

National Seniors

Australia

ADELAIDE EAST BRANCH

AE News – August 2023

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### A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT GEOFF HAYGREEN

**On Thursday July 27, South Australia was represented by 22 Zone 110 committee members at an NSA Forum held at the Alberton Hotel.** The meeting was opened by our current Zone Chair, Edward Staunton, who introduced our visitors from Queensland. NSA was represented by Chris Grice – Chief Operating Officer, John Urquhart – Board member and his wife Teresa who is the President of the Port Macquarie Branch, NSW.

**Chris Grice began by giving an overview** of the Organisation, the roots of which are in Queensland and which was founded by a group of self-funded retirees in 1976. This probably accounts for the fact that 51% of its members are resident in Queensland. NSA now also advocates for pensioners, part-pensioners, superannuants and support for parents of members.

### Here is an approximate breakdown of NSA membership today:

- Queensland has 51% of members. All other States have less. South Australia has 4%
- 87% have been members for more than 3 years
- 42% are male and 58% are female
- By age-group: 50-59 (10%); 60-69 (27%); 70-79 (39%); 80+ (24%).

NSA advises that it has around 73,000 fee-paying members, nationally.

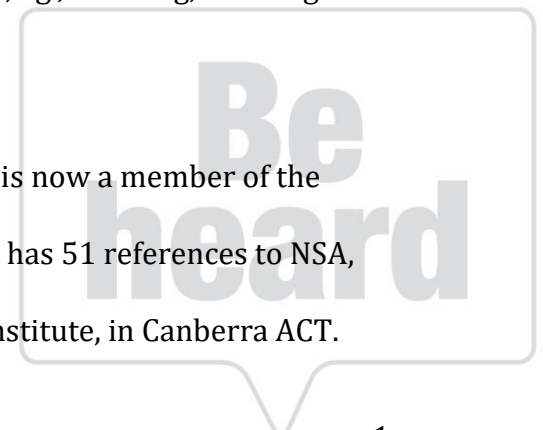
### NSA has three priorities in the future:

#### Advocacy

- The principal activity is to shape Government policy;
- Also engage members, write reports, communicate with Government; and
- Achieve variety and diversity for older groups, eg., deeming, franking credits, pensions, superannuation.

#### Aged Care, Support and Advice

- Professor John McCallum, former CEO of NSA is now a member of the Aged Care Advisory body to the Government;
- The Royal Commission into Aged Care Report has 51 references to NSA, and
- Member of Finance and Retirement Income Institute, in Canberra ACT.



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**Branding to Focus on NSA** as a brand as the word “Senior” is not a popular label. Activity to include the following initiatives:



- New member NSA disc to be launched in September;
- Literary program – in more languages;
- Appointment of expert Branch co-Ordinator, Karen Furnivall, Community Engagement Manager, Sustainability;
- Remaining self-funded – means independent advocacy not influenced by external influences, e.g., Government;
- Twelve months price freeze on subscription fees for existing members;
- Need to develop more revenue streams – selling insurance is one way;
- Website improvement with more information for all people to access;
- Some parts of the website only accessible by members to tempt the interest of possible, new members;
- Partner and business developments – what we want; how to live better lives, etc., and
- Partnering with other not-for-profit organizations, e.g., Probus.

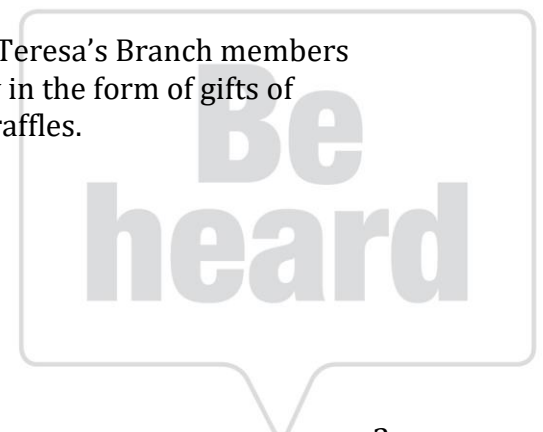
Membership growth is hoped to be achieved by a more sophisticated use of data based on the engagement of our website and the offers presented there. The intention is obviously to try to attract a younger cohort to join by embracing the latest in digital communication.

