

THE COMET

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



We at APSL wish every woman - a Happy Mother's Day - we appreciate and congratulate all Mums; Grandmothers; Great-Grand Mothers and Great-Great Grandmothers for your mothering in your very special ways. A special thought goes to Mums who awaiting a joyous arrival - we wish you well with your pregnancies. APSL hopes you are treated like royalty and honoured on your day.

ooooo

While remembering all the Mums, how can we forget those who are living in appalling circumstances and whose lives and well-being is constantly under threat from abusive spouses/partners?

We regularly read/see in the mass media awful stories about abused women who have been subjected to horrific treatment. Names of woman like Hannah; Karen; Lara; Kelly are just a few who have been subjected to terrible Domestic Violence, and these and many others had filed and obtained Domestic Violence Orders.

In every case, these orders have been repeatedly ignored by the assailants leading to tragic results which have been well documented. Repeated to the stage where murder has been committed. The situation leads me to ask who cares about the fate of these abused women and those potential cases yet to happen? Will you speak up? Will you contact the powers-that-be? (Continued within)

APSL wishes every Mother in this State and beyond - **A Happy Mother's Day!** (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
Toowoomba	07 4616 9700
Townsville	07 4721 5511
State Emergency Service Office	13 74 68
Youth & Family Support Service	07 3274 9917

Community Support Services Service Directory

Domestic Violence Crisis Line	1800 811 811
Immigrant Women's Support Service	07 3846 3490
	07 3255 1420
Qld Aged & Disability Advocacy	1800 818 338
Seniors & Go Card	13 74 68
Senior Shopper	1300 360 265
Sexual Assault Help Line	1800 811 811
South Brisbane Immigration & Community Legal Service	07 3846 3189
The Incapacitated Servicemen & Women's Assoc. of Aust	07 3356 9022
Women's legal Service	07 3392 0670
National Welfare Rights Network	1800 358 511

Department of Health Service Directory

Department of Health	1343 2584
Health Services Info Line	07 3837 5986
Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme	1300 443 570
My Aged Care	1800 200 422



MAY 2021

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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!

A MEMBER OF THE EVERY-AGE COUNTS COALITION OF ORGANISATIONS





EDITORIAL

By

Cherith Weis



Dear Friends,

You will notice that in this issue I have shown that I really disturbed at the rate of Domestic/Family Violence atrocities being committed in this country.

While we depend on media reports to put us in the picture, the real story why some - and I say *some* men are completely out of control.

So you may ask - why is a great grandmother so concerned? Someone who is not experiencing any similar problems. We are all part of a community and we *should* be concerned at the trend.

No one has the right to take another's life, let alone a tiny baby's life while she is strapped to her father as

he jumps to oblivion. While women are the main victims, the crime does include other family members.

How do we stop this trend? A Royal Commission? That takes time. In the mean time, the rate of DVO's being ignored has blown out. In this edition I have included figures which are a year or two old.

Sources say that the breaches of DVO's has risen greatly and the problem seems to be discussed publicly and then filed away in the "too-hard" basket.

A major campaign? I would appreciate your feedback. Stay safe - stay well.

Cherith Weis

NOTICE TO ALL APSL BRANCHES

At a recent management meeting of the APSL, the committee decided to once again waive the annual charge of Capitation fees.

While plans are well under way to again convene the ANNUAL CONFERENCE at Gympie, the conference levy will be payable by branches should the conference proceed. The situation will depend on any change that may arise due to COVID19.

Branches are reminded that the levy is always presented to the Branch conducting the conference.

Every life is an amazing story

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Over the next few weeks, **as many as 250,000 people will be forced into the Government's broken, punitive income support system**, now that JobKeeper has ended. That could mean a **massive surge in the number of constituents in individual electorates receiving income support**, so Members of Parliament will be listening closely to their communities. **This is our chance to be heard.**

Local and regional papers are a barometer for which issues are most important to local voters and you can be sure that **your local Federal Member of Parliament reads every edition**. That's why we need to make sure that the pages are filled with messages from local members of the community highlighting the impact on the local area.

Above From Raise the Rate for Good campaign.

At a recent meeting of the Australian Pensioners and Superannuants the "Newstart" allowance was discussed by all members present.

