

# THE COMET

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



## STOP PRESS! CAMPAIGN RENEWED!

The Australian Pensioners' and Superannuants' League's recent State Conference unanimously backed moves to push for a renewal of moves for a more equitable difference between the Single and the Coupled pension. Conference supported:

- A comprehensive community document demonstrating the financial discrepancy between the Single and Coupled pension detailing the hardship and mental trauma that it causes.
- This document is also to call on the Federal Government to implement the necessary legislation to set the financial difference between the single and coupled pension at no more than 20 percent or lower than that of the current coupled pension and to remain at that rate in all future Aged Pension adjustments.
- When compiled, this document is to be presented to every major community and welfare organisation in Australia for their signatures of support and then presented to the Federal Government for inclusion as a complete Federal Government Budget item for the next Federal Budget.

This Agenda Item highlights the discrepancy between the Single Aged Pension and the Couple Aged Pension. The aim is to have a document put

together to put before the Federal government as a budget issue. A comprehensive community document is required to call strongly on lawmakers to set the difference between Single and Coupled pensions rates at no more than 20%. A proper Submission paper should be drafted and presented to the Federal Government before the next election. Awareness to the issue and attention by lawmakers is critical for the success of this campaign.

The September Pensioner rate boost is as follows

Single Age Pension to rise \$14.80 – for a total fortnightly payment of \$967.50.

Couple Age Pension to rise \$22.40 – for a total fortnightly payment of \$1,458.60.

Pensions are adjusted twice per year and the coming rise goes into effect on September 20, and is the largest increase since 2014. This rise reflects new high rates of inflation.

A detailed report from Babinda's Graham Lynch was circulated to all at the Conference.

A combined effort should be made in the near future to have branches come together and make a move on this important issue.

Moved by Caloundra to endorse and accept this Agenda Item as in the Conference Booklet with no changes. Seconded by Warwick.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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**The Australian Pensioners' and Superannuants' League Qld, Inc. (APSL) provides advocacy and support services to pensioners and superannuants in Queensland.**

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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
Police link Queensland Police (non-urgent)	131 444
Crime Stoppers	1800 333 000

### **Advertisers**



## **OCTOBER 2021**

Our Campaign—pension

P2 Services Directory plus

P3 Editorial

P4 ANNE RING

P5 RSPCA

P6 Road Safety with Leyland

P7 CONFERENCE

P8 CONFERENCE

F9 CONFERENCE

P10 RAY HUGGINS

P 11 RAY HUGGINS

P 12 MORE CONFERENCE

P 13 Dementia

P 14 Bits & Pieces

P 15 SENIORS MONTH MT.  
Morgan

P16 CODE OF CONDUCT

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 EVERYAGE COUNTS COALITION OF ORGANISATIONS**





## EDITORIAL

By

Cherith Weis



Dear Readers,

As you can see, we had a busy conference and one of the most important issues to be put forward by Caloundra is featured on the front page.

I make no apologies for placing it where I have.

A few years ago, when the matter was put forth in a petition, I copped some "flack" especially from married couples. Let me assure you, we do not see your pension being reduced.

This matter is something after one has lived for years with one's spouse, and then the inevitable happens.

Yes, we know that not all pensioners lives are the same. Varying circumstances, surround each and everyone one of us when we apply for and are granted the pension.

When one loses a partner, most times one suddenly finds that the overall household/living costs remain and this has to be dealt with during one of the most stressful time in one's life. If the remaining pensioner is left as a home owner, after some time maintenance and other costs associated with the property mount up and affordability is often challenged.

Not all pensioners have savings to fall back on or a whole lot of superannuation. Many single pensioners who are falling behind have never had superannuation. Many single pensioners have found that what they retired with is not going to last long.

Not all pensioners are affected in the same way. Many of us come together under the umbrella of "Pensioner", however, not all of us should be compare with those whose trek through life has been

on a road less corrugated.

