

THE COMET

Journal of the Australian Pensioners' and Superannuants' League, Qld. Inc.

From the EveryAge Counts Coalition Website:-

The heightened susceptibility of older people to the virus and specific advice that they self-isolate is sometimes seeing older people blamed for the community-wide restrictions. The highlighting of age in the reporting on deaths from the virus reinforces an underlying view that younger people are not really at risk and the 'problem' is therefore less serious. Language used by the media and spokespeople describing a cohort of people spanning up to four decades of life as 'the elderly', entrenches a stereotype that all older people are more or less the same as each other.



In other commentary, older people are being called on to take a disproportionate impact of the economic fallout of the pandemic. At its worst, we are seeing discussions about the possibility of age-based rationing of limited healthcare treatments.

Too often, there is the implication that older people's lives are more expendable than other members of the community, their contributions less valuable, their deaths less tragic.

As a coalition campaigning for a world without ageism, where all people are valued, respected or connected regardless of age or functional ability, EveryAGE Counts asserts:

- Every life is equal and every human deserves respect and equal access to the right care.
- Policy responses around behaviours to avoid catching and spreading coronavirus should apply to everyone, irrespective of age.
- In any 'rationing of care' scenario, individualised assessment of a person's comorbidities, frailty, strength of immune system and capacity to benefit from treatments are the only acceptable inputs a medical decision maker should consider and age alone should never be relied upon.
- Language is important and spokespeople should avoid using 'the elderly' as a shorthand that lumps together age cohorts spanning three or four decades of life. Talk about 'older people' having a weakened immune system and a greater likelihood of other health conditions, making them susceptible to more severe health impacts, should they contract the virus.
- We must work together, directed and motivated by evidence - regardless of our age, gender, cultural background, ability or health status - to manage the pandemic, make the best decisions and keep all of us safe.
- When we see negative messages emerging about people based on stereotypes about their age, it's our opportunity to stand up against ageism and for a caring and compassionate society upholding human rights of all.
- Now more than ever, the generations need to work together. As we emerge from the pandemic, we need all generations to pull together to 'build back better' to ensure that all Australians benefit from the post-COVID recovery.

IMPORTANT: For accurate up to date information about COVID-19, including links to information in community languages, go to <https://www.australia.gov.au/>

Have you signed the pledge to end ageism? You can do it here: https://www.everyagecounts.org.au/take_the_pledge

See editorial on Page 3. (Ed)

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Services Directory

Commonwealth Government Directory

Administrative Appeals Tribunal	1300 366 700
Aust. Competition & Consumer Commission	1300 302 502
Australian Hearing	131 797
Aust. Securities & Investment Commission	07 3867 4700
Aust. Taxation Office	132 861
Centrelink (Older Australians line)	132 300
Child Support Agency	131 272
Commonwealth Respite and Life Flight Centre	1800 052 222
CRS (Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services) - Human Services	1800 277 227
Family Court of Australia	1300 352 000
Home & Community Care (65+ years)	1800 200 422
Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Comm.	1300 369 711
Immigration & Border Protection Department	131 881
Medicare	132 011
Migration Review Tribunal	1300 361 969
National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Services	1800 012 255
Pharmaceutical Benefit's Scheme	1800 020 613
Private Health Insurance Complaints	1800 077 308
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman	1800 640 695
Translating & Interpreting Service	1300 655 820
Veteran's Affairs Department	133 254

Queensland State Government Directory

Anti-Discrimination Commission	1300 130 670
Department of Communities	137 468
Department of Energy & Water Supply	
Electricity & Gas	134 387
Water	137 468
Energy & Water Ombudsman	1800 662 837
Health Ombudsmen	133 646
Legal Aid Qld	1300 651 188
Office of Fair Trading	137 468
Public Guardian (Adults & Children)	1300 653 187
Public Trustee	1300 360 044
Qld Competition Authority	07 3222 0555
Qld Ombudsman's Office	1800 068 908
Residential Tenancies Authority	1300 366 311
Safe Food Queensland	1800 300 815
Senior's Advocacy Information & Legal Services (SAILS)	07 3214 6333
Senior's Card	13 74 68
Senior's Enquiry	1300 135 500
Senior's Legal & Support Service	
Brisbane	07 3214 6333
Cairns	07 4031 7179
Hervey Bay	07 4124 6863



MAY 2020

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Contact APSL State Office to enquire about membership and a branch near you.