The 2019 State conference discussed the matter which was raised by the Gracemere Branch:-

Gracemere Branch of the Australian Pensioners' & Superannuants' League Qld Inc. calls on State Conference to approach the Federal Government to raise the Newstart Allowance, particularly for those over the age of 60 years.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT –

This older age group finds it extremely difficult to find employment because of their age and are usually subjected to "ageism" while applying for work. A more experienced sector would be hard to find.

Many of this age group exist on a Newstart Allowance of approximately \$290.00 per week while also working the designated hours set down under Centrelink's rules. These unemployed Australians are often confronted to find food and shelter as well as clothe themselves, therefore could be out on the streets in no time and homeless. Many may be lucky enough to cohabit with family members.

Our position has not changed and we believe that the recent paltry rise is not enough for recipients to exist on.

Prices of all commodities have increased greatly over the past year.

Weekly shopping bills for necessities have skyrocketed
and power costs are on an upward trend.

APSL - making a difference



INALA BRANCH MEMBER
CELEBRATES
HER 100TH BIRTHDAY!
CONGRATULATIONS, DOT!



What a lovely photo of birthday girl, Dot Teichman with her Grandson Thomas. Dot is a life member of the Inala Branch and she celebrated her 100th birthday on March 22, 2021.

She was absolutely delighted to receive letters and cards from the Queen; Governor General of Australia; Queensland's Governor; the Prime Minister; Queensland's Premier; Dot's Federal member and her local councilor.

APSL would like to add our best wishes to Dot; maybe a little belated but the meaning and feeling is contained in our sincere congratulations on this great occasion!

Happy Birthday, Lovely Lady!



Road Safety

With

Leyland Barnett

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

It is important to consider some important factors concerning traffic congestion that can be created from large events such as Beef Week.

I have seen our road networks come to almost a complete stand still from large volumes of traffic that can lead into crashes from impatient drivers taking unnecessary risks causing further chaos.

Try and minimize the risk by not using the roads in peak hour times such as school zone times and be prepared for considerable delays. Plan your travel to utilize traffic lights as much as possible, to allow controlled excess into streets. Diffuse any anger by playing some relaxing music and making good decisions while driving.

Large events such as Beef week will see a large volume of tourists enter into our city and we should all be aware that these drivers are not familiar with our roads. Have you experienced driving into a major city where you are unfamiliar with the roads and locations that you wish to visit? Do not be surprised if the motorist in front suddenly brakes and swerves into another lane without warning. If you see another car driving erratically, they could be distracted in trying to get directions to a location, so as defensive driver keep a safe distance away from them, preferably a minimum of a 3 second braking distance.

In heavy traffic be aware of what is happening around you and maintain safety margins or cushions from other lines of traffic. Check your centre mirror often and if you are aware that someone is too close behind you judge your braking carefully to allow the driver behind you some reaction time. If you are approaching a busy intersection or roundabout then slow down earlier in case you have to stop suddenly so that you don't get hit from behind. Being aware of your surroundings is important especially if an emergency vehicle with lights and sirens on approaches, where you need to ensure that you give way to emergency vehicles.

In congested traffic be a defensive driver and never assume the other driver knows the road rules and drive to the conditions. I had an incident a couple of days ago in the Rockhampton CBD where a 4wd ute cut us off from the other side, at a set of lights, as we were turning left. The student was aware of the road rules however the other driver wasn't and a collision was avoided due to the observance of the speed of the other vehicle coming across the intersection. It was an important lesson for the student as to never assume the other driver knows what they are doing.

Stay alert when traffic is congested and remember the fatal five while driving or riding on our roads as your due diligence towards safety is the key to your survival.

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

MILLION PAWS WALK DURING MAY

The RSPCA's much-loved Million Paws Walk dog walking event is back in 2021 with a virtual alternative: Walk This May – and sign-ups are now open.

Because of COVID-19 developments, the RSPCA Qld will once again hold Million Paws Walk as a virtual event, where dog lovers will walk their pet for 30, 45 or 60 minutes a day throughout the month of May to raise money for the RSPCA and be a hero for dogs in need.

Million Paws Walk: Walk This May celebrates a mutual love of animals while keeping owners and pets healthy and safe as they hit the pavement in their own backyards and neighbourhoods.

“Sadly COVID-19 restrictions have affected our ability to hold physical walks in Qld”, said RSPCA Qld spokesperson Michael Beatty.