### **John Urquhart and his wife, Teresa made a presentation on improving Branch activities and membership.**

They have spent months preparing a workshop and a new Branch Toolkit to provide support for branches. The recent workshop that they conducted in Queensland identified the need to support branches more, recognizing the work that they do in gaining new members and nurturing new members.

All of the attendees at our SA event took part in an exercise to discover what we did well, what could be improved and any new ideas that could be shared. I was encouraged to find that, in our Branch, we appear to be doing most things that were suggested.

One interesting new idea was an activity that one of Teresa’s Branch members initiated, that is, pursuing local sponsorships, mainly in the form of gifts of prizes, which are then used to raise money through raffles.



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## Ian Henschke

Ian spoke at length for the need for members to provide him with documented evidence of any problems being experienced in the general retirement and aged care areas so that he can advocate on our behalf. The two main campaigns currently underway (**sign the petitions on the website and write to your local State and Federal members of Parliament now**) are to enable pensioners to work without penalizing them through Centrelink and also to improve access to home care packages. 16,000 people have died and currently, 14,000 are in Aged Care waiting for their Home Care Package. Ian needs your individual stories and experiences to help him advocate for change.

### THE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: PRELIMINARY NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Branch will be held on Monday 19 September 2023. Formal notice of the AGM and other details will be distributed in due course. All positions on the Branch Management Committee, including in particular, executive positions, will be declared vacant and Branch members are entitled to stand for election. Should there be insufficient formal, written nominations submitted to the Secretary prior to the AGM, nominations will be invited from the floor on that date. Current members of the Branch Management Committee are entitled to stand for another term, should they choose to do so.

## A WORD FROM THE EDITOR GARY BYRON

**Ross Glossop, Chairman of National Seniors Australia**, has advised that the *Our Generation* magazine is to be transitioned to a digital format, starting from the upcoming Spring edition. The recent Winter edition is the last of the hard copies to be distributed to members. However, Ross states that “those members who enjoy a physical copy will be able to download and print *Our Generation*.” He says that the digital magazine will continue to produce the same high-quality content that we have come to expect.

Ross points out that National Seniors Australia is a not-for-profit organisation and a registered charity that relies upon independent income to sustain its advocacy work. It is not immune to global and domestic inflationary cost pressures. Ross points out that National Seniors Australia has done much in recent times to reduce costs and overheads. Clearly, this was not an easy decision.

*Our Generation* is an excellent publication and is a “must read” for all members of our Branch and indeed, the wider membership of the Organisation.

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## GUEST SPEAKERS

Our July guest speaker was **Emeritus Professor Warren Jones AO MD PhD**. His topic was 'Heritage and Health', addressing the issues surrounding the decision to construct a new Women's and Children's Hospital adjacent to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and the intense public debate about the impact this will have on public parklands. It was an informed and thought-provoking presentation from an influential and eminent public figure in the Adelaide community.

The guest speaker for August is **Katherine Hodgetts from the South Australian Council of Social Service ('SACOSS')** who will speak about her organization's discussions and interactions with community groups about enabling the health system to provide more inclusive and responsive health care.

The guest speaker for September is **Myrana Wahlqvist, from the South Australian Policy Advisory Group of National Seniors Australia**. Myrana will speak about the role of NSA Policy Advisory Groups and the contribution that they make to the activities and objectives of National Seniors Australia.

The guest speaker for October is **Mick Mezzino from Clear Space - Home Downsizing & Estate Clearance Services**. His topic will be 'Downsizing Your Home' and will include references to the myriad and variety of things to consider "when needing to reduce and let go". Mick's presentation outlines the support and assistance that is available and how to minimize the stress involved.

