

# THE SUPERANNUANT

Newsletter of The Association of Public Sector Superannuants Inc.  
Formerly SA Superannuants Established 1927  
<https://www.pssuperannuants.org.au>

## Membership Applications/Renewals

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## General Correspondence

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Tel: 08 7077 0986 E: [apssuper1927@gmail.com](mailto:apssuper1927@gmail.com)

## From the President

I am sad to report that our secretary Barry Gear has suffered a stroke, fortunately it was not catastrophic, and Barry is home again, he is communicating with us by email, and it is hoped that he will recover fully. In fact, Barry has been soldiering on with secretarial chores, managing the agenda and the minutes of our last meeting. This incident does emphasise again how precarious our situation is as far as filling our committee and officer positions, and how we need more members to come forward and help run the Association's business. Meanwhile I am sure you will join me in wishing Barry a speedy return to health.



As is set out in a separate item in this newsletter, we are concerned with our relationship with Super SA. We are not listed on what we regard as the more important of the two lists of stakeholders on the Super SA website. Members of the State Pension Scheme now comprise only about 10% of the people that Super SA deals with, and PS Superannuants is the only organisation that represents the interests of these people; we cannot expect the unions, which overwhelmingly represent people still at work, to be concerned about our welfare, and we are concerned that the Super SA board could make decisions that adversely affect our members' welfare and we would only become aware of this when the legislation is well under way.

The speaker at the general meeting in August was Shona Tostivan of Office of the Public Advocate, she emphasised the importance of getting your affairs in order while you are still well and in possession of your full faculties, particularly by drawing up Advanced Care Directive and Enduring Power of Attorney documents. It is extremely important to decide what you want done and set it down in writing; however well your family normally get on together you should realise that this harmony can break down when faced with an emergency that may involve serious, possibly life and death, decisions. This talk is still available on our website, and I urge you to view it if you have not yet done so. The Office of the Public Advocate has an excellent website describing their functions and services, and I urge you to visit this, it could save.

Lastly, I appeal again for more members to join the committee, we meet once a month and you can participate via Zoom without physically attending meetings. The time to finalise nominations for next year's committee is fast approaching. Lack of committee members remains the biggest threat to our association continuing to look after your interests.

*Mike Evans*

**Disclaimer:** Readers should not act, or refrain from acting, solely on the basis of information in this newsletter, but should consult the relevant authorities and advisers

## General Meeting Guest Speakers

**September 30<sup>th</sup>:** John Cronshaw is a BARRISTER & SOLICITOR Specializing in Wills & Estates Commercial & Business Leasing Practising since 1984. He has a Bachelor of Law degree (Adel Uni) Graduate Diploma – Legal Practice (Adel Uni) and is a Member of The Law Society of South Australia”



**October 28<sup>th</sup>:** Liz Pullen, author, will speak on the challenges of writing a memoir or family history

**November 25<sup>th</sup>:** Stan James Advertiser Arts critic

*Ian Beckingham Guest Speaker Coordinator  
Assistant: Craig Trewartha*

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## Membership Officer Report

### “Your Help Please! – Overcome Missing or obsolete Membership Details”

Since I became National Membership last year, I have been asking Members to update their record in our Membership Register.

Our Communications Manager and I have been working together to successfully ensure the safety of your records and our Membership Register is secure due to our efforts.

So, whether you are single or married or in a partnership, or you rely on family to help with your record-keeping, please update your records and respond now, while you are thinking of this update, so we can keep in contact.



An email address helps us to keep in touch, which can be for a trusted family member if you do not have your own.

As you are no doubt aware, our constitution provides for membership to be transferred to surviving spouse/partner upon the death of the Member.

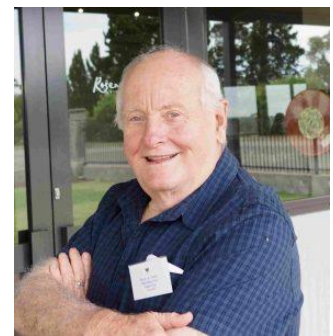
So, I am asking that if your partner is not registered as a Partner Member, then you are invited to include their name in the Form to assist in such transfer at that time. As we may not be aware of the passing, surviving spouses/partners need to inform your superannuation fund AND notify me so I can transfer Membership to the widow or widower.

