

REDLAND COTA MAIL



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>President's Column</i>	2
<i>Older Driver Study</i>	3
<i>Community welfare Project</i>	4
<i>How age affects driving</i>	6
<i>RDCOTA Have-Your Say Meet-</i>	7
<i>Refresh Space Launch—All invited</i>	7
<i>Silver Memories Radio Trial</i>	8

This issue of the Redland COTA Mail experiments with a small number of articles from different sources on a theme. The theme chosen for this issue is that of "older drivers" because there have been a number of media reports about incidents involving senior drivers and, of course, a few comments which have followed these reports. One of these articles was reported in the last issue of this newsletter. Please let us know what you think.

Printed by courtesy of Andrew Laming, MP, Member for Bowman

OLDER DRIVERS



Amongst the discussions constantly taking place about motor transport are the familiar topics of speeding, drugs and alcohol, fatigue, younger drivers and older drivers. Like most public discussions generalisations prevail and, unfortunately, many readers and viewers, particularly of the sensationalist media mostly available in Queensland, develop their own opinions based on what they are fed.

So, when the discussion turns to older drivers, it's largely about whether they should be allowed to continue driving. There is always media coverage of incidents involving some aged person who has had some misfortune on the roads which can be used to argue the case for more regular testing or other mandatory limitations for older drivers.

Observation of drivers of all ages does raise the question of how many would pass any sort of stringent test of their driving skill or knowledge of traffic rules. However, it's not my intention to raise questions of how efficient our licensing procedures are for an activity which, to perform well, requires a reasonable level of physical and mental ability.

This is the question which should be addressed and not some mass notion of age leading to incompetence. The experience and natural ability of drivers as they grow older equips them well, not only to continue driving with a high level of skill, but also to recognise and begin to compensate for many of the changes brought on by advancing years.

This should apply to all drivers but the normal distribution of skills would suggest that this won't happen. We will always have traffic accidents because some drivers are at the lower end of abilities, do not recognise this and fail to compensate in necessary ways.

Having said all this, it is important for older drivers to realise that there is a perception in the community and with finger-waving younger drivers that, because you are older-looking, you are incompetent. There are a number of sources for advice

which provide information to assist drivers continually to assess their progress and to consider whether they need to seek medical or other advice to give them a sound basis for determining their needs to ensure not only their safety but that of their passengers.

This article is simply an unresearched opinion piece to provoke thought and to point to some of the more credible sources of information that are available. Space has been devoted in this newsletter to quote some information from these sources with the hope that readers may embark on their own research. Contributions to future newsletters would be greeted with joy and amazement.

Tony Christinson

Medical Certificates

Drivers who are 75 years or older, as well as drivers with medical conditions that affect their ability to drive, are required to obtain a medical certificate from their medical practitioner in order to continue driving.

An 'M' will be shown on the licence as a condition. The driver must carry the medical certificate at all times when driving and produce it to police if required. Failure to carry a medical certificate could incur a fine.

For both older drivers and drivers with a medical condition, doctors can suggest what limitations or conditions be placed on the driver's licence.

While doctors and health professionals may be able to assess an older driver's medical fitness to drive, it is not necessarily possible to evaluate a driver's ability to interact with the road environment unless being assessed while driving. The doctor may suggest a formal driving assessment be carried out to evaluate a person's ability to drive safely.

Source: RACQ website: *Motoring Advice*; *Safer Drivers: Education*

FROM THE PRESIDENT

There are a number of issues which, as the very new president of the Redlands Committee on the Ageing (RDCOTA), I believe must be addressed immediately.

The first of these is the question of connectivity with our community and, in particular, the seniors of the Redlands. I included the RDCOTA acronym above deliberately because I believe that it is not recognised by the majority of people in Redland City. Recent discussions with Management Committee members confirm in my mind that many people who are officially regarded as seniors do not identify with a "committee on the ageing".

Shakespeare asked the question "What's in a name?" and it's obvious that, in today's busy world, an organization's name is important in achieving some degree of recognition in a community. This is not the most important of our issues but it is a start to addressing them by allowing us to gain attention of those with whom we wish to communicate by having them know who we are and what we do.

Of course, recognition will not be switched on as soon as we change our name. Our task will be to ensure that our name becomes identified with the duties we perform for our seniors and the community. We are engaged in performing these duties but we are limited by the very lack of recognition that I am discussing here. Any change of name would have to conform to our charter as a committee of the ageing and would have to be determined by a general meeting of members, perhaps at our next AGM or a special meeting if this were considered necessary.