You can still contact Head Office on the usual number and Anneliese will answer.

**APSL—
MAKING A
DIFFERENCE!**



EDITORIAL

By

Cherith Weis



Dear Friends

I have placed the article from EveryAGE Counts web site on the front page this month as it contains statements that cover what I am feeling about the loss of life in Nursing homes, in particular one in another state.

While we are social isolation, so are the aged care home residents and virtually left to die on their own without any chance of family visiting or being near them when they are breathing their last breath. Without a member of their family; a Minister of Religion; just on their own and left in tragic circumstances. Why were these residents not taken to ICU and treated? Some Carers in one facility also contracted the COVID19 virus. What chance did residents have?

As with the investigation into Aged Care facilities, so should the "care" of the aged during this COVID19 pandemic be thoroughly investigated. Grieving families must be given answers as to what happened and why life in Aged Care facilities turned so deathly.

Management meets on Friday May 15 via the magic of ZOOM with most members quickly learning that technology can be magical...in a way!

It's definitely the way to go as we are confined to our homes in various parts of the State. For the Executive Committee it's been a busy time learning. ZOOM.

Anneliese is working from home like many Queensland workers and as are we, the volunteers who are finding that we need more help to get done what we have to if we are going to stage a conference this year.

Because of the COVID19 this year's plans have been shot to pieces for a conference in September. Therefore the postponed date for the conference is now November 9 and 10 and I think a lot of our members will be anxious to get out again; enjoy themselves and attend this year's conference. Requests from head office for agenda items will be sent out in conference

information mail in the coming month along with Credential forms. I would urge branches to seriously consider the attending the Gympie conference. Should any recurrence of this virus arise, things may change but it's looking better at the moment as **most** Queenslanders have been abiding by the Government's regulations.

Let's think positively about the future. We live in the best country on this earth.

To all Mothers out there, young or not so young; Grand Mas; Great Grandmothers, Great Great Grand Mas, you are the salt of the earth; the glue that holds families together; you are living treasures...I wish you all a great Mothers Day!

Stay safe. Stay well. Cherith

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Covid-19 vehicle cleansing.

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed our lifestyles considerably in regards to social distancing and any gatherings of people in our community.

We must keep 1.5 meters apart and only 2 people are allowed to be together in public and advice is to stay at home unless it is necessary to leave.

Older people are at high risk with this virus and it is important that you take care in this current climate.

Reduce the possibility from getting exposed to it by utilising services such as home delivery and applying good hygiene techniques especially in regards to our motor vehicles.

In the situation of a motor vehicle you cannot keep 1.5 meters apart and it is important that no more than 2 people are in the vehicle at any time.

The Qld Government recommend that people that have a passenger in their vehicle do a free course (<https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/covid-19-transport/personalised-transport>) (<https://www.drvrtraining.com/courses/hygiene-for-drivers>) .

This course, that I have completed, illustrates the risks and how to hygienically clean your vehicle to ensure that you don't get the virus.

According to the Qld Government the "virus is spread from person to person most likely through;

- Close contact with an infectious person
- Contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze

- Touching common objects or surfaces(like door knobs or tables) contaminated by cough or sneeze droplets from a person with COVID-19 infection, and then touching your mouth or face."

Therefore when cleaning your vehicle, ensure that you use an appropriate sterilizer and allow the sterilizer to air dry on the surface.

Please consider all points of contact both passenger side and driver side.

Things to consider for passenger side are:

- Door handles, inside and outside, arm rests and grab handles, seats, seatbelts including the release button, cup holders and centre console, inner door lining, visor, boot lid.

Things to consider for the drivers side are:

- The keys, steering wheel, transmission shifter, door handles both inside and out, seat and seat belt, dash controls, indicator and wiper levers, hand brake lever, visor.
- When driving, have the air conditioner set on fresh instead of recyle.
- When finishing your trip, ensure that you immediately wash your hands before touching anything, for at least 20 seconds.

