

It's not who you are that holds you back, it's who you think you're not.

big, big, BIG Raffle at this month's AGM. Please bring some extra cash and be one of the lucky winners!

Dear Members,

Thank you to all who took the time to fill in our Newsletter questionnaire at last month's meeting. The team need as much feedback as possible to make content relevant to all our members; if you were not able to respond to the questionnaire, we welcome your comments at any time, especially on the types of articles you would like to see.

We're into another financial year; may the taxman be good to us all. We will start off the year with our AGM, as always, and a new Committee. A heart-felt thanks to everyone who has come forward to fill an executive position. We could not, literally, run the Branch without your help; no Executive means no Branch.

Our annual Planning Forum follows the AGM. For new members who haven't been to one, the Forum is a consultative process that the Committee organises to hear from members about what they like (or don't like) about

our Branch. Like the Newsletter survey, the Forum gives us a chance to make our feelings known about National Seniors at both a national and branch level. Ideas for future meetings, activities and speaker program are very welcome so please come along and help make our Branch even stronger.

Lynda will be standing down as Editor at the meeting, after three years in the position. She would like to acknowledge all the sterling support that she has had during this time, which means that she has a lot of people to thank.

The Newsletter is very much a team effort so, firstly, a big thanks to Erica, Dee, James, Judith, Lee, Nicola and Teresa for all they have done to publish so many editions and for all the laughs we have had in the process. Another big thank-you goes to our regular contributors, Anne Jackson and John Urquhart, and to our photographer, Allen Philp.

And to everyone, too many to mention by name, who responded to the team's requests for content; especially to those who have taken part in our Getting to Know Our Members section and to those who sent in articles during those long days of COVID isolation when the Newsletter was the only way we were able to stay in touch.

Your Newsletter Team
Dee, Erica, James and Lynda

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Comments and contributions are very welcome.

Please contact: President, Teresa Iwinska, or the Secretary at nationalseniorspm50@gmail.com

MEETINGS AND MEMBERS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND PLANNING FORUM

VENUE:	Downstairs at Port City Bowling Club
DATE:	Tuesday 11 th July 2023
TIME:	10 a.m. for 10.30 a.m. start
ENTRY:	\$2 for lucky door prize
RAFFLE:	\$2 per ticket or 3 for \$5

GETTING TO KNOW OUR MEMBERS: LEIGH PIKE

I was begat in Footscray in 1958 and lived in Sunshine all my childhood, going to high school in Braybrook the next suburb along. After HSC, I became a commercial trainee with British Petroleum (BP). During this time I went to University where I gained a Bachelor of Business (Accounting). But I try not to be boring.

During my early years with BP, I was sent on a twenty-one day outward bound course near Canberra. For the whole time we were not allowed to take any form of ignition for fire making. **So no hot food.** Unlike the TV show 'Survivor', I had to spend three solitary days in the Brindabella Ranges equipped only with a plastic sheet for shelter, a tin of mackerel, luncheon meat, baked beans, water, powdered milk and—**LUXURY** – nine sheets of toilet paper. At least I was given a tin opener and map reading equipment. This was a great learning experience in my life but not one I would wish to repeat.

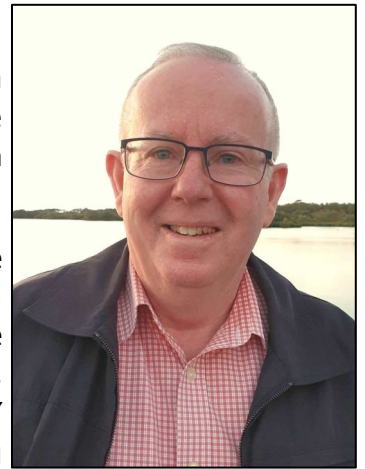
In 1984 I became BP's site accountant in Port Moresby where we drilled for oil in the Gulf of Papua. Sad to say, after US\$16.5 million in drilling and ancillary costs, we were unsuccessful but I thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

After thirteen years I decided to leave BP. I had a range of jobs, spending some time with a company developing accounting software and also did contract accounting work at various firms including stints back at BP. In 1993, I got a job at Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE; this was the most rewarding place I worked. After some years I became the CFO and stayed there until retirement.

Whilst bushwalking in 1990, I met my wife to be, 'Leanne.' We were married eighteen months later. I didn't have the overseas travel bug when we met but that soon changed, going to both China and Indonesia before we were even married. We went on to continue bushwalking and travel, at one stage spending nine weeks crossing Russia.