“Our dogs still need their exercise despite the restrictions and this is still possible while practicing social distancing and maintaining good hygiene. “

“Plus, community events like Million Paws Walk are even more crucial in these challenging times, as we depend on fundraising and donations to survive and continue the life saving work that we do. We desperately need you and your pooches’ help this May.”

Million Paws Walk is a national event and in the lead up participants are encouraged to fundraise online and through merchandise sales available on the Million Paws Walk: Walk This May website. This will contribute to supporting the RSPCA’S work within the community, including caring for and re-homing some 112,000 animals that depend on us all over Australia each year.

#MillionPawsWalk and #MPWDOGSQUAD will be used across social media to allow walkers to share images and routes.

Detailed information, registration forms, fundraising progress and merchandise are available for individuals to view and purchase at **www.millionpawswalk.com.au**. We would encourage people to contact their local RSPCA Care Centres and Community groups for interviews.

Brisbane <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcawacolbrisbane/qld>

Bundaberg <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcabundaberg/qld>

Cairns <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcacairns/qld>

Dakari <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcadakabin/qld>

Edmund <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcawildliferehabilitationcentreateumundi/qld>

Gold Coast <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcagoldcoast/qld>

Gympie <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcagympie/qld>

Kangaroo <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcakingaroy/qld>

Mackay <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcamackay/qld>

Noosa <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcanoosa/qld>

Rockhampton <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcarockhampton/qld>

Toowoomba <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcatoowoomba/qld>

Townsville <https://www.millionpawswalk.com.au/fundraisers/rspcatownsville/qld>

Hill’s Pet Nutrition is the National Nutrition Sponsor of the RSPCA and the Million Paws Walk - providing dog and cat food for animals in our shelters nationwide for over 23 years.



Planning is underway for Queensland Seniors Month to be held in October 2021.

Seniors Month provides opportunities to promote positive community attitudes towards older people and ageing, facilitate community participation, and enhance community connections, aligning with the Queensland Government's and Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland's vision of building Age-friendly communities in Queensland.

COTA Queensland coordinates Queensland Seniors Month on behalf of the Queensland Government.

Both COTA Queensland and the State Government value the contribution older people have made – whether as volunteers or in the workforce, community leaders or carers, grandparents, or advocates.

To stay up to date with news and information about Queensland Seniors Month on:

Website

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

*Get in contact with **COTA Queensland** at seniorsweek@cotaqld.org.au or phone 07 3316 2908.*

To find out about information and services for seniors, visit www.qld.gov.au/seniors

oo0oo

Comment:-

I am sure most people would agree that this move will be a hit with seniors. I think it's a massive move which gives organisers plenty of time to plan an event.

Conducting a Seniors Month of activities commencing on International Seniors Day on October 1 and ending on Grandparents Day gives groups a whole month to organize functions. Whereas Seniors Week was too short a time to hold an event without clashing with other organisations.

I know that coming out of winter and having to organize a function for Seniors Week puts pressure on Committees so this change should work well.

Applications for funding of up to \$1,000 opens on Thursday, April 1 and close on May 31.

I would encourage APSL branches and all groups to take advantage of the opportunity of holding a function during the month of October. (Ed.)

WHERE THE BLOODY HELL ARE WE ???

BABINDA BRANCH AP&SL

The Babinda Branch is the only Branch still active in Far North Queensland, {previous branches were Mareeba, Edmonton, Gordonvale and Innisfail.}

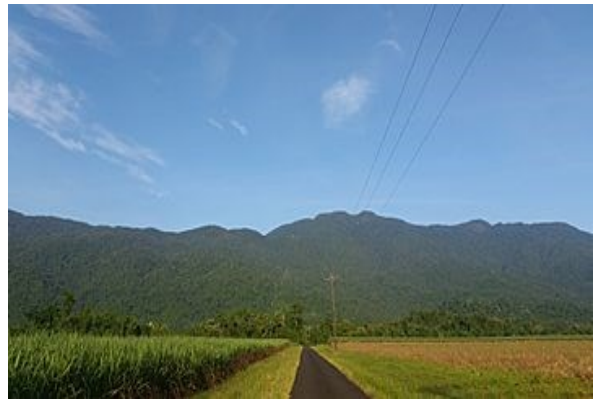
Babinda Branch currently has 12 members and meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 9 am with a cuppa before the meeting at the Babinda Taskforce, Not sure when the branch started as records have been destroyed as a result of Cyclone damage, but known to be operating since late 1970s

