website designed for parliamentarians and their staff to access evidence-based research and insights to help inform them in decision making and policy priorities. “Drawing from 16 years of NSA research, the website includes key statistics, survey insights and policy submissions – all of which are at your fingertips,” he said.

Last, but not least, he launched the Everalld Compton Community Champion Medal, which has been established to acknowledge the unsung heroes among older Australians. “The medal honours NSA’s Founding Father’s outstanding contribution to the Australian community while celebrating everyday champions whose grassroot experiences and selfless contributions make a significant difference in their communities,” Mr. Grice said. “It also reflects NSA’s values of fairness, excellence, and respect exemplified by Everalld’s own experience and achievements.”

Nominations for the medal will open in May, with details available on the NSA website and social media closer to then.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL – BECOME A TRANSCRIPTION VOLUNTEER

The Australian War Memorial holds a diverse collection of material relating to the Australian experience of war; and an archive holding extensive official and unofficial documents, diaries, and papers making the memorial a centre of research for Australian military history. They have set up an online platform called *Transcribe* that allows the public to transcribe digitised text from the National Collection to ensure their future discoverability and accessibility.

Since the public launch on Wednesday 14 February, the response has been truly overwhelming. In just over 48 hours, more than 1 million words had been transcribed by more than 20,000 volunteer transcribers. This accomplishment stands as a

testament to the contributions and strength of community and collaboration.

As the project moves forward, further collections will be added in the coming weeks by the *Transcribe* team which is an ongoing project as there are thousands of diaries and letters that the Memorial is continuing to digitise before being made available for transcription.

You can be a part of Australian history and help make the National Collection more accessible, readable, and discoverable by becoming a transcription volunteer.

The Memorial also holds a rich collection of interviews with people who have served in Australia’s military forces. Some of the Memorial’s interview collection has been uploaded to the *Amplify* system, which uses speech-to-text software that creates machine-generated transcripts of oral history interviews which are edited by volunteers. You can help enrich these historic records by correcting transcription errors as you listen to them.

For more information or register to volunteer, contact the [Australian War Memorial via their website](#).

SENIORS NEED SUPPORT AS ‘CASHLESS SOCIETY’ LOOMS

Banknotes remain legal tender, but more and more businesses are demanding payment by card or mobile app. National Seniors is urging Australians to make it known that they want banknotes and coins to remain in circulation. The apparently inexorable march towards a ‘cashless society’ has long been a concern for many Australians, especially seniors.

The issue hit the headlines again in February with a prominent politician making a stand against being forced to pay electronically, with a credit or debit card or mobile phone app. It started when Queensland Federal Member, Bob Katter, went to purchase a meal at a café inside Parliament House in Canberra. When he tried to pay for his meal with a \$50 note, he was told that the establishment only accepted cards.

Mr Katter pointed out that cash was legal tender and he was supported in this assertion by the Speaker of the House, Milton Dick.

The reality, however, is that many Australians are preferring to use cards for everyday transactions, and many businesses are refusing payment in cash. This trend accelerated during the pandemic when more of us started shopping online and some people were reluctant to handle cash for fear of transmitting COVID-19.

At the same time, our opportunities for obtaining cash have been dwindling, with banks closing many of their branches (more than 400 in the year from June 2022-June 2023) and removing automatic teller machines (700 in the same period). Supermarkets are also limiting the amount of cash they allow shoppers to withdraw at the checkout, and banks are phasing out personal cheque accounts, which will be gone by 2030.

Inconvenience – National Seniors Australia chief executive officer, Chris Grice, said, “Seniors have been experiencing this issue for a number of years now. There are many seniors and others who would be greatly inconvenienced and experience hardship if cash was difficult to access or use.”

In media interviews on the issue, Mr Grice said seniors had good reasons to be wary of card-only payments. Some people cannot afford mobile phones, and others are not tech-savvy or are concerned about scams associated with electronic transactions. He said card payments often attracted additional fees, so purchases are more expensive than with cash.

Another concern is power and internet outages which could render cashless systems inoperable. Mr Grice said banks were phasing out personal cheque accounts, with the system due to shut down by 2030, yet many government payments are still being made by cheque. “There is a disconnect in the system,” he said.

The future – The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) notes on its website that businesses are legally able “to specify the terms and conditions that they will supply goods and services”. It says, “This includes whether they will accept cash payment. However, consumers must be made aware of these terms and conditions before they make a purchase.”

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) associate professor in finance, Dr Angel Zhong, told Nine News that the transition to a cashless society was already underway and could be complete by the end of the decade. However, she said this didn’t mean that cash would cease to exist. “It doesn’t mean that there’s no banknotes at all. No one should be panicking that your banknotes will no longer carry value,” she said. “There is always a place for cash, but the majority will be making payments with digital wallets.”