Please act NOW - Thanks so much

*Don Campbell Membership Officer*

## Communications Manager’s Report

We are doing our best to keep members informed. The Superannuant comes out three times a year, and our website is constantly being updated and holds special members’ only



information inside the Member’s Portal. Members who have provided their email address receive at least 3 emails each month including one with a link to the video of each General Meeting. Soon we will need to be thinking about setting up the 2025 committee. As we approach our centenary in 2027 it would be a shame if the association were to fold due to lack of committee support, especially given that we have around 1500 members. Being on the committee does not require you to attend in person as all executive meetings have Zoom access and currently, we have online attendees from South Australia, Victoria and Queensland. So why not give it a go and put yourself forward in 2025?

*Peter Frick Communication Manager*

## Victorian Branch Report

. We had a successful June Meeting with Frankie Freeman, Manager, Education and Engagement, COTA Victoria on “Scams and Financial Matters, Memory, and COTA Membership and Services”. If you have suggestions for future meetings or can assist in their organisation, please complete and send us the questionnaire accessed by clicking on the link below. Victorian meetings are held on the last Wednesday of March, June, September and November, commencing at 12:30 with refreshments and the guest speaker hybrid presentation commencing at 1:30pm.

The November Victorian Meeting will be at the South Melbourne Community Centre, Corner Park Street, and Ferrars Place, South Melbourne (Entry from Ferrars Place) on Wednesday 27th November 2024. Note: this is our pre-Christmas meeting. BYO celebration beverage, light lunch will be supplied. \$5.00 donation.

Topic: Commonwealth Superannuation Schemes.

CSC Representative to attend as Guest Speaker.

Members, partners and guests should book in by clicking on the link to our questionnaire below to advise attendance (for Catering), request for Zoom details or to ask questions of our Guest Speakers

<https://forms.gle/5nZZhCqoRJNdDcPP8>

or use the following email address [apssuper1927.Vic@gmail.com](mailto:apssuper1927.Vic@gmail.com)

**Gerry Schembri Convenor Victorian Committee**

## Current Questions Awaiting Answers

The Association has not yet received a response from State Treasurer, Stephen Mullighan, to its request made on 28 June for future triennial actuarial reports of the State Pension Scheme to make clear that, once full funding of the scheme is achieved, and all pensions have commenced, there will be no basis for saying that substantial government outlays are going to continue beyond that time.



Members are referred to items in this year's February and June issues of The Superannuant for the background to this request.

Another matter of concern for the Committee is the fact that the Super SA website has two lists of key stakeholders with the Association included on only one. The list on which we are included can be viewed on the Super SA website by highlighting the 'About us' page and then selecting 'Stakeholders'. The other list, without our name on it, can be seen by selecting 'Governance', scrolling down to select 'Governance Reporting' and then selecting the item 'Board Terms of Reference and Charter'. The list of Board stakeholders is on the second page of this document.

The concern of the Committee here is that the Board is the body that the Government communicates with about legislative changes and/or interpretation of existing legislation. Our exclusion from the Board's list of stakeholders allows the possibility that we would not be consulted on a change to arrangements having the potential to adversely affect pension scheme members. This is in spite of our organization being the only one having any record of effectively representing the interests of State Pension Scheme members over the last twenty years. We believe that as matters stand at present the Board list, from which we are absent, appears to be the more credible and important list.

The Super SA Board has several characteristics that add to the risk arising from our name not being included in its list of stakeholders.

1. Of its 5 Board members three, including the presiding member, are appointed by the Government. The other two are elected by the members of all schemes, including the pension scheme.
2. The quorum for a meeting of the Super SA Board is three and a decision of the Board requires only three Board members to vote in favor.
3. For most of its schemes, including the pension scheme, the Super SA Board is not a trustee having a legal obligation to hold the member interest paramount over all other interests.

Other superannuation boards usually have more than five members with an equal number of employer and member representatives. A quorum requires at least two thirds of the Board members to be present and decisions require at least two-thirds of the total Board membership to vote in favor. This ensures that all decisions have support from both employer and member representatives.