Check out Leyland's website:-

[Evolutiontraining.com.au](https://www.evolutiontraining.com.au)

Continued from page 4

COVID-19 Vehicle Hygiene Checklist for Drivers

Passenger Touchpoints

Surfaces your passengers frequently touch

- ☐ Door handles, both internal and external
- ☐ Passenger assist grab handles just inside the door
- ☐ Seats
- ☐ Seat belts and seat belt release buttons
- ☐ Cup holders
- ☐ Window controls
- ☐ Arm rests
- ☐ Inner door lining
- ☐ Payment terminals
- ☐ Boot lid

Driver Touchpoints

Surfaces drivers frequently touch

- ☐ The key fob and keys
- ☐ Steering wheel
- ☐ Transmission shifter
- ☐ Internal and external door handles
- ☐ Dash controls such as volume knob, heating controls, mirror adjustment
- ☐ Indicator and wiper stalks
- ☐ Hand brake and gear shift

LETTER FROM CALOUNDRA

30 April 2020

Dear Members

I hope that you all are safe and well, its no fun being in voluntary lock down. With the dangers of this Covid19 virus we must do what is best not only for us but also for the rest of the country.

As you would know I should have gone to England to see family, but common sense prevailed and I did not go. Like other voluntary organisations APSL is in hibernation. (we will awake)

Our petition to increase the single pension was gaining enormous momentum prior to the lock down I had been inundated with requests for copies of the pension forms from New South Wales Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria — and all over Queensland. I am pleased to say that head office has also received a great deal of request for copies of the petitions.

When I contacted the Seniors Magazine they were very happy to print our story. What I did not know at the time was the Seniors Magazine feeds their major stories into regional and local news papers all over Australia. As such, our article was printed in issues across Australia.

The one thing that has been made very clear to me with the responses that I have received, interstate people have gone to the expense to ring and speak to me. Supporting the need to have the gap between the single and coupled pension increased to a far more equitable amount.

Their need to have the single pension increased will not go away. What will happen to this petition once the Virus has passed and we are back to normal is in the hands of our APSL head office.

For the following reasons I firmly believe that we have very little chance at this time of obtaining sufficient signatures to make a major impact to support our case for an increase in the single aged pension. The Covid19 virus has not allowed people to collect signatures.

To their credit, the Federal Government has given each pensioners a \$750.00 supplement payment, with an other \$750.00 payment in July. Plus many more millions to support and assist people in this time of need. via Jobkeeper payments, etc. No one could possibly expect a government to even consider giving an increase to the single pension at this stage.

Those that know me know that the disparity between the single and coupled aged pension is a cause that I have been lobbying to have closed for over many years.

I would like those members with a computer to check back over the recent pension adjustments, received in March and September of each year.

You will see that under the Governments CPI pension the calculation. The financial gap between the pensions widens in favour of the coupled pension, all the time.

You have all heard it many times before ...the strength and power of the Seniors lobby. The trouble is over many years seniors have failed to unite I suppose human nature kicks in with the larger Community groups each protecting their own patch not seeing the major benefits of forging a united front and the benefits of lobbying together.

I feel very confident to say to you all, if Seniors formed a genuine one voice lobby group. No State or Federal Politicians would ignore them. The main party establishment would stand fast. Those parliamentarians on all sides of politics with slim margins to retain the seats would be calling for compromise they would definitely be our support.

2020 APSL State Conference to be held at Gympie listed for September hopefully this Conference will take place, if it does, with members approval I will propose a motion on the following lines:

APSL Head Office take the lead roll creating a Seniors round table consisting of all major seniors and welfare organisations.

The goal to lobby until successful to have the financial gap between the coupled and single pension set at no less than 18 percent. To remain or reduced to a smaller percent in all futures pension adjustment by the Federal Government. This would require an up dated petition, I feel that the Covid19 virus has taken away the thrust of our current petition. Should any majors seniors organisation not wish to join, Media advertisements should be taken out promoting our endeavours highlighting groups that do not wish to join the lobby group.

Under advice, I feel that APSL should forward all petitions that we have currently collected to the Speaker of the Federal Parliament with a letter of explanation concerning the petition numbers being impacted by the Covid19 virus lock down.