If you have any suggestions, please let us know by phone, email or in person.

A further matter for consideration is our relationship with other community groups in the Redlands, other committees of the ageing throughout Queensland and the Council on the Ageing Queensland (COTAQ). The first of these is being addressed cooperatively with the Redland City Council through the Redlands Seniors Network, specifically for

seniors but also through the Redlands Inter-Agency and Redlands Disability networks. We will assume responsibility for the Seniors Network in the next few weeks and will encourage as many seniors groups as possible to participate for the collective benefit of all our members.

We are in contact with other committees on the ageing through COTAQ and will endeavour to increase these contacts in order to share ideas and efforts in the future.

To enable us to represent the needs of members and seniors in general, we must be in continual communication with you. We assisted COTAQ to consult with Redlands seniors at a meeting in 2008 but Redland City covers a large area and one meeting is simply inaccessible to some. This year we are organising a number of meetings around the city closer to where you live. We hope to have good attendances to discuss issues of concern and interest to you. These meetings will also feature a short talk on a topic of interest to seniors. The first of these is advertised in this newsletter and further meetings will be held in Cleveland, Victoria Point, Thornlands, Alexandra Hills, Capalaba, Redland Bay and Macleay Island.

Other projects which the Management Committee is developing include: the purchase of a bus; collection of grocery items for welfare organisations and a number of activities for Senior Citizens' Week featuring a Cloudland at Cleveland dance for young and old.

WE have high hopes that we can have a good year but we ask that seniors support our initiatives and give us the moral support we need

LIFESTYLE TALKS

Looking for a fun and informative speaker for your group? Look no further. I would love to come and share my passion for life, health and fitness. I teach Tai Chi, aqua aerobics and gentle exercise to the mature and can share with your group that with a positive attitude and physical fitness you have the keys to growing old disgracefully.

Phone Kay Bayly for a talk tailored to your groups interests. Charge - travelling expenses.

Phone 3821 0406, 0438468592

Email : kaybayly@tpg.com.au

Older Drivers the Focus of Unique Study

Improving the safety on the roads for older drivers through a healthier lifestyle and improved peripheral vision is the focus of a first-of-its-kind study at The Australian National University.

The study is being conducted by Professor Kaarin Anstey and PhD Student Chris Hatherly of the Centre for Mental Health Research (CMHR) at ANU. Between February and June this year, the study will aim to help people improve their health knowledge and driving abilities, enabling a more healthy and active lifestyle and potentially improving driving safety for older adults.

Professor Anstey said the study will tackle the problem of improving poor health and driving safety for older drivers in two distinct ways.

“The health training component of the study will involve informal lessons on topics such as healthy eating and physical activity,” she said. “It will also cover issues such as brain health – including activities to reduce the risk of dementia – and first aid for older people.

“The driving skills component will not involve time in a car, but will focus instead on improving people’s peripheral vision. Peripheral vision is particularly important for older drivers as it’s an ability that declines with age and which is implicated in a lot of accidents amongst this age group.

“Improved peripheral vision may also reduce the risk of accidents such as trips and falls,” she added.

MEMBERS OF THE ANU CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH TEAM CONDUCTING THE STUDY (L-R) KAARIN ANSTEY, ARIANNE SCHLUMPP AND KARIN DUPLESSIS.

Seniors are you having trouble taming your mobile phone? What do all those buttons mean? — bring the little beastly along with it’s instruction book to our “Tame Your Mobile Phone” Workshop on Wednesday May 06, 10am at 57 Wynyard Street, Cleveland gold coin cuppa available.



URGENT NOTICE (FOR THOSE WITH THE CONFIDENCE TO ADDRESS GROUPS)

VOLUNTEER PEER EDUCATORS NEEDED

Are you interested in becoming a trained Volunteer Peer Educator to assist with delivery of the sessions indicated below.

RDCOTA would like to host a training session for Peer Educators in the Redlands/Bayside area. Training would be undertaken by Peer Education Officers from COTAQ with ongoing support provided by COTAQ and RDCOTA.

Enquiries can be made to any of the contact phone numbers or email addresses at the bottom of this notice.

GUEST SPEAKERS FOR SENIORS GROUPS – FREE

Are you involved with a seniors group which is looking for guest speakers on topics of interest?