We retired in 2014 and moved from Victoria to Port Macquarie where our first job was renovating our house. For a number of years we were volunteers at Douglas Vale winery. Since retirement, Leanne & I have travelled more often; we've been to Cape York, Italy, 4 of the Stans, Myanmar, Antarctica, Argentina, The Falklands, Chile, New Zealand, Mexico and, earlier this year, to Egypt, Jordan & Portugal. Our next venture is to Northern India & Cambodia. All of these trips have been put together by Leanne, my travel agent (D.I.Y. tours), who spends numerous hours on the net researching then booking flights, hotels, trains & planes. We do sometimes incorporate a tour in a trip. In addition, we have a camper van and love to get away in Australia.

In my younger days I enjoyed crawling up storm water drains and jumping on slow-moving freight trains. Later I was a keen tennis player. I am now a ferroequinologist with an interesting collection of HO trains. Leanne and I joined National Seniors last month and are looking forward to making many friendships and having enjoyable experiences. **Interviewed by James**



REMINDER: UPCOMING CHARITY AUCTION



Roll up! Roll up! It's time again for our amazing Charity Auction! Please put **Tuesday, July 25th** from 1.30 in your diaries. It will take place, once again, at the Lions Den on Hastings River Drive, first left into Hamilton Green after the Harvey Norman shopping complex .

If you would be kind enough to put your name down with Erica, the cost will be \$10 a head. You will be served a variety of hot and cold delights; tea and coffee will also be available. **Please BYO all other drinks and glasses.**

The auction is a really important event in our calendar year as it is the biggest fundraising event for our charity. It has been a fabulous success over the years. What a wonderful way to donate unused items and gifts that you no longer require and then to find a whole new range of treasures for yourself at bargain prices.

A cupboard sort-out may reveal quality clothing or shoes, household items, equipment, tools, books, puzzles, games, craftwork and sets of things; any item superfluous to your need might be just what someone else is looking for.

If you have items to donate, could you please drop them off from 11am onwards so that we can arrange our display tables in time for the 1.30 p.m. start. If you are unable to attend but would like to donate goods, please contact Lee on 0418474925. Please Note: if you would like to set a reserve price for any item you bring, please let Erica know on the day.

Our highly-qualified and Amazing Auctioneer, Ian Richardson, will take bids on each item as they come up for sale. You will be able to pay for purchases with cash or through the NS bank account. **Please come along and support this stunning NS event and our charity.**



CHOOSING OUR CHARITY

At the AGM, we will be choosing a local charity to support for the next twelve months. Recent organisations we have picked have been Hastings Home Hospice, Endeavour Clubhouse and Lifeline. This past year we have been fundraising for Orange Sky Laundry.

If you know of a charity you would like considered, please tell one of the Committee or suggest it at the meeting on Tuesday. If more than one is proposed, we will vote to decide which to support.



A postcard from America

Having just returned from a four-week trip to the United States, I realised, yet again, just how much phone technology has changed the way we travel. My first priority on arrival anywhere abroad is to buy a sim card with

enough data to last the whole trip (I'm too mean to pay those appalling roaming charges). It also means I have a local phone number that apps recognise and accept.

With data on phone, getting around becomes so much easier than at any time before. Here are some of the apps I found really useful while away:

Airlines and trains apps: we had booked flights and rides in advance but with apps, information is at your fingertips. Notifications let me know if a flight had been delayed or a gate had been changed. (Thankfully none were). I also checked-in online but, unfortunately, we still had to line up to drop off suitcases; I find self check-in of bags one of the most bewildering of experiences and the old fashioned way much easier (One point to doing things the old-fashioned way!).

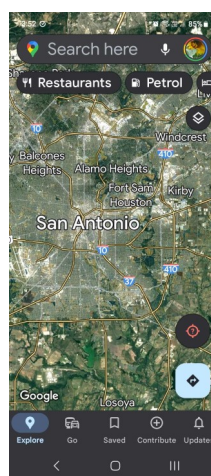
Uber: I've never had to use the app in Australia (I think there is only one Uber driver in Port) but, abroad, it makes it so easy to be picked up at train stations, airports and hotels. No waiting in long queues for taxis and I love the way I can track where we are and where we are going as well as whose car we are using.