The guest speaker for November (**name yet to be advised**) will be a representative of the Council of the City of Burnside. The presentation will be about the Council's **Home Support Program**. The City of Burnside offers a comprehensive range of services to its residents, accessible in their own homes, designed to maintain their independence and good quality of life. The Council states, "If you are having difficulty with day-to-day tasks, require support to continue living independently and improve your health and well-being, then the Home Support Program may be able to assist." (Thanks to our Branch Welfare Officer, Sandy Williams, for organizing this presentation).

## A WORD FROM OUR TREASURER, GAIL HAYGREEN

What exactly does the Treasurer do? The duties and responsibilities are not onerous nor particularly time-consuming, but they are important. We do not handle significant amounts of money, but nevertheless, the Treasurer's job needs to be taken seriously, particularly as the Branch is an incorporated Association. Briefly, the duties are as follows:

- Collect money at each Branch meeting and recording what relates to \$5 meeting fee, money taken for various functions and purchase of new member badges.

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- Keep an Excel spreadsheet for all money taken for whatever reason and record the names of persons making payments (other than the \$5 meeting fee).
- Deposit all cash in the Branch account at the NAB in Norwood.
- Check all payments received into the Branch NAB account via internet banking and record accordingly. Make payments via internet banking.
- Keep Excel spreadsheet for moneys paid out for functions, name badges and expenses associated with door prizes, refreshments, guest speaker gifts and other outgoings. Record all payments on invoices handed to the Treasurer for all expenses claimed.
- Maintain a balanced Excel spreadsheet for all income and expenditure in line with the bank balance at the NAB.
- Prepare income and expenditure statement showing opening and closing bank balances for each monthly meeting, for reporting purposes and recording in the minutes.
- Prepare end of year accounts reconciled with the bank statements, with accompanying invoices for presentation to the Auditor for the purpose of conducting the annual audit and preparing the Audit Report.
- Liaise with the Events Committee regarding updates on payments made by members for participation in organized functions and events.
- Attend and participate in Branch Management Committee meetings.

The Treasurer obviously holds a key position in the administration of the Branch.

### BRANCH EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Early in the year, the Events Committee published a Program of Branch events for the current calendar year. A copy of the Program was distributed to each member for their information. Events thus far have included a lunch at the Earl of Leicester Hotel at Parkside; a guided tour of the old Adelaide Gaol; comedy plays 'Who's in Bed with the Butler' and 'Nonsense the Mega Musical' at the Arts Theatre, Angas Street, Adelaide. Coffee mornings have continued again this year on the last Thursday of each month at Zeea's Eatery, 553 Portrush Road Glenunga. However, the July Coffee morning was held on a trial basis at 1816 Burnside Café, opposite the entrance to the Burnside Council Library. This proved to be successful and consideration is being given by the Events Committee as to whether the change of venue will be continued. They will advise us in due course.



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A particularly notable event was a visit to the Australian Space Discovery Centre at Lot 14, North Terrace, Adelaide on Friday 9 June 2023. This event was free of charge and included a 20-minute presentation on why space matters and the space industry, generally. We viewed the Live Mission Control Centre operated by Saber Astronautics and explored the various interactive facilities in the Space Gallery. A team of Space Communicators was on hand to deal with questions and to engage in conversation.

Our tour was well attended. Anyone who missed out can attend either individually or in groups. I think that we all agreed that it was a real “eye-opener”, to say the least.

