

SiP AGM 2018

President's Report - Jenny Wills

SiP has this year has continued to provide information for older people, promote their rights and advocate for ageing in place and age friendly communities.

Jointly with BACA we convened a number of forums on the Bellarine on the Commonwealth's Aged Care reforms and specifically on home care packages. These events were all well attended indicating the interest of older people and the need for accessible understandable information.

I would like to especially thank local resident Deb Warren, a recently retired public servant and aged care expert, who was the keynote presenter at the forums, and SiP member Anne Prendergast for sharing her experiences and personal insights as a service user for both herself and her late husband Don.

Whilst waiting for Council action following its endorsement of the Age Friendly Cities and Communities global concept, SiP members have been very active in public transport - one of the essential elements of Aged Friendly Communities. Through the Northern Bellarine Transport Action Group, and in partnership with Bellarine Community Health, a *Use It or Lose It* campaign encouraged residents to leave their cars at home and use the local bus service. The campaign was funded by Geelong Council and we thank Council for their support and Cr. Jim Mason for his involvement.

The work of NBTAG continues and following representations with the office of local member, the Hon. Lisa Neville M.P. we are currently in discussions with Transport for Victoria and PTV re upgrades to bus stops, timetable improvements, and electronic information on bus routes and times in central Geelong. NBTAG still has on its agenda the issue of reinstatement of cross peninsula services which will benefit people of all ages in our community.

In addition to the My Aged Care forums, speakers were invited to regular SiP Members' Meetings. Naturalist Trevor Pescott, who writes regularly for the Geelong Advertiser, spoke about his new book *Birds and Botanists: A Field Naturalists History of Geelong*. Natalie Davey the Project Manager for Cherished Pets Foundation was a very welcome speaker explaining the dedicated work of this unique not for profit organisation which supports both pet owners and their animals in times of need.

At our last meeting we were briefed on Council's new draft Municipal Public Health and Well being Plan by Chantal Chauvet-Allen, Coordinator of Health Equity and Planning. Through our regular column in *The Port Report* we encouraged people to input on the draft plan and I would like to thank *The Port Report* for publishing our monthly updates covering information which is important to older residents.

Our seniors outing last year to the National Trust property 'The Heights' mansion and garden in Geelong was a very enjoyable day, and again with Council financial support, SiP has planned a visit this October to Barwon Park at a very reasonable cost. I thank Sue Cook for her pictorial record of last year's visit and thank you also to SiP's Treasurer Annette for all her planning for this next fabulous day out, together with Secretary Chris Kelly for their work in handling bookings for this year's already sold out event.

Finally, thanks to all members for supporting the SiP network and special thanks to SiP Committee Members Annette, Chris, Robyn Hope, Jenny Tilleard, John Moug, and Bruce Holmes for another successful SiP year, and thank you too to Pat Crotty who established and maintains our website.

We look forward to an enjoyable and interesting 2018-19.