Health app: Then we caught COVID (there's no app to prevent this, I find). Thankfully, we were

only unwell for about three days but it played havoc with our itinerary. I downloaded another app and set up an appointment with an urgent care facility to get the precious piece of paper we will need to claim on insurance. Change of plans, then. I quickly booked last-minute hotels and tours to reroute our journey.

Email and messenger apps: these kept me in touch with what was happening at home. I could video-call my family in Scotland when a new addition to the family arrived (a little girl and beautiful, of course). Compare this with the trials of yesteryear. When I first stayed in the States in 1973, I had to book a phone call weeks in advance so that I could talk to my parents at Christmas. Correspondence was by those flimsy airmail letters and took ages. Now, I can even put together some of this Newsletter from articles sent to me by the Newsletter Team. Of course, there is something to be said about being incommunicado while on holiday but we always choose to stay in touch.

Google Maps: sightseeing used to require unwieldy maps and a good sense of direction.



Now I check my phone with its GPS and know (almost) exactly where I am. No fear of getting lost and the information on places to visit is just a Google away.

Photo Apps: No need for postcards either: you can send photos in real time to your nearest and dearest. (See above)

How did I manage before??? I really don't know. **Lynda**

WHAT OUR MEMBERS HAVE BEEN DOING: VIVID SYDNEY

During this beautiful, sunny winter, we decided upon a trip to Sydney to see and experience the Vivid Festival. Our first experience was at the



Botanic Gardens and the excitement, wonder and beauty is hard to describe. Music was playing, dragons were thrusting out fire, trees were silhouetted or beautifully-lit, rivers

of exceptionally stunning flower lights led us around. A wonder.



Dark Spectrum in the abandoned Wynyard rail tunnels was a totally different but exhilarating experience. A very innovative travel of light, sound, robotics, lasers and state of the art technologies. I found it hard to photograph but loved the exploring of this vast underground labyrinth.



Our final experience was a harbour cruise – this was the ultimate! The Harbour Bridge was beautifully lit, the pylons with their native birds and animals, and the lasers reaching into the sky. We have a beautiful capitol city which embraces excitement, scenery, art and creativity. My personal favourite was the Opera House where the paintings of the late John Olsen were illuminated on her sails – magical.

I really would have like to see the drones, hear more of the wonderful music and indulge in the food exhibitions – maybe next year. *Erica*



HASTINGS FARM GATE TOUR – 10-12 JUNE

We went to the Hastings Farm Gate Tour on the long weekend in June. This annual self-drive tour is a way for consumers to see the range of quality produce available in our region. Twenty properties, from Upper Rolland's Plains to Moorland, were open over the weekend. They ranged from large farms that use regenerative farming practices to people growing their own food on a house block. Tickets were \$60 per car for the three days and you can visit as many or few as you like. After buying your ticket you are emailed a booklet with all the details; as it would not be possible to visit every property, it is important to decide the places you really want to visit and plan accordingly. Not all properties are open every day, and quite a few tours need to be pre-booked.

As I grew up on a dairy farm I was particularly interested to visit one, so Day 1 saw us at Oxhill Organics, a large well-organised dairy farm where we learnt about soil and pasture health. The cows and pasture looked fantastic and Chris, the farmer, explained many things including that the weeds are a benefit as they help the seeds to germinate by keeping the ground cool. They sell their organic milk to Norco and also produce organic chickens, pork and eggs.



On Day 2, I had booked another dairy farm as I couldn't resist a chance to see the milking. By 8 a.m. we had enjoyed an egg & bacon roll at Hastings Riverlands Dairy and were ready to watch. This was just amazing and not what I expected. Thirteen jersey cows all with names, a very old walk-through dairy and a brand-new pasteurizer and bottle-washing system. This new enterprise sells non-homogenised milk directly to businesses in the Hastings and adjacent regions and is actually run by Jimmy, the 18 year old son of Chris, our dairy farmer from yesterday. Jimmy started the business in January of this year and personally delivers the milk to all his outlets.

Another stop on Day 2 was "Grazed & Grown", a large mixed-farming property. Regenerative farming practices take farming to a level above organic. Like organic farmers they grow produce without any artificial chemicals or fertilizers; however, they also aim to keep the land and soil healthy for the future. This involves regularly rotating animals to other parts of the farm to help with disease control and regrowth of pasture. Most farms have a variety of animals for this purpose. A highlight here were the Marema guardian dogs who keep watch over the chickens. Apparently, the roosters will notice a hawk or other bird of prey first, and then the dogs are needed to round them up into the chook house for safety.