### THE PERVASIVE PRESENCE OF AGEISM

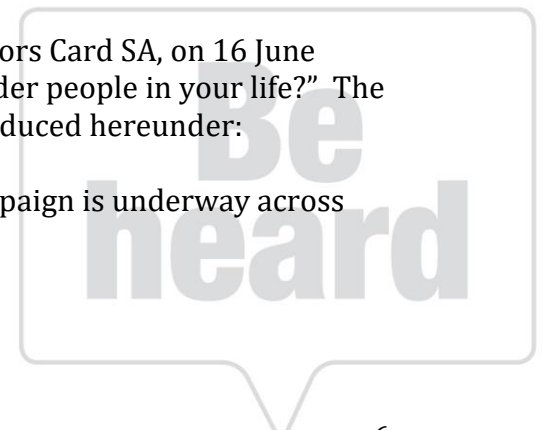
Ian Henschke, NSA Chief Advocate addressed our members at the Branch meeting on Monday 19 June 2023. He drew attention to the misconceived and growing campaign, to discredit the ‘Boomers’ as being a burden on the taxpayer, going forward. It did not take him long to tear down the misconceptions and flawed arguments that underpin this misguided and ill-informed view. He lamented the fact that ‘Boomers’ was once merely a term used to describe a particular generation, whereas now it is becoming an unwelcome and disrespectful term of derision of, in fact, a highly productive generation that has contributed so much to Australian society over the years

Ian also pointed out that the Aged Care Royal Commission was substantially about respect for older people and all that this implies. NSA played an important role in the campaign to instigate the Royal Commission.

He made the point that we have a fight on our hands to get our point of view across and that membership of NSA is an important element in this exercise. Ian advocates in support of the rights and interests of older Australians but it is imperative, that our generation gets right behind this effort; that we need to build our membership in order to keep NSA relevant and credible, and we need to keep ourselves informed so that we can be a positive and constructive influence amongst our contemporaries and others in the wider community. **(See ‘Branch Update’ published by NSA on 15 July 2023 for more on this topic and more of what Ian Henschke has had to say).**

On a local level, in ‘Weekend Plus’, published by Seniors Card SA, on 16 June 2023 the question was put, “How do you treat the older people in your life?” The article is relevant to what Ian had to say and is reproduced hereunder:

“The annual Elder Abuse community awareness campaign is underway across the State.



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The campaign links ageism and elder abuse or mistreatment, and emphasizes that older people have the right to safety, dignity and autonomy, and to be treated with respect.

Ageism is a pervasive presence that impedes living and ageing well; can negatively affect the way services and care are provided, and be a barrier to older people participating in the workforce.

Through Office for Ageing Well's engagement with older South Australians, we know they continue to express frustration about their portrayal by media and popular culture. The presentation of stereotypical characters and situations and the use of language such as 'elderly' [inappropriately], can reinforce negative community beliefs and attitudes towards older people.

Persistent and insidious devaluing of older people – for instance when others assume they cannot do something, excluding them and talking over them – can spiral into abuse or mistreatment. This may involve depriving older people of their rights, such as making their own decisions about their life, how and where they live, who they spend their time with, and how they deal with their finances.

Abuse or mistreatment of older people is a continuing worldwide community social, health, workforce and legal issue. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimate its prevalence as high as 14% in high or middle-income countries.

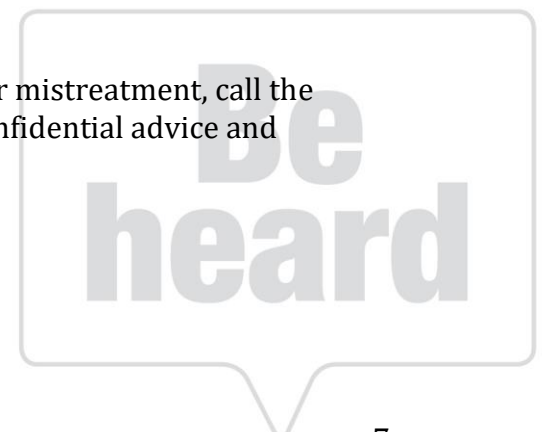
In Australia, the National Prevalence Study in 2021 reported that 1 in 6 older people experienced some sort of abuse or mistreatment in the 12 months prior to being surveyed.