APSL is thinking of the future with a guaranteed Pension and calling on the "powers-that-be" to think into the future and act on the behalf of pensioners.

Therefore we call on the Government officials; the public; and all members and supporters to get behind this move for a more and equitable system for the payment to all who receive an aged pension.

A meeting will be held with the chief proponents of the campaign, Caloundra branch and the State Executive Committee at a venue in Gympie on Friday, October 22nd.

Until next month - Stay safe and well.  
Cherith.

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## **“We can all be pro-ageing and anti-ageist media monitors”**



**Anne Ring**

Comet readers will know that I feel strongly about respecting old age for what it is. And one of the ways in which I try to foster that is by being what I call a “media monitor”. By that, I mean that I keep a watchful eye out for the ways in which old age and issues about ageing are portrayed in the variety of media that I have access to. When I see a portrayal that is praiseworthy positive or realistic, I send a letter to congratulate them. This is something that the legendary Val French and OPSO (Older People Speak Out) did successfully for many years on a national scale through their Media Awards. And it is also something that we can do as individuals.

In addition, however, I also call out ageism in its various forms when I see that, by writing a letter to the relevant organisation (which, more often than not, might not be aware of the impact of what has been written or said) and pointing that out.

Being a media monitor is not always successful in bringing about change, but if we keep on chipping away at the negative stereotypes around being old, who knows what we might achieve? As to how this can work, I’ve pasted in the main points of a letter I wrote earlier this year to tackle an instance of what I consider to be ageism: the Palace Cinemas labelling their 2021 festival of movies for older people “The Young at Heart Film Festival”:

Dear Palace Cinemas Team,

As a movie lover for most of my 79 years, and someone who would rather see a film at a cinema than on the television, I am a great supporter of the Palace Cinemas. So, I am writing as a fan in asking you to rethink your branding of the annual movie festival for older people, as being for the “Young at Heart”.

What does that even mean? That we older people – God forbid, as someone who has accompanied grandchildren to see that excruciating film – should be watching “Tom and Jerry”?

Or that only those of us who can put our hands on our hearts and declare them “young” are eligible to

see a typically excellently curated set of movies about interesting older people having fun or facing up to challenges as part of their experience of ageing?

To put it bluntly, seeking to affirm youth as a value in ageing is plain ageist. And patronising. It’s actually time to acknowledge all the benefits of a life being well lived as older people, one that is based on the experiences, learning and relationships that are continuously accumulating to add to whom we are.

As such, we shouldn’t be persuaded to suddenly see the virtue of defining ourselves as being cases of arrested development by the “achievement” of staying young.

In fact, as we have been doing ever since birth, we keep on growing and developing as we get older. This is especially so in modern times, pandemic only possible for the young and the youthful was well and truly put to bed in 2012 in the Courier-Mail by psychology professor Nancy Pachana, in her powerful description of the amazing and continuing adaptability of centenarians, as she reeled off all that they had lived through, from the arrival of electricity through two world wars and into the era of robots, computers and social media, as well as some of the more negative aspects of ageing such as illness and loss of family and friends. Her conclusion? “Our image of older people is really bad because we stereotype them as being inflexible and not being able to cope with change, when really they can, and have.”

So, hopefully, I’ve made a case for relabelling your rich variety of movies cherry-picked to entertain us, to something that more accurately portrays us as we are now: perhaps, the “Evergreen Film Fans’ Festival”?

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter.

Regards,

Anne Ring

Fingers crossed that next year’s great film festival will have a more appropriate name, celebrating us as we are.

**Anne Ring ©2021**

## **Early start to horror “Trauma Season”**

October traditionally signals the start of the wildlife breeding season which sees a dramatic increase in the number of wildlife on the move. Sadly this means that large numbers of native animals and birds are hit by cars or find themselves victims of dog and cat attacks.

This year the trauma season once again kicked off early with warmer temperatures coming a month sooner than expected.