This is not required for decisions of the Super SA Board. Members with Commonwealth, PSS and CSS defined benefit pensions should note that their board is a Trustee for their schemes and it does meet the equal representation standard.

These differences between the Super SA Board and other superannuation boards have been pointed out here for matter-of-fact reasons and not to suggest that any Board member would disregard the interests of pension scheme members in Board deliberations and voting.

Pension scheme members now constitute a small minority of the total membership of Super SA schemes and the Association does not expect to be consulted on all superannuation matters. For example, when choice of fund was proposed for SSS members we had no expectation of being consulted on that matter. All we expect is that when there are changes being considered by the Board, that will impact mainly on members of the State Pension Scheme, (this was not the case with the choice of fund issue which mainly affected SSS members) we must be a stakeholder that is consulted for advice on how any change will impact on pension scheme members.

If this modest expectation is not met, the Association believes that the welfare of pension scheme members will be put at unnecessary risk.

The power of State Governments to use superannuation governance arrangements that do not conform with normal standards is authorized by a Heads of Government Agreement on Superannuation. This has been signed by the Commonwealth and all the State/Territory Governments. The justification for this, given by the Commonwealth, is that such schemes will be subject to parliamentary oversight. This suggests that it would be prudent for the Association to make all members of the State Parliament aware of its concerns over these two matters.

*Ray Hickman*

## Advisory Group Report

We met two high level Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) Customer Service Managers, Bronwyn Riley, and Chris Parson. They have worked for several years within CSC mainly for defined benefits schemes (about 264,000 retired members) and 185 employers. They have a rich history from the wider superannuation and financial planning world. Bronwyn & Chris described their business

as driven by legislation and trust deeds, and that substantially limits the scope of new activity. They run most parts of the CSC that we as members would want to contact. Issues of policy, like more equitable treatment of defined scheme taxation, and other changes we seek will need to follow the parliamentary organisation and Treasury for access to policy issues. I expect we can get limited data from CSC to help scale the impacts of change but will likely need Freedom of Information (FOI) to gain some information.

CSC will provide a guest speaker in Melbourne for the November meeting. So, if we have any questions about the Commonwealth defined schemes they can be raised in person, or an email request beforehand.

Communications with members is a growing issue for CSC, they have a large cohort approaching retirement and want them to be educated about their scheme and how to maximise their transition to retirement. This is a two-way street our members have knowledge gaps in how the schemes work and we can channel them into CSC, equally CSC publish educational material which we can use or link internally towards our members.

Our advisory group has skills and memberships in defined schemes national bodies, South Australian, Commonwealth, and exposure to Queensland and NSW defined schemes and access to another scheme knowledge.

Our Advisory Group raised issues we see as important from a policy position and day to day education issues:

1. changing defined scheme taxation to match the industry funds
2. Better Targeted Super the \$3M threshold for additional tax will impact and increasing number of defined scheme members over time, especially when a person has multiple super fund memberships, and even international schemes.
3. review of the 10% limit on how much employee funded taxed pension can be excluded from Social Security tests
4. How some defined funds are untaxed now, but appear to be moving to a fully funded / taxpaid position
5. Promote scheme information with CSC support, guide members into CSC to fix failures or seek guidance.

*Peter Baker*

## Residential Villages

*By Jane Trimbell, first Published by Pearls and Irritations which is a daily online journal for policy discussion on politics, public policy, foreign affairs, defence, the economy, media, the arts and religion. Jane Trimbrell is a retired trade union official, she is the Deputy Convenor and Campaign Manager of the Vintage Reds of the Canberra Region (an organisation of retired progressive trade unionists). In 2023, Jane was appointed to the ACT Government's Retirement Villages Working Group and in 2024 she was reappointed to the ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing.*

The looming question for me and my partner is "where might we live as we grow older and frailer?" For us, the ideal place is likely to be a retirement village. But at what cost?

These days, there are more than 2,000 retirement villages operating in Australia, housing approximately 200,000 older Australians, usually over the age of 55 who are no longer in the workforce. Residents are usually people who have grown tired of the responsibilities associated with managing a home or they may be feeling vulnerable or have other concerns which leads to them moving into a retirement village. Two thirds of residents are women and most residents are aged between 75 and 85.