Frank Gower

BARRY RAMSAY—ON CALL!



Our APSL State Vice President, Barry Ramsay has been keeping in touch with members throughout the State. Barry has been calling members in various parts of Queensland during this Social Isolation period. He said that all had welcomed the call and they have enjoyed a good chat. I believe he's on at least his second round of calls. Most people have kept themselves busy. Some of our members have done an early "spring clean" while others have tackled the garden. Seniors do not even contemplate adding the word "bored" to their vocabulary. Very much appreciated, Barry!

For Mothers Day!

My mother had a great sense of humor and a knack for making everything fun. One thing that resonated with me, even as a small child, was how much she seemed to enjoy her own company and found ways to entertain herself. As a kid, I remember her giggling while paying bills. What was so funny about bill paying? She would put humorous notes in the reference section of the check: For the electricity bill, she might put "You light up my life," and for the mortgage she'd write "Four shingles closer to owning it all." Anon.

There is no way to be
a perfect mother
and a million ways to be
a good one.

—Jill Churchill—

Happy Mother's Day



Pictured at the Zonta Club's morning Tea for International Women's Day on March 8 this year, are from left to right ; Jacintha Batalibasi, Rosemary Chamberlain, Joyce Macdonald and Jan Brown.

The Zonta Club of Bowen hosted a morning tea on International Women's Day in March with an attendance of 115 people. Venue was the Starboard Café in the North Queensland Cruising Yacht Club.

The theme for Queensland Women's Week 2020 was celebrating our diverse community of strong women in Queensland and aims to empower and inspire women and girls to embrace and celebrate their unique qualities and experiences.

In keeping with the theme, the audience heard inspirational stories of two strong local women guest speakers Jacintha Batalibasi and Tamara Henry.

The highlight of the evening was the annual Zonta recognitions of our local women, Jan Brown, Rosemary Chamberlain, Joyce Macdonald and Jacintha Batalibasi who all volunteer many hours over many years to empower women and girls within the community.

Speaking about our APSL President, Chris Coventry told the audience that Joyce Macdonald was her inspiration and role model. "How good is this lady for a few months off 90!"

She spoke about Joyce being elected as State President of Australian Pensioners and Superannuants League for the 2019-2020 term as an achievement that Chris found exciting.

"Our Joyce has had great training to be this leader because she has always been a volunteer, a working girl, a single mother and the bread winner. She told me stories of being Secretary for many years of the Bowen Branch of the Bush Children's Health Scheme; Fashion Parades for the local schools, Bowen Women's Forum etc where Joyce was always the Compere and as she said marvelous training by learning to think quickly on your feet".

She added that Joyce has been a committed Christian for a long time and studied and achieved a Certificate 4 in Christian Ministry and Theology. Her involvement as a volunteer in N Qld Aboriginal Communities with children.

Chris Courtney concluded by saying Joyce offered her some wise words. Be confident in yourself as you are of much worth. Look in the mirror and say "I can do it!" Secondly keep learning new skills when you can, so when the door of opportunity opens...you are at the head of the queue".

Thank you Chris for this contribution which has been lightly edited. (Ed.)

Lima Laulau has always been a fan of superheroes. Then lately he started dressing up as different superheroes while walking his dog Bear in Cleveland and neighbouring suburbs. But now he's joined the **RSPCA's Walk this May** campaign and is fundraising to help the RSPCA.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, the RSPCA has adapted its much-loved national dog walking **Million Paws Walk** event by launching **Million Paws Walk: Walk This May**. The new event will see dog owners hit the pavement in their own neighbourhoods and backyards, and responsibly walking to fight animal cruelty throughout May.

"I just wanted help," said Lima. "The RSPCA does a fantastic job and if I can help bring a smile to peoples faces and also raise some money it's win- win situation for all of us."

Million Paws Walk: Walk This May, will celebrate a mutual love of animals whilst keeping walkers safe and healthy.

"We're encouraging participants to don their workout gear, grab the leash and walk in their backyard or neighbourhood", said RSPCA Qld spokesperson Michael Beatty. "We want them to know that their contribution is helping the RSPCA continue its vital work in animal welfare."