“We’re already seeing a lot of koalas, possums and echidnas come into care,” said Senior Wildlife Veterinarian Meaghan Barrow. Each year the season seems to start earlier because the temperature starts to warm up at the end of July.

But of course it’s not just animals. It’s the breeding and birthing season for all native wildlife. Strong winds can also contribute with baby birds being blown out of trees and onto areas where they’re at risk of being attacked by dogs and cats.

In the last year over 27,000 native animals and birds have passed through RSPCA Qld’s wildlife hospital. Ten years ago the number was just over 8,000. The wildlife hospital operates 24/7 and on any day during trauma season it can have over 200 animals and birds in care. Many of these are orphans.

“That’s a staggering increase and really disturbing. Habitat destruction is to blame but we’d also urge people to slow down and keep their dogs and cats inside at night.”

Anyone who comes across injured wildlife can call the RSPCA’s animal hotline on 1300 ANIMAL for advice.

A cut video and wildlife “roughs” can be found below

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/dx4756zi64hnsud/The%20Buzz%20-%20Spring%20-%20Media.mp4?dl=0>

## **TICKS**

The recent welcome rain combined with early high temperatures means paralysis ticks are already in the community. RSPCA Qld and private vets are seeing a stream of animals being brought in with tick paralysis.

RSPCA Qld’s Senior Veterinarian Dr Anne Chester is warning all pet owners to check their pets thoroughly for any signs of ticks.

“Our main concern is the paralysis tick,” she said. “All pet owners should seek advice from their vet on the best form of tick prevention. There are several alternatives including washes, collars, sprays, spot-ons and tablets. The paralysis tick can act very quickly indeed and can cause severe impairment or worse. It’s a killer!”

You really do need to check for ticks daily, even if they are taking tick preventives.”

Dr Chester said that people need to be of the early symptoms of tick paralysis. An unsteady staggering gait, a dry cough and even just a change in the animal’s bark or meow could mean they’ve been infected.

“They should seek veterinary attention immediately,” she emphasized. “The sooner the antiserum is administered the less chance there is of the tick poisoning being lethal. Prompt action can and will save lives.”

## **HARRY STYLES**

*Recently, our Inspectors were called to rescue a cat that was caught in a foothold trap on a property north of Brisbane. Thankfully Inspectors were able to transport the cat, nicknamed “Harry Styles”, to Scarborough Veterinary Surgery where the trap was removed and immediate treatment was provided.*

*This is yet another example of a foothold trap being used in a manner that is inhumane, and posing a risk to not only pets and wildlife, but also children who may accidentally come across it. The RSPCA encourages the community to contact their local council to address the issue of stray animals and to access humane traps for their property if needed. The community is also encouraged to keep their cats contained inside their homes or in appropriate enclosures, to protect their pets along with native wildlife.*

*Although currently legal in Queensland, if used inappropriately the person setting these type of traps may face criminal charges. The State Government is also currently reviewing the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, and the use of these traps will form part of the discussion. Anyone who witnesses animal cruelty or welfare concerns should report it immediately to RSPCA’s 24/7 Animal Emergency Hotline on 1300 ANIMAL (1300 264 625).*





# **ROAD SAFETY**

## **With**

# **LEYLAND BARNETT**

### ***Responsibility***

***Road safety always comes to driver responsibility and it is important that we have a great understanding of road rules before attempting to drive on our roads safely.***

***I had an incident today where someone reversed out of their driveway with extensive speed resulting in a situation where they could have rammed our car with no consideration of damage or hospitalization of innocent people?***

***The best thing to get the attention of a distracted driver is to use your horn to avoid a collision and to either brake firmly or look at hard acceleration to avoid collision where costly repairs or serious injuries could occur?***

***At the end of the day we need to be defensive drivers and react quickly and responsibly to avoid a collision that impacts so many lives.***

***To the people that think they are invisible driving 4wds, it is most likely that you will be flipped on your lid in the event of a collision? Please understand the laws of physics and of the higher centre of balance that some 4wds have that can result in serious roll overs in loose gravel on country roads?***