RDCOTA is working with Council on the Ageing Queensland (COTAQ) to offer guest speakers to seniors in the Redlands/Bayside area. Interactive and engaging sessions are delivered by trained Volunteer Peer Educators to groups of seniors on healthy ageing topics. Sessions are **FREE**, take 30-60 minutes, with a range of easy to read resources available for all sessions. Topics available at present are:

beyond blue: In partnership with *beyond blue*, the national depression initiative, **beyond maturity blues** is offered, encouraging early recognition of the signs of depression, increasing knowledge of depression and demonstrating that depression is not a normal part of ageing.

Seniors Quality Use of Medicines (SQUM): Developed and implemented in partnership with the National Prescribing Service (NPS), assists older people to become active partners in the safe use and management of their medications.

Brand Name or Generic Medicine? Also developed in partnership with NPS this topic is a follow-up to SQUM and looks at the safety and effectiveness of generic brands compared to the original brand.

To book a session:

RDCOTA – 3488 0680 : FAY – 3286 7728

COTAQ – 3316 2999

Email: seniors@rdcota.org.au : or
education@cotaq.org.au

PROPOSED NEW PROJECT COMMUNITY WELFARE PLAN

The RDCOTA Management Committee has given approval for an approach to Redlands seniors' organisations to develop a plan according to the following principles. A questionnaire will be sent to seniors' organisation to seek support for the scheme.

The Community Welfare Plan is aimed at enabling community members to donate food or money to welfare organisations which provide direct aid to those in the community who are experiencing difficulty due to economic circumstances.

Decisions on who is eligible for aid will be determined by the organisations which provide it. RDCOTA will assist organisations which provide assistance according to assessment of need in consultation with the organisations concerned.

Donations will be provided by seniors' organisations with no barriers of age as a contribution by seniors to the community in which they live.

It is intended that, subject to continued support by the community, this will be a continuing program with periodic delivery of collected items depending on the rate of accumulation of usable quantities.

The elements of the plan are as follows:

1. Seniors' organisations will be asked to encourage their members to participate in the project by donating food or money for distribution on an equitable basis to participating welfare organisations.
2. RDCOTA will advise participating seniors and community organisations of acceptable donations and where these can be deposited.
3. All donations will be transferred equally, depending on need and ability to distribute, to participating welfare organisations.
4. Participating welfare organisations will guarantee that donations will be distributed to those in need in accordance with their normal criteria for distribution.
5. RDCOTA will endeavour to arrange for drop-off points in a range of venues to enable donations to be made as conveniently as possible.
6. This project is intended to be a long term commitment to the provision of aid.
7. RDCOTA and participating welfare organisations will provide advice of the acceptable items for donation according to laws relating to handling of food-stuffs. This will include items in newsletters, on web-sites and other means of communication with members.

RDCOTA is able only to distribute what it receives from seniors' organisations. It is not possible to guarantee that donations will be available at any given time.

ASSISTANCE WITH JOB APPLICATIONS

Redlands District Committee on the Ageing can provide free access to those seeking assistance with the following:

- Job applications
- Writing resumés
- Selection criteria
- Interview performance

Free consultations with a qualified volunteer are available for

- Unemployed
- Mature age
- Migrants

Ring RDCOTA on 3488 0680 or email us on seniors@rdcota.org.au

***DON'T FORGET TO RENEW
YOUR RDCOTA MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2009***

-o0o-

**VOLUNTEERS ARE VALUABLE
DURING THE YEAR BUT, EVEN
IF NOT ACTIVE, YOUR
SUPPORT ENCOURAGES
OTHER VOLUNTEERS.**

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL ON
NEXT PAGE AND NEW MEM-
BERS ALWAYS WELCOME.**

2009 RDCOTA RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please indicate:

I wish to become a financial member for 2009

Our organisation wishes to become a Financial member for 2009

I/We would like to know more about Volunteering with RDCOTA

I/We wish to make a financial contribution in support of RDCOTA

Our organisation would like a guest speaker from RDCOTA

Name (Individual/Organisation):
.....

Address:.....

.....**Telephone:**.....

Name of Contact person.....

Email address

Annual Subscription

Individual \$ 5.00

Organization \$20.00

Donation \$

Cheque enclosed \$ _____

**REDLANDS HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY**

Is looking for new members

**JOIN US every third Monday at
THORNLANDS DANCE HALL from
9am till noon**

**Corner of Island Outlook Road and Redland
Bay Road.**

**Gardening advice; competitive days; in-
vited speakers; bring and buy; raffles; bus
trips.**

**For further information, contact Chief Steward on
3907 0551**

Cuppa for Cancer



If you happen to be passing by the RDCOTA office on Wednesday 27th May, pop in for a cuppa—the coffee pot will be on and the tea brewing—for a small donation supporting a cause that over the years has provided funds for research and cures of many types of cancer—your support is appreciated.