Signs of abuse or mistreatment can be fear, sadness and neglect. Forms of abuse include financial, psychological, physical, social, neglect, sexual and chemical – such as over or under medication.

The community awareness campaign will run across digital and social media, radio, print and on screens in metropolitan and regional shopping centres until 31 July.

Visit [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/tacklingageism](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/tacklingageism) to find out about the campaign and tackling ageism.

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse or mistreatment, call the adult Safeguarding Unit on 1800 372 320 for free confidential advice and support, or to make a report.”



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While dealing with the symptoms and consequences of elder abuse and mistreatment, it seems that the underlying elements including ignorance, misconceptions, negative attitudes, complacency, lack of respect and common decency, etc., need to be addressed in order to substantially eliminate the insidious manifestations of persistent and pervasive ageism in the community. It will be interesting to learn in due course, whether or not the campaign produces positive outcomes.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF BREATHING IN EARNEST

Kate Roberts wrote a brief article for ‘Your Life Choices’ a few months ago. She maintains that we can rejuvenate our bodies with proper breathing techniques.

She says:

“Breathe in, breathe out. It seems so simple to do and yet, very few of us breathe in a way that invigorates, energises and strengthens our bodies.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), 7.5 million Australians reported having a chronic respiratory condition in 2020/2021. Of those, 5.1 million people reported suffering from hay fever and 2.7 million reported suffering from asthma. Now add to this the 5 per cent of Australians who suffer from obstructive sleep apnea ... There are a lot more people who do not breathe well due to stress, heart problems, musculoskeletal conditions and poor physical fitness.

Fast shallow breathing is common in people who suffer from chronically high levels of stress and those with chronic pain. A feeling of being short of breath is frequently reported by people who have poor cardiovascular health and may be due to their heart having trouble pumping oxygenated blood around their body. A stiff thoracic spine might make it hard for people to expand their ribs to breathe well, and being unfit speaks for itself.

Walking up a flight of stairs or climbing a steep hill uses more oxygen than sitting still and often leaves people feeling winded or puffy if they don’t breathe well.”

Breathing properly is probably not something we think about all that much, except where chronic conditions are present. But if Kate Roberts is correct, it is something that we ought to be aware of, consciously practice, and perhaps even

seek professional advice and assistance, if necessary, in the interests of good health and well-being – particularly for our generation.



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## MORE ABOUT SCAMS

In May of this year the Federal Government indicated an intention to establish a faster response to reports of consumer fraud with the creation of a \$58 million National Anti-Scam Centre (NASC). This has featured in the media recently (and will obviously continue to attract further interest as developments occur). A detailed article on the topic was published in the National Seniors Australia Connect Newsletter on 25 May 2023. [It is well worth a read.](#)

[The Connect Newsletter is always informative and it is a good idea for members to sign up in order to be kept well informed on issues relevant to us and our best interests].

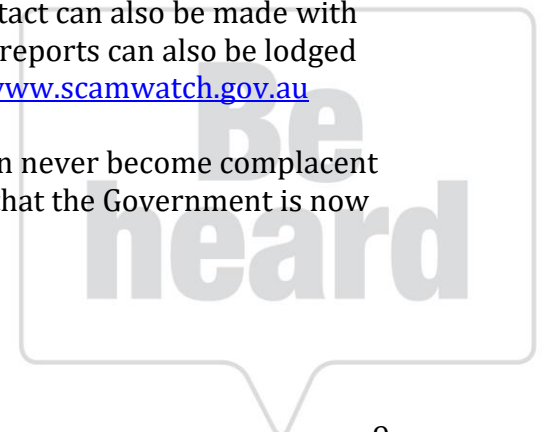
Scams of all imaginable descriptions have reached almost plague proportions in Australia today. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission says that Australians parted with over \$3 billion to scammers in 2022, which is an astonishing 80% increase over the previous year.