***Being a responsible driver on our roads requires an understanding of not only road rules but of the physics of a vehicle in motion.***

***Wet slippery surfaces create situations where 4wds can lose traction on sharp uneven surfaces leading into serious loss of control.***

***Peter Brock was a legendary figure in motor sports and he lost his life on a rally event where his car ended up into a tree on a bend. It doesn't matter how much experience you have driving on our roads, it matters on your responsibility and your ability to ensure that you arrive safely to your destination.***

***A simple shoulder check before changing lanes can make all the difference in regards to being a defensive driver and reducing risks of collisions?***

***A simple attitude of being a safe driver and arriving home to your family and friends should be the first thing that happens before turning the key on the ignition of your motor vehicle.***

***Please drive safely these school holidays and be a responsible driver, God Bless and be safe.***

# CONFERENCE COVERAGE



**Caloundra President, Frank Gower addresses State Conference held In Gympie on September 13 and 14, 2021. Caloundra delivered a presentation on the Single Pension and the need for the difference between the Coupled Pension and the Single pension to be lowered to around 20%. An Australia wide campaign will commence shortly in an effort to gain wide support.**

Newly elected State President, Barry Ramsay presented a gift on behalf of APSL, To Returning Officer, Rick Wadrop of the Albert Park Bowls Club, thanking him for carrying out his duties.



Guest Speaker, Snr. Constable Darryn Hewitt received a gift from Gympie's Branch Secretary, Maureen Perry.

Snr Constable Darryn Hewitt proved to be a popular guest speaker when he addressed the Monday afternoon session at the State Conference.

Snr Const. Hewitt spoke on various instances of Domestic / Family Violence; the prolific numbers of scammers at work at the moment (mobile phone messages); and among other matters, knife crime around Gympie.

He also spoke of his work with youth in the Gympie district.





## Introducing the APSL 2021—2022 Management Committee

**Back row — Maureen Perry (Gympie); Michael Holland (Warwick); Meg Paterson (Gladstone); Margaret Laughton (Gracemere); Kevin Ward (Gympie)**

**Seated —Anne Long (Gympie); Nola Harvey (Gracemere); Barry Ramsay (Kurilpa); Cherith Weis (North Rockhampton). Not present Graham Lynch (Babinda).**



Pictured are the 2021 - 2022 APSL STATE Executive Committee —Standing Margaret Laughton (Treasurer); Nola Harvey (Vice President); President Barry Ramsay and Cherith Weis ,Secretary.

After trying to stage a Conference for two years, Covid stayed away long enough for a successful conference this year. Maureen Perry was presented with a gift for her fine efforts by Cherith Weis.





## 2021 State Conference Gympie Sept 13 & 14, 2021



## A PHOTO MIX

Holding anything during these COVID times is a challenge.

After having to hold last year's late in the year and on ZOOM, there were some anxious moments as September approached. However, our Gympie Branch Secretary Maureen Perry was always confident that nothing would stop it this year. We didn't have to resort to Plan B. The pics on this page are one of the planning stage (the day before); our free night dinner at the Jockey Club Hotel and others of those branch members who stayed for the end of conference dinner at the Albert Park Bowls Club; not forgetting our entertainers. Thank you!

**Australian Pensioners and Superannuants League****174 Boundary St, West End, QLD 4101****Attention: Cherith Weis, APSL State Secretary**

Further to the 2021 AGM in Gympie I would like to share a story through the APSL newsletter about my experience with my energy company in the hope that it may assist others.

Here are the facts:

Late last year I acquired the solar system which was installed in January 2021. Consequently, I received my first quarterly account for the period 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2020 to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to the amount of \$104.55. This was made up of 2 parts - the standard energy usage and my new solar system. The bill included a "Demand Charge" of \$39.30 that I did not question at the time.