Mr Grice said the best way for Australians to support seniors during this transition was to “pay it forward” by using cash where possible. This would keep cash flowing through the system, sending a message to government, banks, and business that it is still being

used. The aim is to help ensure online and digital transactions are offered in addition to cash payment, not instead of it. Mr Grice said businesses should improve their customer service and support for people who are struggling to adjust, and support initiatives such as the *Be Connected Program*, which aims to increase the confidence, skills, and online safety of older Australians in using digital technology. (Source: *News.com.au; Nine News; Radio 4BC*)

A recent email from one of our members highlighted some interesting thoughts on a cashless society:

- A cashless society means no cash. Zero.
- It doesn’t mean mostly cashless, and you can still use a “wee bit of cash here & there”.
- Cashless means fully digital, fully traceable, fully controlled.
- No more tuck-away cash for those preparing to leave domestic violence.
- No more purchases off marketplace unless you want to risk bank transfer fraud.
- No more garage sales.
- No more cash donations to hungry homeless you pass.
- No more cash slipped into the hands of a child from their grandparent.
- No more money in birthday cards.
- No more piggy banks or tooth fairy for your child.
- No more selling bits & pieces from your home that you no longer want/need for a bit of extra cash.
- Less choices of where you purchase based on affordability.

What a cashless society does guarantee:

- Banks have full control of your every single cent.
 - Every transaction you make is recorded.
 - All your movements and actions are traceable.
 - Access to your money can be blocked at the click of a button when/if banks need ‘clarification’ from you which could take weeks.
 - If your transactions are deemed in any way questionable, by those who create the questions, your money will be frozen, ‘for your own good’.
 - Big Brother Governments will know your every move and transaction.
- ✓ Forget about cash being dirty. Cash has been around for a very, very long time and it gives you control over how you trade with the world. It gives you independence.
 - ✓ Cash is a legal tender – it is our right to pay with cash.
 - ✓ Banks are making it increasingly difficult to lodge cash and that has nothing to do with a virus.
 - ✓ Please pay with cash and please say no to a cashless society while you still have a choice.

NAVIGATING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS IN YOUR PRIME: 5 TIPS FOR THOSE OVER 60

Whether you're newly single, have recently retired, or desire to expand your social circle, making new connections can seem daunting – especially when you're over 60. The good news is many opportunities are just waiting for you to seize them. Here's a guide to uncovering them:

Finding Companionship in Shared Hobbies: Social and Hobby Clubs – Your hobby or activity likely resonates with many in your local community. Clubs and community centres often offer specialised groups for seniors, encompassing diverse activities from book clubs and art classes to fitness groups and volunteer organisations. Connecting through shared interests facilitates a natural camaraderie but can also be the foundation of long-lasting friendships.

Embrace Age-Specific Gatherings: The Appeal of Senior Events – Senior-specific events are abundant and provide an excellent venue for meeting individuals in the same life stage. Watch out for social mixers, dances, seminars, and workshops in your locality. There is an array of activities to meet your interests, and participating in them creates ample opportunities to meet and interact with new people.

Digital Companionship: The Rise of Online Dating and Social Platforms for Seniors – Online platforms have changed how we connect with others, whether for social or dating engagement. Numerous dating websites and social media meet the needs and preferences of mature individuals. They can be a fantastic way to connect with others within your age group who are also seeking the same companionship or meaningful relationships you are too.

Learning and Connecting: The perks of Enrolling in Classes or Workshops – Learning has no limits, especially when it comes to age. Pursuing knowledge or honing skills can be enriching at any age. Register for classes or workshops that pique your interest. Whether it's cooking, photography, or language learning, these environments foster personal growth and serve as platforms for meeting others who share your enthusiasm.

Engage in Your Community: The Magic of Local Events – Engaging in community-based events, such as festivals, concerts, or art exhibitions, is a wonderful opportunity to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. These events are occasions to forge new connections and become an active part of your local community. You must remember that cultivating relationships takes time and patience. Embracing an

open-minded and positive outlook can make the journey more enjoyable.

Final Thoughts: Embracing the Art of Connection in Your Golden Years – Life's later years offer unique opportunities for growth, discovery, and connection. They invite you to embrace the world around you with renewed energy and curiosity. By following the strategies outlined above, you're taking proactive steps towards nurturing meaningful relationships and engaging in rewarding experiences.