Babinda is a small Sugar farming town on the Bruce Highway approximately 1,600 klms north of Brisbane and 60 Klms south of Cairns and 30 Klms north of Innisfail

It is surrounded by two of Queensland's highest mountains, {Mt BARTLE Frere 1622 m . The mountain was named after Sir Henry Bartle Frere, a British colonial administrator and then president of the Royal Geographical Society by George Elphinstone Dalrymple in 1873 and

Mt BELLENDEN KER 1593 m pictured right } which are part of the World Heritage Wooroonooran National Park It is named after the botanist John Bellenden Ker Gawler.

Babinda is also renowned for being Australia's wettest town battling with Tully {just down the highway} for the title.



The Babinda Boulders and Josephine Falls, Art Deco Heritage listed buildings including the Iconic State Hotel built in 1917 are some of the attractions along with the renowned Babinda Bakery that bring people to Babinda,

Bellenden Ker Range, granitic massif, in the Eastern Highlands, northeastern Queensland, Australia, extending for 40 mi (65 km) along the coast northeast from Nerada to Gordonvale, just south of Cairns. Bounded by the Mulgrave River (east), the Innisfail Downs (south), and the Atherton Plateau (west), the range was named after the Scottish botanist John Bellenden-Ker and culminates at Mt. Bartle Frere, 5,287 ft (1,611 m). In 1921 the area was made a national park, which encompasses 125 sq mi (325 sq km) and is accessible via the Bruce Highway from Brisbane (830 mi southeast). Features include Aboriginal bora (ring-like mounds of earth used for tribal rites), varied wildlife (including kangaroo), and vegetation ranging from tropical rain forests to scrub-covered peaks. Beautiful country!

Thanks to Graham Lynch.

Some details obtains from Britannica website.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FIGURES

Violence against women is now recognised to be a serious and widespread problem in Australia, with enormous individual and community impacts and social costs.

However this significant social problem is also ultimately preventable. But to prevent violence against women we first need to understand it. Get informed with these key statistics, facts and definitions.

The following basic statistics help demonstrate the prevalence and severity of violence against women. They have been taken from OurWatch.

Read more resources on domestic violence.

- On average, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner.
- 1 in 3 Australian women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15.
- 1 in 5 Australian women has experienced sexual violence.
- 1 in 6 Australian women has experienced physical or sexual violence by current or former partner.
- 1 in 4 Australian women has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner.

Australian women are nearly three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner.

Australian women are almost four times more likely than men to be hospitalised after being assaulted by their spouse or partner.

Women are more than twice as likely as men to have experienced fear or anxiety due to violence from a former partner.

More than two-thirds (68%) of mothers who had children in their care when they experienced violence from their previous partner said their children had seen or heard the violence.

Almost one in 10 women (9.4%) have experienced violence by a stranger since the age of 15.

Young women (18 – 24 years) experience significantly higher rates of physical and sexual violence than women in older age groups.

There is growing evidence that women with disabilities are more likely to experience violence.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women report experiencing violence in the previous 12 months at 3.1 times the rate of non-Indigenous women.

In 2014–15, Indigenous women were 32 times as likely to be hospitalised due to family violence as non-Indigenous women.

Figures from the DVConnect website.

From Sarah Moss

I think we should start using the term “escape.”

Domestic violence victims don’t leave; they escape.

Some don’t make it out with their lives; all are injured.

The use the word “leave” implies it’s easy; that it’s a simple process of packing a bag and walking out.

It’s an escape, with high risk. It has to be planned carefully, and it isn’t always successful.

Why didn’t she leave?

Can be answered with, “She wasn’t able to escape.”

WHAT CAN YOU OR I DO?

A domestic violence order was broken 84 times a day on average in Queensland in 2019, police statistics show.

A total of 30,796 domestic violence protection orders (DVO) were breached last year, an average of four an hour and almost five times as many as the 2001 figure.

The shocking act of violence shows that for some women, a DVO does nothing to stop a deadly attack.

Brock Wall was sentenced to two terms of life in prison after murdering his ex-girlfriend, Fabiana Palhares, with an axe and jumping on her stomach to kill their unborn child at their Varsity Lakes home in 2015.