On receiving my second quarterly account I was billed for the amount \$20.00. This was wholly related to the new solar system. However, this time I noted that there was a Demand Charge for \$87.89 and after using their 1-800 telephone number, I challenged AGL to explain the reason for this charge. It seemed I was asking too many questions and they had difficulty answering to my satisfaction so I was transferred to the Reconciliation Dept. This seemed strange to me considering they are a long-established professional company.

The explanation given by the Reconciliation staff member was that the Demand Charge was related to the period between the hours 4pm to 8pm. During this period there is an additional charge based on the kilo watts per hour (kWh). That is calculated on the highest reading one has in any half ½ hour during this period.

On my third quarterly account I was \$66.43 in credit however the Demand Charge was 4.926 kWh @ the price rate of \$0.2404 which equates to \$106.58 for **the 90 days of the term of transition of my account with AGL** or (4.926 x \$0.2404 x 90 days = \$106.58). That means that without the Demand Charge I would have been in credit for the sum of \$173.01.

After a long discussion and explanation the staff member credited me for the total sum \$155.84 labelled it as an Inconvenience Credit. I need to point out that there was a slight increase in the General Usage and the Tariff 33 Controlled Charges effectively "giving with one hand and taking with the other". Reluctantly I agreed being assured during our conversation that the Demand Charge would not be applied again.

However, this was not the case. On phoning the 1-800 number again, I was unable to find the same staff member and ended up talking to another person. I asked what happens if I don't use electricity between those hours? This person said that the numbers would improve as we approached longer sunshine hours. He also pointed out it would help to control the use of cooking during the 4pm to 8pm time slot, not to use all the appliances at the same time and also avoid using the washing machine, dishwasher, clothes dryer etc.

My reply to him was that this is was impractical, especially for working Mums & Dads trying to feed the children after getting home from work. So, in this case, there was no compromise on the Demand Charge. He couldn't tell me why I had received a credit previously either and would not give any assurance that the Demand Charge would not be applied in future.

At the end of my conversation with both officers I asked for a direct contact number to reach them if required. They would only provide the main 1800 number, proving both annoying and time consuming as well as repetitive.

I contacted the Ombudsman and she advised me that the Federal Government approved an extra loading fee for the peak usage of electricity between the hours of 4-8pm and so Energex applied the charges and passed it onto their retailers such as AGL which in turn passed this on to their consumers. However, talking to other retailers it appears they absorbed this additional charge at no cost to their customers.

My advice to all members of the APSL and others is to scrutinise their account from their nominated electricity provider. Do not be complacent and really check the charges from your provider.

Sincere Regards

Raymond Huggins

Phone (07) 54928085 Email:- [hugginsfamilyau@yahoo.com](mailto:hugginsfamilyau@yahoo.com)

P. N. With The assistance of Jody Plecas we were able to fine tune this transcript of which is more easily to read and comprehend. I am very much appreciated of Jody's Interest and assistance with this document Ray Huggins

## **MATTER RAISED AT CONFERENCE.**

**This letter follows on from the previous page. Ray raised this matter at our recent conference and it was thought if it was “aired” in The Comet, other readers may also have similar problems.**

Att Comet @apsl.com.au

C.C. Cherith Weis (State Secretary)

Subject Re:- AGL – Ombudsman

Hi Cherith,

Further to my letter for the Comet of which you received there has been a turn around by AGL after referring the problem to the Ombudsman, who in turn contacted AGL in SOUTH AUSTRALIA at the top Management.

Briefly and to the point AGL after a lot of Argy—Bargy of negotiations they came up with a proposal as follows:-

General Charge .1559 to .1491cents

Demand Charge 2404 cents per KWH to .0758cents per KWH

Tariff 33 Controlled Charge \$0.1626 TO \$0.158 per KWH

Supply Charge \$88.66 **same as before**

Solar Metering Charge Per (90 days) \$0.07 = \$6.30 **same as before**

FEED IN TARRIFF was \$0.15 TO \$0.12

QLD GOV Electricity Rebate \$76.40 **same as before**

All the above is based on 90 days from the previous statement

As you can see they put it in one hand and take it out in the other.