Retirement villages are no longer just a unit or villa in a complex, with a parking space; they have morphed into "retirement lifestyle villages" where there are often swimming pools, gardens, gyms, theatres, grand pianos, croquet lawns, libraries, hairdressers, cafes, and a village bus for outings. Retirement villages are not yet the domain of wealthy Australians; they are in fact the homes of ordinary Australians. In the 1960s and 1970s, even blue-collar workers could afford to move into a retirement village (eg my tram-driver grandfather and my grandmother who did not work).

Retirement villages are no longer the initiatives of churches, charities, clubs or philanthropists, nowadays they are the domain of the property industry. Indeed, the peak body for retirement village investors and operators is the Retirement Living Council and they are represented by the Property Council of Australia in each state or territory.

For many people, moving into a retirement village will mean selling the family home. The cost of an

Independent Living Unit will be the market rate in the area. In addition, operators charge a monthly or fortnightly service fee that covers things such as council rates, building insurance, repairs and maintenance, staff wages and the like. Residents will also be charged a Deferred Management Fee upon exit and may be charged an additional fee to refresh the ILU, irrespective of its condition when an ILU becomes vacant.

However, the ILU contracts give prerogatives to the investors and operators to create fees, and the majority of contracts do not give a share of the capital gain on the ILU when it is time for the resident to leave the village.

Whilst aged care is the domain of the Commonwealth, retirement villages are the responsibility of state or territory governments. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety produced a damning report of the aged care industry and the Federal Government has taken on the enormous task of implementing the recommendations, including hopefully, a new Aged Care Act. What was revealed during the Aged Care Royal Commission told us that economic rationalism (ie, let the market decide) doesn't work.

Yet, almost all retirement villages are run along economic rationalist lines. These same investors and operators are moving into delivering Commonwealth-funded Home Care Packages package to the aged living in their homes. The Home Care Package industry is another unregulated field ripe for the economic rationalist model. Until recently, when new industrial relations rules were implemented, a friend living in a retirement village and in receipt of a Home Care Package told me he was being charged by the provider for the weekend penalties, whilst the staff delivering the service were not paid penalty rates.

Meanwhile, the retirement villages industry, state by state, continues on its merry way. Every state has different legislation, yet it is all the same as it favours investor operators over residents. Ever so often something happens, and a few bandaids are applied to the existing legislation or regulations; the residents are fed a few crumbs, while everyone is worn down by the filibuster and lobbying of the Property Council.

Here in Canberra, there are approx. 5,000 older people residing in the safe haven of a retirement village, where the rules, fees and charges are determined by the investors and operators, with minimal consultation with the residents. Most

retirement villages plunder residents of their life savings through contracts, fees and charges, and a business model that favours the investors and operators.

The longer residents stay in a retirement village, the poorer they get. When they reach the point of graduating to residential aged care, they must pay a market rate for a room which will then be much more than their refund of capital from the retirement village.

My mother was lucky as she was able to afford the room she wanted. However, she had to stump up the difference between her ILU refund after 19 years, and the cost of her aged care accommodation; she should have been given a significant share of the capital gains when she downsized to aged care. At the same time, my mother's friend, Pat, another long-term resident, was not so fortunate when it came to moving into aged care. Pat was offered a very small room; she asked if they had something larger to which came the reply, "this is all you can afford". There are more and more people like Pat living in retirement villages.

In 2023, the ACT Retirement Villages Residents Association requested the Territory Government to establish an ombudsman to oversee various difficulties between residents and management. In a media release issued on 23 September, the Property Council joyously announced "The Retirement Living Council and Property Council have welcomed today's announcement from the ACT Government to not pursue a Retirement Living Ombudsman".

In The Canberra Times (6 Aug 2024) Crispin Hull summarised the view of Rod Sims, former chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, concerning economic rationalism that, "the fundamental point is that corporations simply cannot be trusted to do the right thing. To the contrary, unless constrained by regulation, you can almost guarantee they will do the wrong thing to the detriment of competition, productivity and economic health in general".

Retirement villages are not an appropriate domain for harvesting profits. Retirement villages should be treated as a home, rather than an investment, and residents should be treated as residents, not commodities. Residents need to be treated with financial as well as social respect.