Day 3 and it was time for Barbushco Bushfoods. I have enjoyed their food since moving to Port, and on the tour it was interesting to hear how the new-ish owners are continuing the farm. The Lemon Myrtle Cheesecake for morning tea was also wonderful.

We visited a number of other places including Hauslein Tiny Houses, where we saw a range of small houses (large caravan size) that are ideal to add as a second house on a farm. The Antheraea Biodiversity Conservation Trust, another of our stops, helps people to preserve areas of land on their property from development. The property we visited had protected old-growth forest trees and a wildlife corridor. The owner had been asked to be in the farmgate tour to show possibilities for land conservation. Regenerative farming is all about ensuring the land is not degraded whilst producing whatever is needed; as a lot of farms have areas that are not used for food production, protecting some of it becomes an option.

We had beautiful weather each day, and it was lovely driving around the hinterland. The Farm Gate tour aims to give consumers an understanding of how food producers of the region work to grow nutritious food whilst nurturing and regenerating the environment. It certainly did that!!! The farmers were so passionate and committed to what they did. We thoroughly enjoyed the three days and came away with a lot more knowledge and, as a number of farms also sell produce, some very tasty food to consume at home. **Leanne**

Pike

WHAT OUR MEMBERS HAVE BEEN DOING

ART WALK

There was something for everyone to see and do at the Art Walk, held on Friday June 9th from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. A cool, crisp, dry evening with a fabulous sunset saw the town filled with locals and interstate visitors of all ages and traffic free zones were created for ease of access. Colourful lights were evident through the streets and lawns close to Town Square. With art work on show by primary school students through to professional artists, all tastes were covered at a variety of venues. The Courthouse had two shows projected onto the building, one of them new this year.



Music took to the streets and one of our own NS members, Ian Richardson, performed with the highly entertaining

Blokes Notes. On a stage by the Glasshouse, school bands, a ukulele group and Latino dancers were amongst some of the crowd-pleasing acts showcased. Inside many of the retail shops were displays, and a craft market was held in the Square itself. There were many craft activities for young people to participate in.

Food trucks, cafes and restaurants were 'hoppin'n' poppin', the whole ambience was about fun and positivity. Well done Port Mac and it was lovely to see so many of our NS members there too. **Dee**

SOLSTICE STROLL

Oh boy! Haven't we experienced some very cold mornings this past couple of weeks, but thirteen energetic, warmly-dressed members met at the Skate Park Break-wall near Town Beach at 8.00 am on Thursday 22nd June, ready for a Winter Solstice walk to Westport Club.



We all set off after an 8 a.m. photo taken by our President, Teresa. We were presented with a



beautiful, crisp morning: some stepped out to get warm; and other members stopped to observe the "Shag on a Rock" on a branch. We arrived at the Club for breakfast, where we were joined by five other members.

We sat by the window basking in sunshine, and enjoying the view.

It was great to have a catch-up chat and meet new members whilst partaking in culinary choices for breakfast. We now look forward to the longer warmer days and our next planned walk. **Helen Lutz**



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Our wonderful Secretary, Lynda Walters, will be celebrating a momentous "o" Birthday in July.

Happy birthday wishes to Lynda and to all our members celebrating in July.

Lee Brown	Walter Lutz
Lesley Cooney	Andrew Moll
Mara Goodall	Keith Reichenbach
Kevin Howell	Jacqui White



BOOK REVIEW

A TRAITOR TO MEMORY by Elizabeth George

Virtuoso violinist, Gideon Davies, one fateful night loses his memory of music and his ability to play his violin. He suffers a form of amnesia. The cure is to remember a crime of twenty years ago. The detectives come to know a group of people whose lives are inextricably connected by a long ago death, trial and prison sentence.

Absorbing, a drama of life and death. *Anne Jackson*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 11th July—AGM
- 17th July—500 Club
- 19th July—Fire Museum Tour
- 25th July—Charity Auction
- 8th Aug—Monthly Meeting
- 14th Aug—500 Club
- 22nd Aug—Movie and Lunch
- 30th Aug—A Day out of Town
- 19th Oct—First Aid Course
- 9th to 11th Nov—Hunter Valley Lights

Scientists say the universe is made up of Protons, neutrons and electrons They forget to Mention morons