They also gave me a new contract starting from the 20<sup>th</sup> of September to the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2021.

A Monthly arrangement instead of a 90 days

Also a credit of \$200-00 from the time I commenced the Solar system.

Then AGL suggested we contact the Ombudsman and say this has been resolved.

My answer to this; it is not resolved until I receive the first new Statement of which the Ombudsman whole heartily agreed with me.

Cherith I have written this addition to you as I thought it might be worth it's substance to the previous letter to prove to people who read the Comet we don't have to except things that are conveyed to us. Look forward to your reply.

I will leave this to your discretion how you present this additional correspondence.

Sincere Regards

Ray Huggins

hugginsfamilyau@yahoo.com

Ph (07) 54928085



## FROM THE CONFERENCE

### MASTER MEMBERSHIP REGISTER AT HEAD OFFICE

A reminder to Branches - It is important that Branches advise Head Office of all changes to branch membership numbers (increase/decrease) and also the contact details for same. The maintenance of a comprehensive membership list is required by the Office of Fair Trading and importantly, by the APSL Constitution. Membership numbers at the branch level will impact the cost of Public Liability and Voluntary Workers' insurance – as well as the amount invoiced to each branch for their insurance certificates.

### CAPITATION FEES

In 2021, Branches have been exempted from paying Capitation Fees. The income from Capitation Fees has traditionally been a contribution from branches to help cover the expenses involved in running the organisation at the state level. Without this contribution, the financial stability of the organisation declining at a faster rate.

Moved by Gracemere that APSL Capitation Fees be reinstated to be paid, with the intent to review the rate of fees annually at State Conference. Seconded by Gladstone. CARRIED

### ELECTION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

#### OFFICE BEARERS / EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT – Barry Ramsay

VICE PRESIDENT – Nola Harvey

SECRETARY – Cherith Weis

ASSISTANT STATE SECRETARY – the position is left vacant with the intent to fill it later in the year.

TREASURER – Margaret Laughton

AREA ORGANISERS (FIVE)

Area 1 – Graham Lynch of Babinda.

Area 2 – Anne Long

Area 3 – Meg Paterson

Area 4 – Maureen Perry

Area 5 – Michael Holland

ORDINARY MEMBERS ON COMMITTEE (THREE)

Kevin Ward (Gympie)

Some unfilled vacancies remain which the Management Committee has the power to fill in the coming year.



Guest Speaker at conference  
was Snr Constable Darryn  
Hewitt.

He spoke on Domestic/Family  
Violence; Scams; Safety in the  
home; Knife crime; covering a  
wide area of matters. He is well  
known for his work with youth  
in Gympie.

## What is dementia?

Dementia describes a collection of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain. It is not one specific disease.

Dementia affects thinking, behaviour and the ability to perform everyday tasks. Brain function is affected enough to interfere with the person's normal social or working life.

## Who gets dementia?

Most people with dementia are older, but it is important to remember that not all older people get dementia. It is not a normal part of ageing.

Dementia can happen to anybody, but it is more common after the age of 65 years. People in their 40s and 50s can also have dementia. For more information about younger onset dementia go to **the younger onset dementia hub**.

## What causes dementia?

There are many different forms of dementia and each has its own causes.

The **most common types of dementia** are Alzheimer's disease, Vascular dementia, Dementia with Lewy bodies, Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration (FTLD), Huntington's disease, Alcohol related dementia (Korsakoff's syndrome) and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

## Is it dementia?

There are a number of conditions that produce symptoms similar to dementia. These include some vitamin and hormone deficiencies, depression, medication clashes or overmedication, infections and brain tumours. It is essential that a medical diagnosis is obtained at an early stage when symptoms first appear, to ensure that a person who has a treatable condition is diagnosed and treated correctly.

If the symptoms are caused by dementia, an early diagnosis will mean early access to support, information, and medication should it be available.