Scammers, typically and routinely, focus on taxpayers each year. The Australian Tax Office received more than 20,000 reports of such scam attempts in the 2021/22 financial year and, in June 2023, indicated that this number was expected to rise by the end of the 2022/23 financial year – a forecast that proved to be correct.

Scammers are criminals and parasites who care nothing about the pain and suffering they cause to others. They get up to all sorts of mischief, including posing as ATO officers and offering to assist with your tax issues; offering you a refund that you can retrieve once you have given your personal details; making contact by any means including social media to extract information from you, and more. The ATO warns that it does not send you links to login to their online service or ask you to give personal information via social media, email or SMS. (I had such an experience a couple of years ago when a message was left asking me to call back to a mobile phone number. On contacting the ATO to check out the authenticity of this request, I was informed that only the ATO official phone number can be used for contact purposes and that they would never ask anyone to respond to a mobile number).

The ATO's scam reporting line is 1800 008 540. Contact can also be made with the ATO by email at [ReportScams@ato.gov.au](mailto:ReportScams@ato.gov.au) Scam reports can also be lodged with Scamwatch, the Australian scam watchdog, at [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au)

Sadly, scamming is a reality of life these days. We can never become complacent about it, and it is reassuring to some extent at least, that the Government is now



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taking a proactive approach by the establishment of the National Anti-Scam Centre. How effective that will be remains to be seen.

Finally, members should make a point of reading an excellent article in the Winter edition of *'Our Generation'* at page 36 titled *Increasingly sophisticated scams. How to spot the fraudsters*, by Judith Maizey. It is a concise and informative article. Its theme is stated at the outset:

“Scammers are getting crafty these days and it is becoming even more difficult to know what’s real and what’s not, making it easy to fall victim.”

The article sets out the types of scams now trending and how we can avoid being caught by them. Examples of scam texts; what you need to know, and top tips for avoiding scams, are covered in this article.

### MARK TWAIN'S COMMON COLD

Undoubtedly, many of us have read health-related advertisements on-line that, at the outset, speak of some alleged remedy “that your doctor won’t tell you about” or “try this new trick”, or similar. The aim of course is to attract our attention to some miracle remedy that will immediately relieve particular conditions, aches and pains that creep up on us as we age. These advertisements invariably introduce us to some “well known” medical authority, (whom we have probably never heard of), who will solemnly vouch for the particular product. In most cases, they sound plausible to the extent that many people will “give it a try”. It is entirely possible of course, that some of them may be effective.

This approach is not new and indeed, something similar was employed by Mark Twain in his essay, *'Curing a Cold'* (see *'A Treasury of Mark Twain'*, The Folio Society London, 1999 at page 147).

As to his qualifications and expertise in this field, he essentially invites the reader to trust him. He states:

“Having led a pure and blameless life, I am justified in believing that no man who knows me will reject the suggestions I am about to make, out of fear that I am trying to deceive him. Let the public do itself the honor to read my experience in doctoring a cold, as herein set forth, and then follow in my footsteps.”

As to some of his remedies, he proffers:

- Bath your feet in hot water and go to bed
- Get out of bed and take a cold shower-bath



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- Drink a quart of warm salt water
- Drink a concoction made up of molasses, aqua fortis\*, and turpentine, mixed with various other substances
- Drink gin
- Drink gin mixed with molasses
- Drink gin mixed with onions
- Apply a mustard plaster to your chest
- Drink a quart of whiskey every 24 hours (he said he did and still managed to live)

He claims that these various “remedies” were suggested by various well-meaning friends and colleagues. Nevertheless, he takes responsibility for them and in a kind of philosophical back-country way, he suggests:

“Now, with the kindest motives in the world, I offer for the consideration of consumptive patients, the variegated course of treatment I have lately gone through. Let them try it; if it don’t cure, it can’t do more than kill them.”

Well then, what have we got to lose?

\*aqua fortis is Latin for ‘strong water’ – goodness knows what was in it!