Remember, age is not a limit but an opportunity. Your vibrant journey of social exploration awaits. There's the old adage that the best way to have a friend is to be one. Be proactive, seize opportunities, and remember that life in your prime is about creating meaningful experiences. Happy socialising! (*This article was first published by the 60plusclub newsletter*)

HOW DO MY EYES CHANGE AS I GET OLDER?

Many people associate older age with poorer vision. It's true that there are many eye conditions which are more common in older age. However, there are many things you can do to help maintain good vision for life. As with other parts of your body, your eyes go through normal changes as you age.

Prebyopia – is a vision problem where you may notice it is more difficult to read things that are close by. You need to hold things further away to see them clearly. Almost all people will experience this after about age 40. Prebyopia happens because the lens at the front of the eye becomes less flexible as you age. This makes it more difficult to focus on nearby objects. Prebyopia is treated with reading glasses, which your optometrist can prescribe.

Cataracts – this is a condition that affects the lens of the eye. The lens of the eye needs to be clear for you to have good vision. If a cataract develops, the lens becomes cloudy. If cataracts significantly affect your vision, they may be treated with surgery.

Glaucoma – this is a type of vision loss caused by damage to the optic nerve (one of the nerves that connects the eye and the brain). There are many types of glaucoma, but the most common form of the disease mainly affects people over age 40. People with glaucoma don't usually have any symptoms in its early stages. It's important to see your optometrist regularly to check if you have signs of the disease, so you can treat the condition and preserve your vision.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) – this condition leads to a loss of central vision. AMD is caused by degeneration of the macula, a small but important part of the retina which helps with detailed vision needed for activities such as reading and

driving. AMD is usually related to ageing and commonly occurs in people over 50 years. Several treatments can slow down the progression of AMD, so it's important to identify AMD early with regular eye checks.

Diabetic retinopathy – this condition affects many people with diabetes, especially those who have had diabetes for a long time. Diabetes can affect the blood vessels at the back of your eye, leading to vision loss. You can help reduce your risk of developing diabetic retinopathy by maintaining good blood sugar control and getting regular eye checks.

Dry eye – this is a common condition among all age groups, but it is especially common in older people. Dry eye happens when your tears do not provide enough lubrication for your eyes. This can lead to a range of symptoms including itchy, burning, or sore eyes. There are many strategies you can use to reduce your symptoms, as well as medicines such as lubricating eye drops.

Remember that your vision affects your safety and that of the people around you, so it's important for everyone that you look after the health of your eyes. This is especially true if you drive.

How can I prevent eye problems?

Many eye problems that are common in older people have few or no symptoms in their early stages. This means it's important to see your optometrist regularly to make sure your eyes stay healthy. There are many other things you can do to reduce your chance of developing eye problems as you age:

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle including a balanced diet and regular physical activity.
- Avoid smoking.
- Limit the amount of time you spend looking at screens, and take regular breaks when working on a computer or watching TV.
- Avoid reading in dim light.
- Wear sunglasses with polaroid lenses when outside.
- Wear eye protection when something may get in your eye – for example, when working with chemicals, using power tools, playing sport or gardening. (Source: Heath Direct)

PACKING ITEMS AVAILABLE

One of our members has recently moved and is offering her packing items for free to anyone who may need them. Items include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 30 boxes | Bubble wrap |
| Butchers paper | Cardboard inserts for crockery |
| Plastic tubs | Stripey bags |
| Plastic covers for mattress or rugs | |
| Packing tape dispenser gun | |

If you, or someone you know, will be moving soon and can use these items please contact Libby on 0411 141 146 to discuss collection or possible delivery arrangements within a reasonable distance of Greenslopes.

BRANCH CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries please contact our Secretary, Graham Tienan, on mobile 0407 736 453 or email nsacoorparoosec@gmail.com. Please remember to update any changes to your details. Emergency contacts need to be current.

SMILE

A priest, a doctor, and an engineer were waiting one morning for a particularly slow group of golfers. The engineer fumed, "What's with those guys? We've been waiting for fifteen minutes!"

The doctor chimed in, "I don't think I've ever seen such inept golf!"

The priest said, "Here comes the green-keeper. Let's have a word with him."

He said, "Hello George, What's wrong with that group ahead of us? They're rather slow, aren't they?"

The green-keeper replied, "Oh, yes. That's a group of blind firemen. They lost their sight saving our clubhouse from a fire last year, so we always let them play for free anytime!"

The group fell silent for a moment.

The priest said, "That's so sad. I'll say a special prayer for them tonight."

The doctor said, "Good idea. I'll contact my ophthalmologist colleague and see if there's anything she can do for them."

The engineer said, "Why can't they play at night?"