Wall had two domestic violence protection orders made against him at the time.

Two days later, Karina Lock, 49, was shot dead by her estranged husband, Steve Lock, in front of horrified onlookers at a Gold Coast McDonald's. They then watched him shoot himself in the head.

He had a court-ordered two-year domestic violence order against him at the time.

Across the state in 2001, there were 6500 DVO breaches, compared with 30,796 in 2019 – an increase of 374 per cent.

There is probably still an under-reporting of the amount of breaches that do occur, because we still have many women and clients who come to us and inform us of difficulties in getting police to take breach action or take the matters seriously.

"The domestic violence orders do require the back-up of police to take breach action to be really effective."

Ms Lynch said even the act of obtaining an order could be a meaningful symbol for a lot of victims.

"It signifies in a public way for the first time the system acknowledging what she has been through," she said.

Once an order was made, it was up to police to crack down on breaches, which could escalate quickly.

Tara Brown's death came less than a week after she sought police help to protect her from her estranged partner. CREDIT:FACEBOOK/TARA BROWN FOUNDATION FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELIEF

From the Brisbane Times website....

THE WAY I SEE IT

What is it going to take to bring a halt to the murderous intentions of some spouses and partners.

A woman is murdered and we seem to talk about it for a week with comments like "How shocking—how can a husband murder his wife—how could he burn her to death—why kill the kids?"

Familiar words?

However, what have we done about it? Have we written to our local members expressing the need for much needed action? Have we started a campaign? Did we know that the immense terror suffered by these women? The worst and most dangerous time for a DV victim to move is when the decision has been made and the dangerous times begin? She's covered by a DVO - you think? The records show a DVO is a piece of paper and totally ignored by these men who are on a murderous mission. (Ed)

KURILPA KITCHEN CLIENTS DAY OUT



On Thursday 22 April, a group of 14 Kurilpa Kitchen clients joined us for an outing to the Botanical Gardens at Mount Coot-tha.

The group enjoyed a mid-morning stroll through the lush greenery, then hiked up to an elevated look-out area where staff had set up a gorgeous picnic of gourmet sandwiches with cheese and fruit.