### **FLY ME TO THE MOON**

If we lived on the planet Saturn (if that was possible), Frank Sinatra would have needed to be more specific about which moon he had in mind when he sang about flying him to the moon. It was thought until recently that Saturn was second to Jupiter in having the greatest number of moons. However, with the

recent discovery of 62 new moons orbiting the planet, the total number is now 145. Jupiter has a mere 95 recognized moons. A team of international astronomers made the discovery over several years using a technique called ‘shift and stack’ in order to find these less visible, additional moons. They are classified as ‘irregular moons’, characterized by their large elliptical and inclined orbits, compared to regular moons. (Source: ABC NEWS).

### **AUSSIE INVENTIONS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD**

Australians are a clever lot and have held their own in the contribution of ideas and inventions that have improved and supported our lives and lifestyles. Some of the more notable inventions are:

- The black box flight recorder on aircraft
- Spray on skin
- The electronic pacemaker

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- Medical application of penicillin
- Polymer bank notes
- The Cochlear implant (bionic ear)
- The electric drill
- The winged keel on boats
- Permaculture
- Wi-Fi technology
- The ultrasound scanner
- Plastic spectacle lenses
- The inflatable escape slide and raft used on passenger aircraft
- Permanent crease in clothing
- Gardasil and Cervarix cancer vaccines
- The Frasier deep-focus lens for cameras
- The Triton WorkCentre (improves the accuracy of portable power tools)
- The Race Cam (allows viewers to watch a racing car race from the driver's perspective)
- Tank-bred tuna (invented by German-born but SA based Hagen Stehr. It is thought that he may well have prevented the extinction of the southern blue fin tuna).

An impressive list indeed, amongst a whole range of inventions.

### THE LAST WORD

After a long illness, a woman passed away and duly arrived at the Pearly Gates. While waiting to be interviewed by St Peter she noticed a magnificent banquet table had been set and there, sitting at the table, were her parents, friends, relatives and other people she had known and had died before her.

When St Peter came along, she said, "This is such a beautiful place! How do I get in?"

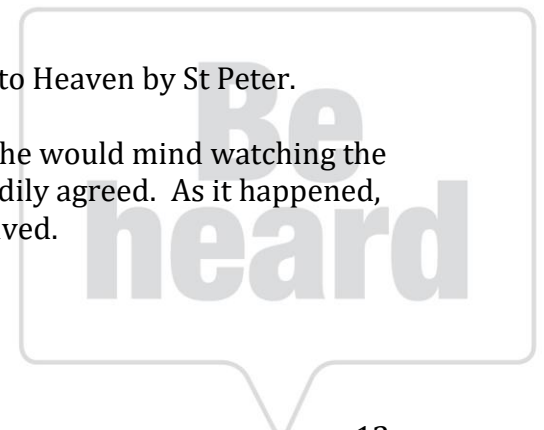
"You need to spell a word specifically allotted to you", replied St Peter.

"What word is that?", the woman asked.

"Love" said St Peter.

She got that right and was immediately welcomed into Heaven by St Peter.

Some six months later, St Peter asked the woman if she would mind watching the Pearly Gates during his absence on that day. She readily agreed. As it happened, and much to her surprise, her husband suddenly arrived.



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“Well!”, she said, “I am very surprised to see you here. How have you been managing since I passed away?”

“Oh, I have been doing very well”, he said. “Not long after you went, I married the beautiful young nurse who was living with us and took care of you while you were ill. Then I won Lotto. I sold our old house and bought a mansion and a new Porsche. My new young wife and I travelled extensively throughout the world, first class, and had a great time. We were water skiing in California today when I fell off the ski and hit my head on the side of another boat, so here I am. Anyway, how do I get to pass through the Pearly Gates into Heaven?”

“You have to spell a word specifically allotted to you”, she growled through clenched teeth.

Oh, I see”, he said, “What word did you have to spell?”

“Love”, she said.

“Easy!” he exclaimed. “What’s my word?”

“**Czechoslovakia**”, came the reply.