**Can dementia be inherited?** This will depend on the cause of the dementia, so it is important to have a firm medical diagnosis.

If you are concerned about the risk of inheriting dementia, consult your doctor or contact Dementia Australia to speak to a counsellor. Most cases of dementia are not inherited.

**What are the early signs of dementia?** The early signs of dementia are very subtle and vague and may not be immediately obvious. Some common symptoms may include:

- Progressive and frequent memory loss
- Confusion
- Personality change
- Apathy and withdrawal

Loss of ability to perform everyday tasks.

## What can be done to help?

At present there is no prevention or cure for most forms of dementia. However, some medications have been found to reduce some symptoms. Support is vital for people with dementia. The help of families, friends and carers can make a positive difference to managing the condition.

For a range of books and videos contact our **Library**. Also see our section on **Help Sheets**.

**Check out the Dementia Australia web site.**

For more information, call the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500

Maureen Perry passed on a number of bags of Ring Pulls collected by a southern friend of hers.

Maureen asked me to bring them back to give the collection to the Ring Pull group in Rocky, but before passing them over I weighed them. 5KGS!

Brett Jones from the Rockhampton Ring Pull group is pictured with the donation and he reckons there could be a few headaches.

Whether or not the pulls came from Beer Cans; Soft drink cans or any other product these donations are very acceptable and used in recycling.

I would urge consumers to save ring pulls and plastic bottle tops for this worthwhile group.

Use an empty tissue box and just pop them in and then drop them off at 242 Alma Street.

Are you a volunteer? Ring Pull would like to hear from you. Ph. 0459 797 057



John Alexander "Jack" French, VC was an Australian recipient of the Victoria Cross, the highest award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces. French was one of 20 Australians to receive the award for their actions during the Second World War.

He was killed in action fighting against the Japanese during the Battle of Milne Bay in September 1942 while serving with the 2/9th

Battalion. From Wikipedia.



North Rockhampton Pensioners' and Superannuants' will commence activities at Bauhinia House on Wednesday, October 20.

Players are asked to BYO Morning tea at 9.30 a.m. but Tea, Coffee will be provided. Play will commence at 10 a.m.

The Branch has a new President, Merv. Molloy and Vice President Dudley Pound. Secretary is Cherith Weis.

A quick meeting will be held following play to pay an account and elect the remaining members of the Nth Rocky Committee.





## Socially Connecting this October

During [Queensland Seniors Month](#) October 1 to 31, hundreds of event organisers will host inclusive events and activities suitable for people of all ages, cultures, and abilities.

That's right, you can mark the whole of October in your calendar as we introduce big changes this year. Beginning on the United Nations International Day of Older Persons, 1 October, the month will end on National Grandparents Day, 31 October.

This year's celebration will be held with the theme of *Social Connections*.

I think most of us can agree that this past year and a half has been a bit tough. We have been separated, segregated, and yet somehow, most of us have found ways to stay connected.

Hands up, who is over Zoom calls? \*Note I am holding one hand in the air, I still need to type.

Whilst our conventional ways of connection may have been replaced by video, emails and phone calls our basic human need to feel safe and secure; stretched and stimulated; connected to and part of the wider community; and a sense of meaning about life and what we do, to name a few, has not wavered.

Feeling socially connected, especially in a COVID world, is more important than ever and it can provide great health benefits and improve your quality of life.

Don't forget to check-in with people. A phone call can do wonders towards a person feeling connected, especially when we are physically distanced.

Let's come together Queensland, it's going to be a connect fest!

Cheers,

**Lisa Hodgkinson**

**MOUNT MORGAN P & S. League**

**are holding a Seniors Morning Tea**

**in the School of Arts, Morgan Street**

**on Tuesday, October 19 commencing at 9.30a.m.**

**Adm. Is just \$4.00. Lucky Door; Multi Draw; Money Board; competitions; Musical Programme; BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL! Book your table with Pat Hare on 49 381 986 or 0409 270 025 by October 12!**

**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.

#### **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.