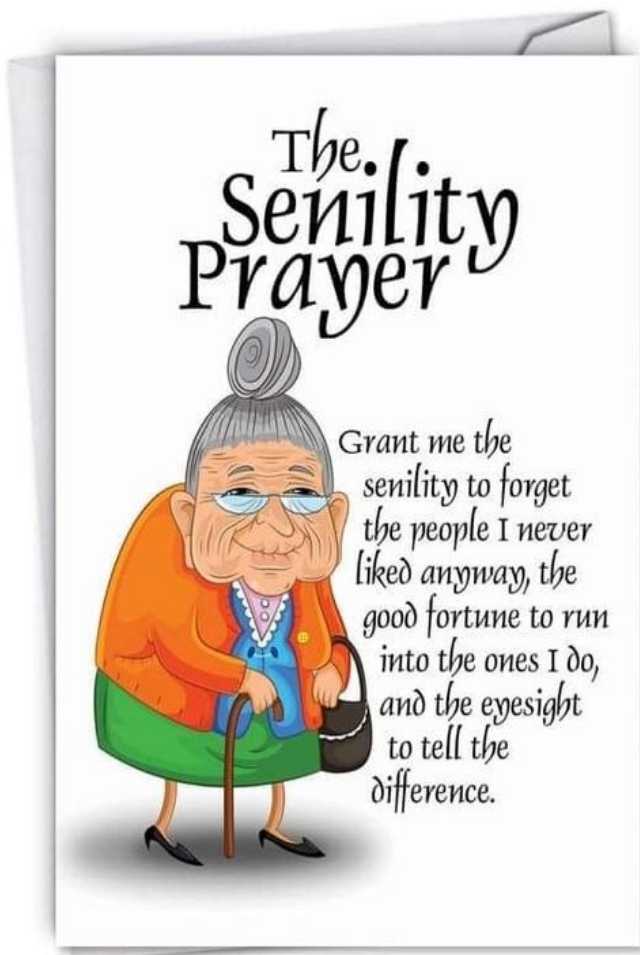
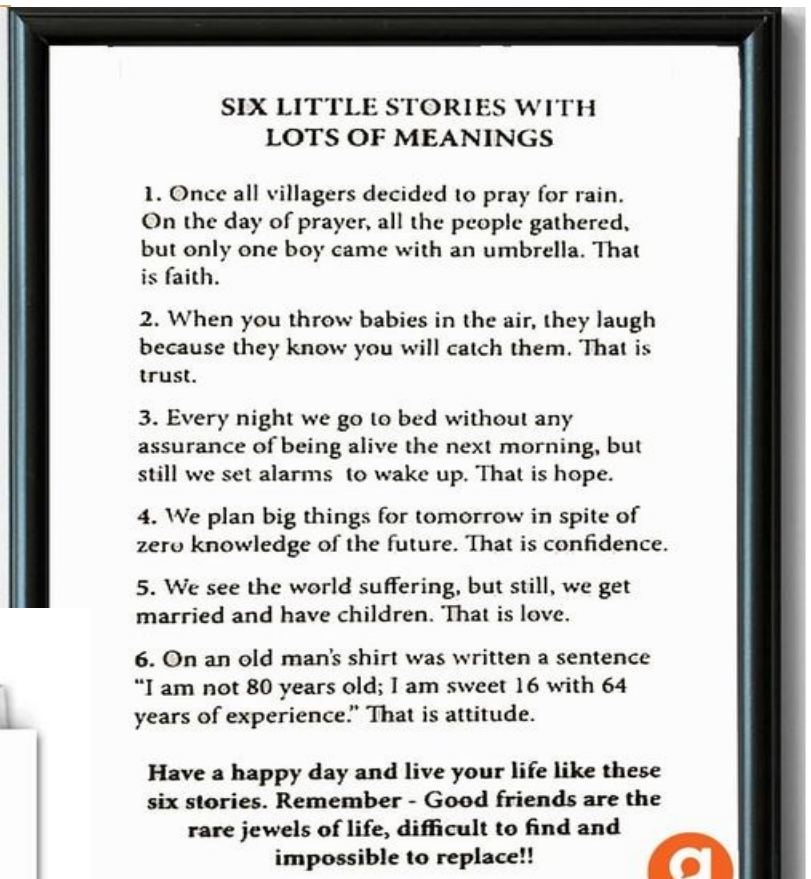
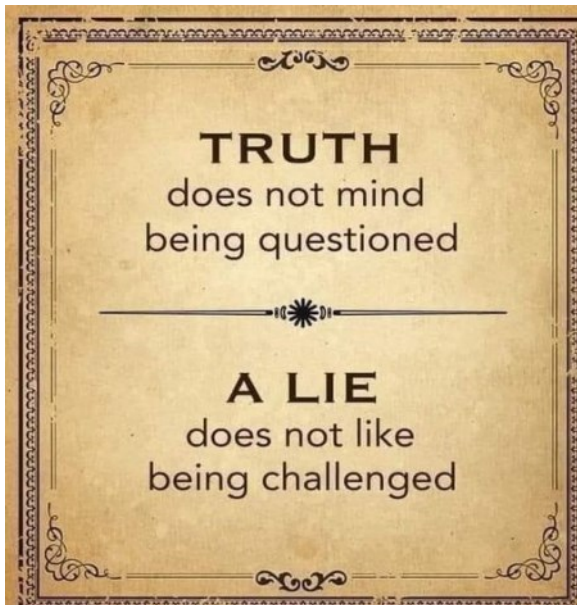
The weather was balmy and an ideal temperature for outdoor recreation. It was so good, we'll have to plan another one soon!