"The funds raised through Million Paws Walks; Walk this May are vital to enable us to continue to care for the 54,000 plus animals that pass through RSPCA Qld Animal Care Centres every year. Over 14,000 of these are dogs that have been surrendered, abandoned or seized by Inspectors. These dogs are not as fortunate as your much loved family pet. They also often need to be de-sexed and vaccinated before they have the chance to find a new home."

RSPCA Qld praises ReCollect initiative. - New App makes recycling even easier!

Re.Group has launched a new way to recycle in Queensland through the ReCollect App, an on-demand service that picks up eligible items from homes and businesses, recycles them, and rewards customers with payments and information. When they download the free ReCollect App, Queenslanders will be able to conveniently get paid to recycle their eligible containers, such as beer bottles, cans and plastic containers, all without having to leave their home. Customers can also select one of four charities that will benefit if they decide to donate the money raised.

"RSPCA Qld is proud to be a part of this initiative that helps Queenslanders make a very real difference in the on-going fight against pollution," said RSPCA Qld spokesperson Michael Beatty. "Obviously we would like people to choose the RSPCA as their charity of choice. That way they are not just helping the environment, but also raising much needed funds to care for the 54,000 animals that pass through our Centres every year."

Thousands of Queenslanders have already visited Container Refund Points across the state, where they can drop off their eligible bottles and cans for a 10c refund. The ReCollect program will help bolster the State's recycling efforts, with plans to expand the service beyond containers to pick up other recyclable items in the near future.

"We developed ReCollect to help people who want to do the right thing, but can't easily return items such as eligible bottles and cans," said Re.Group CEO David Singh. "ReCollect provides a new option for people who might not have the time, the means or the motivation to get to a collection point. Through ReCollect, more people can participate, and get refunds for eligible containers back into the community".

The ReCollect App is free to download and doesn't require credit card details to sign up. Eligible containers returned through the on-demand service are worth the same 10c, and ReCollect keeps a portion of this to cover the collections costs while customers receive 5c per eligible container transferred direct to their account, or to their nominated charity. ReCollect App users can book a collection from a house, unit, or a business address. Customers are not required to be at the address upon collection, with a function in the App to leave instructions for the driver on where to find the items, such as "behind the letterbox". Customers just need to place their bags in a safe and accessible location by 8am. The App has been launched on the Gold Coast, in Brisbane's northern suburbs, and across Townsville. New areas and suburbs are being added weekly.

For more information visit <https://www.re-collect.com.au/>

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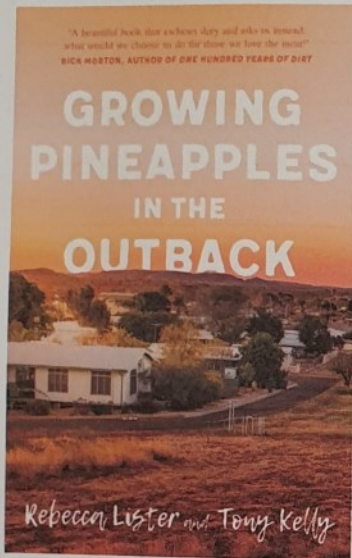
GROWING PINEAPPLES IN THE OUTBACK

NON-FICTION

by Rebecca Lister and Tony Kelly

ISBN: 978 0 7022 5412 3 | 3 March 2020 | C-Format Paperback | 272pp | \$29.99

PUBLICATION DATE
3 MARCH 2020



Praise from Rick Morton, author of *One Hundred Years of Dirt* — 'This book aches with love. We are shown love for a mother as time begins to claim her and love for the red earth, the pulsing heat, the sense of home that stays in our bones no matter our travels. *Growing Pineapples in the Outback* is a beautiful book that eschews duty and asks us instead: what would we choose to do for those we love the most? In its pages we discover how that simple choice can open our hearts, even to the ugly scar of a rough mining town, and deliver quest and comfort. I cried. I cried for the kind of tribute we should all hope to give to our dearest: our time.'

When a professional urban couple relocate to regional Australia to care for an ageing parent, they find it more confronting yet also rewarding than they could have imagined.