So to ameliorate the current situation and to redress the power imbalance with some semblance of "a level playing field", retirement

villages should be properly regulated in every state and territory with the emphasis on:

1. A strong Retirement Village Act to protect the interests of residents not just the investors and operators;
2. The appointment of a statutory registrar with powers to inspect and intervene in disputes between the residents and the operators over contracts, fees and charges etc; and
3. A comprehensive publicly accessible register containing full pro-forma copy of contracts, details of the village ownership and management, and a transparent schedule of all fees charged and policies to residents.



## CPI Changes

The Adelaide CPI change for the period 1 January 2024 -30 June 2024 was an increase of 2.04% and this change to Super SA pensions will occur in October 2024. CSS and PSS pensions increased by 1.6 % in July



## Treasurer's Report

Space does not allow for the inclusion of financial details in this newsletter. However monthly Treasurer's spreadsheets are available attached to the executive minutes which may be read in the Member's Portal on our web site.

*Mike Evans*



## Constitution Change

A Special General Meeting on July 29<sup>th</sup> accepted the committee's recommendation for a change in the constitution. As explained in an earlier edition of the Superannuant this was done in an effort to respond to the sparsity of willing committee members. On submission we received advice from the Department of Consumer and Business Services that we should make a few minor changes. The executive considered that advice and accepted it. We were further advised that a subsequent Special Meeting would not be necessary, as a result the Constitution change has been approved by the department. It can now be read on our web site

*Peter Frick Public Officer*

## Joining and Renewing

### Fees and How to Pay

**ANNUAL:**

**\$30**

**LIFE:**

Under 60 yoa **\$400**

60 to 65 yoa **\$350**

66 to 70 yoa **\$300**

Over 70 yoa **\$250**

Voluntary levy (to bolster dwindling reserves)  
\$15.

**Partner FEES**

**ANNUAL: LIFE:**

**\$10 \$100**

Receipts will be sent on request. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for postal receipts.

### a) **Joining & renewing online**

Complete the appropriate forms at:

<https://www.pssuperannuants.org.au/how-to-join/>

### b) **Bank transfers**

Please make sure that the payment is accompanied by your name and suburb with sufficient details to identify you as the payer. Please also send a completed renewal or application form by post or e-mail

Bank SA: BSB 105-900

Account number: 950313840

Account Name: SA Superannuants

### c) **Paying by cheque or money order**

Please send your postal payment with the renewal or application form to:

Membership Officer

Public Sector Superannuants

PO Box 8202, Ferntree Gully, Victoria 3156

E-mail: [apssuper1927@gmail.com](mailto:apssuper1927@gmail.com)

T: 0870770986

### d) **New and Renewing members**

When not renewing or joining online, please send a membership application form to the Membership Officer so that your necessary details can be recorded.

On the next page a form is provided for this purpose if you do not use the online option. It can also be used to convert to a life membership, notify a change of address or phone number.

## Members Details and Payments

### New and Renewing Member's Postal Form: (An online form is available on our website)

Title..... Gender.....

First Name .....

Last Name.....

Postal Address

.....  
.....

Year of Birth.....

Home phone.....

Mobile phone.....

E-mail .....

*(Providing this, will not affect how your Superannuant is delivered)*

Department from which you retired or are currently working with

.....

Payment amount \$.....

**Purpose of payment** (tick relevant box)

- Renew annual membership.
- New Annual Membership
- New Life membership
- Change annual to life.
- Partner Annual Membership
- Partner Life Membership
- Donation

**Newsletter**

by post  email

Signature .....

Date .....

## Your Missing Membership Details

Personalised, postal delivered Superannuant Newsletters sought the information below and in the previous column. The details we had for the addressee in our Membership Registry was included. We have added the option of providing an alternative person to handle your communication with us if members wish. This is optional.

If there was a blank in the email covering letter, then that meant we had no details for this heading. Members were asked that if there were missing details or there was an error, they should email details to the Membership Officer or send them by mail to the addresses at the newsletter masthead. The headings below are indicative only and do not reflect your details in our registry.

**Land Line if still active:**

**Mobile:**

**Email:**

**Birth Year:**

**Department you work(ed) for:**

**Alternative Contact name:**

**Alternative contact Relationship:**

**Alternative contact phone:**

**Alternative contact email:**