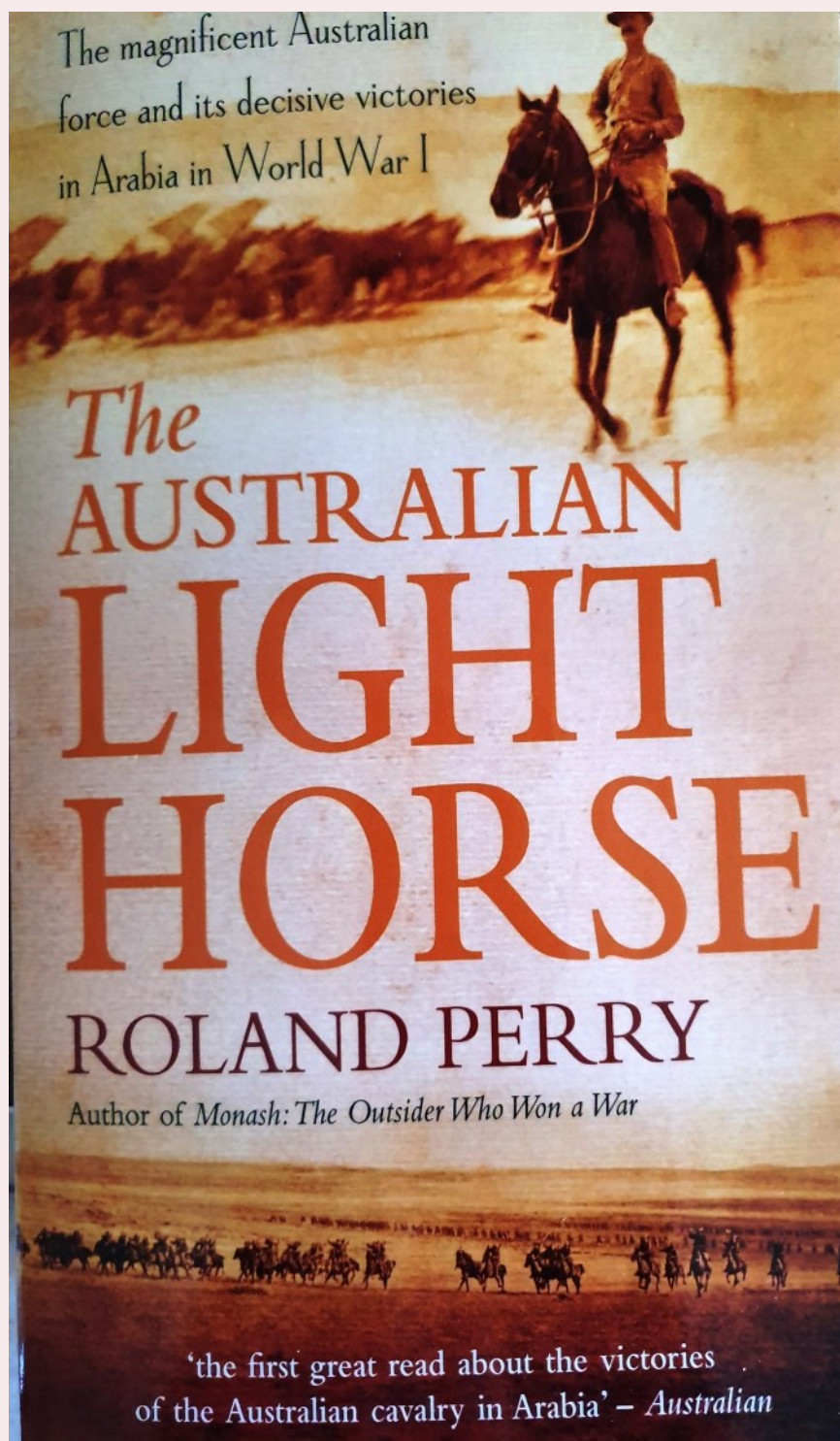


COVID19 IS STILL WITH US

COVID19 is still with us and the rules still apply. Social distancing (some people completely ignore this one) - Always carry a mask - if you are travelling by train or flying - airports have not lifted the "wear-a-mask" rule.

Are you being vaccinated? Several of our members have had theirs and I haven't heard of any side effects. Mine is probably coming up near the end of June. {Ed}





RECOMMENDED READING

Are you a bookworm?

Are you interested in our Australia's military history?

If so, this Roland Perry account of the Australian Light Horse and their victorious escapades in Arabia during World War 1, will keep you interested from beginning to end.

The book is available from Australia Post Offices for the bargain price of \$14.99.

Roland Perry has also written another account of The Australian Light Horse; as well as Bill the Bastard: Monash; Red Lead (a cat which survived the sinking of the HMAS Perth and the Burma Railway} and many other books on Australians at war.

DOMESTICE/FAMILY VIOLENCE

Did you know?

- 84 D.V.Orders are breached in Queensland every day
- Reportedly 100,000 complaints received in Queensland yearly
- There are only 90 DVF Specialist Officers in the State
- Chronic under-resourcing to prevent harm to women
- Enough is enough!

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.