When Rebecca Lister and Tony Kelly move from Melbourne to Mount Isa to care for Rebecca's elderly mother, Diana, they have no idea what they've signed up for. The isolation, sweltering heat and limited employment opportunities make settling into the mining town a challenge. While Rebecca deals with her mother's declining health and delves into her own past, Tony takes on a new role in native title law.

Caring for Diana – a witty, crossword-loving 92-year-old – proves to be a more enriching experience than either Tony or Rebecca thought possible. As they make deeper connections to the land and community, they find themselves flourishing in a most unexpected place.

Growing Pineapples in the Outback explores the highs and lows of caring for an ageing parent, while also celebrating the rewards of a simpler life.

MORE ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *GROWING PINEAPPLES IN THE OUTBACK*

'*Growing Pineapples in the Outback* is a gentle and sometimes tough family memoir infused with the daily acts of love that make life worth living.' — **Sophie Cunningham, author of *City of Trees***

TONY KELLY is a native title lawyer and is currently CEO of First Nations Legal and Research Services in Melbourne.

REBECCA LISTER is an award-winning playwright, arts producer and social worker. In 2018 she was awarded the Australia Day Mount Isa City Council 'Spirit of Mount Isa' Award.



REBECCA LISTER AND TONY KELLY ARE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS

To request a review copy or to arrange an interview, please contact

Dina Kluska at Pitch Projects on
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A statement in response to the COVID-19 crisis by the Steering Group of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP)

‘The human rights of older persons must be fully protected in the COVID-19 response’

In the global response to COVID-19, it is essential that States protect the rights of older persons on an equal basis with others without discrimination and without exception and in line with international standards.

Older persons already face particular challenges claiming their human rights globally due to widespread age discrimination and ageism. The gaps in the protection of the rights of older persons within the international human rights system are well-documented, particularly through the work of the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing since 2010.

Older persons are at higher risk of mortality and serious illness from COVID-19. The public health, economic and social emergency triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic is being intensified by ageism and discrimination against older people globally. We see daily reports of alarming cruel and ageist commentaries in relation to this crisis that can cause further harm to older persons at a time when they are already facing significant risks, isolation and stress.

Efforts to address COVID-19 may exacerbate ongoing threats to the rights of older persons, for example isolation and social exclusion, and the challenges of accessing information, health and social care, and social protection. Stay-at-home and no-visitor policies to contain the spread of the virus are putting some older persons at greater risk of violence, abuse and neglect. Other older persons may be affected disproportionately due to their care and support needs, or underlying health conditions. We are concerned that this pandemic has the potential to exacerbate the entrenched inequalities and disadvantages that older persons experience daily.

It is essential that States and other actors involved in the COVID-19 response put in place measures to ensure that older persons’ human rights are protected on an equal basis with others, without discrimination and without exception. Any decisions to restrict rights and freedoms during this public health emergency must be lawful, necessary and proportionate in line with international standards. Arbitrary or discriminatory approaches or decisions on the basis of age are unacceptable. We are also witnessing alarming cases of neglect of older persons living in institutions and the failure to provide them with necessary health, social and palliative care. These practices risk undermining older persons’ right to life and, by implication, rank their lives as being of lesser value than others’.

Decisions about the allocation and prioritisation of scarce medical resources must be made on the basis of medical and scientific evidence and not on non-medical grounds such as age or disability. This will support an ethical and more efficient public health response for all affected by this disease.

The views and experiences of older persons themselves must be heard and taken into account in the planning and implementation of responses to COVID-19 that affect them.

Ageism cannot and must not be tolerated.

The impact of COVID-19 and the measures taken in response on older persons’ human rights is proof that a new UN convention is urgently needed to provide the legal clarity and guarantees necessary to fully protect the rights of older persons worldwide.

About GAROP

The Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP) is a network of over 350 civil society organisations from 80 countries working together so that all older people can live free from discrimination and are able to fully enjoy their rights. We believe a UN convention on the rights of older persons is essential for older people to fully enjoy their rights.

<https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/>; <https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/documents/OHCHRAAnalyticalOutcomePaperonOldePersonsAugust2012.doc>

<https://www.helpage.org/newsroom/latest-news/studies-confirm-risks-to-older-people-from-coronavirus/>; <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-Covid-19/statements/statement-older-people-are-at-highest-risk-from-covid-19,-but-all-must-act-to-prevent-community-spread>

GAROP ‘In Our Own Words’ report

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25748&LangID=E>; <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/19/human-rights-dimensions-covid-19-response>

My Opinion Page

I have included two pages of references to Ageism. I am astounded at the content of news releases regarding the treatment (or lack of) of senior residents in Aged Care Facilities particularly in News South Wales.

I am absolutely appalled to think that the residents who passed away in the "care" of at least one institution were not afforded dignity in their last days. Also appalling is the awful attitude of some authors of articles and comments who consider the aged should not deserve to live if they are over 70 years of age!

How dare they? Australia wasn't the country where the elderly sick were considered disposable.

Italy while being overcome with victims of COVID19 was one country where many of the older generation were left to die without care.

In New York massive numbers of people succumbed to the deadly virus and was another place where the toll in Nursing Homes/Aged Care Facilities was extremely high.

We know that a number of staff/cares were also diagnosed with the virus and throughout the World many nursing staff and Doctors were also victims.

I applaud those on the front line for their dedication to their positions in looking after COVID19 victims.

Never in my 81 years have I known such a disastrous disease wiping out so many people and the horrible repercussions involved if we do not employ safe distancing. Many of Comet readers must surely agree with me. Now we have to wait for a vaccine in the hope that no other strain of this virus develops.

Memories of the days when there wasn't a vaccine for Whooping Cough and Infantile Paralysis (Polio was known in those days) and other childhood diseases. Memories take me back to when I was four years old and had Whooping Cough and Polio at 10. I was born too soon to be vaccinated.

However, Polio has been eliminated in this country and now when you have a pregnant woman in your family you must have a Whooping Cough shot before the baby arrives. We have come so far in our fight with childhood diseases, but it has taken time to develop the vaccinations, and so it will be with one to combat COVID19. We know there are scientists throughout the world working on a suitable vaccine. Time will tell just how long it will take to develop the correct one, but let us pray it is soon.

An upshot of being "confined to barracks" is that many people have learned new skills. I know I am happy that ZOOM was available to us so that we can run the APSL and make sure people keep in touch.

For meetings, the ZOOM system is fantastic and I would recommend it to everyone. I believe that we will probably save the APSL funds by using ZOOM for some meetings instead of funding travel and accommodation expenses.

I would encourage those who haven't already linked up with technology to rethink it as it the way of the future. ZOOM certainly gives us opportunities to talk to each other face to face although there are thousands of kilometres between us. Stay safe and Stay well.

Cherith Weis (APSL State Secretary/Comet Editor)

Message to Branches

This space box is provided to insert your Branch contact details when you leave The Comet at Doctors' Surgeries /Libraries and so on



CODE of ETHICS and PERSONAL CONDUCT

The Australian Pensioners' & Superannuants' League (Qld) Inc.

Be patient and courteous in all dealings with fellow members.

Be inclusive - Members to welcome and support people of all backgrounds and identities and discriminate against no one.

Be considerate - Each member should respect fellow pensioners and superannuants. Our decisions and comments will affect our fellow members, therefore we must always take this into consideration.

Be respectful - Each member may not agree all the time, but disagreement is no excuse for disrespectful behaviour. Each member may experience frustration from time to time, but we cannot allow this to become a personal attack. An environment where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not productive or creative and not in the best interest of The League.

Choose your words carefully - Always conduct yourself professionally. Harassment and exclusionary behaviour is not acceptable in The League. Differences of opinion and disagreement will occur, each member must resolve disagreements and differing views constructively and respectfully.

Our differences can be our strengths - Members can find strength in diversity. Different people have varying perspectives on issues, and that can be valuable for solving problems or generating new ideas for the betterment of The League.

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APSL Mission Statement

To lobby powerfully with governments at all levels and private sector agencies, and within community sector, to promote all aspects of the security, well being and dignity of pensioners of all ages, superannuants, other self-funded retirees, low income families and other disadvantaged people, including Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) peoples.