10 am—12 noon

Pensioners

**Feel like a break
when shopping in
Capalaba?**

**Read about the
Blue
Care/RDCOTA**

Refresh Space

DO YOU HAVE EMAIL?

**You can receive
your *Redlands
COTA Mail* by
email in colour.**

**Simply send us
an email saying
you will accept an
electronic news-
letter and we'll
include you on
our list.**

**It saves us
postage.**

**OUR WEBSITE HAS
RDCOTA NEWS AND
LINKS TO OTHER
WEBSITES.**

**HAVE A LOOK
AT**

www.rdcota.org.au

**DO YOU NEED THE
USE OF A COM-
PUTER?**

**Come into our office.
We usually have a
couple not being used.**

What About Queensland Government Advice?

The advice below can be found on the website of Queensland Transport. Any of the hits obtained from a search for "older drivers" are from other states, chiefly New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

There is little encouragement for older drivers in many articles, mainly timely warnings about the onset of factors which will limit driver competence with advancing age. The arbitrary limit set by most authorities is 75 years. The advice they give is worthwhile and should be heeded by all.

It would be encouraging to see some balance introduced by commenting on some of the positive skills and knowledge gained by sensible, experienced drivers. This may contribute to the confidence of many older drivers. It may also change the attitude of younger, less experienced drivers towards older citizens.

Here, then, is advice from the Queensland Government. The dot points are links to further advice on the website.

How age affects your driving

Driving a car gives people freedom and mobility. However, driving can be a very complex activity and a lot can go wrong.

Older drivers and young drivers are more often involved in road crashes than people of other ages. Older drivers have the benefit of years of experience but age brings changes to the body that can affect driving ability.

Driving safely in later years is simply a matter of knowing your limits. It is important to remember you have a responsibility to your passengers and other road users.

As we get older our bodies gradually change. This can affect how safely we drive. Although older drivers have years of experience to help compensate for many of these changes, it is not possible to overcome all of them. The older driver is most affected by age-related changes to their:

- [vision](#)
- [movement](#)
- [processing of information](#).

A medical condition, or medication, combined with alcohol make a particularly dangerous combination. Mixing drugs with alcohol can seriously affect your health and your ability to drive safely. You may not feel intoxicated, when in fact you could be over the limit.

LEGAL SEMINARS - 2009

Honorary Solicitor for the Redland District Committee on the Ageing, Russell Biddle, is prepared to offer short seminars on legal matters in retirement villages or other venues.

These free seminars will cover issues such as making wills, enduring power of attorney, issues arising from contracts with retirement villages and other matters of relevance to seniors.

Those interested in arranging a seminar for their village or in attending one in another venue should contact RDCOTA

- by phone on 3488 0680 or
- by email on seniors@rdcota.org.au

Detailed information on seminars will be provided in future newsletters or by separate flyer.

HAVE-YOUR-SAY MEETINGS

RDCOTA is conducting a series of meetings to obtain the views of Redland seniors on issues of concern to them.

All views are welcome. Praise is as important as criticism

- All over-fifties are invited to attend
- This is part of a consultation process throughout Redland City.
- RDCOTA seeks to collate information on problem areas for seniors but constructive comment is desired as well
- Consolidated Redlands views will contribute to formation of policy for advocacy with appropriate bodies

Each meeting will feature a speaker on a topic of interest to seniors.

Dates and areas for meetings are listed below. Venues and speakers for the meetings after Cleveland on 12 May will be advised.

26 May	*Cleveland*	
16 June	Capalaba	Speaker: Andrew Daniels, Commonwealth Carelink Services
21 July	Redland Bay*	
28 July	Macleay Island*	
4 August	Victoria Point*	
11 August	Alexandra Hills*	*Speakers for these meetings and all venues to be advised. Please watch "Bayside Bulletin" Community Notes.

Morning Tea will be provided. For further information, call or email RDCOTA

Phone: 3488 0680

Email: seniors@rdcota.org.au

Volunteers Needed

If you have an hour or two a week to spare and love being with people then Rosevale Court Aged Care Facility needs your help.

It may be spending time chatting to a resident, perhaps taking them for a look around the gardens or assisting with activities on the recreational calendar.

- Lunch will be provided
- All volunteers must have a current Queensland Police Check

If this sounds like you, please phone Wendy Gavin, Diversional Therapist on 3829 7100. We are located at Victoria Point!

REFRESH SPACE LAUNCH

Official opening by Redland City Mayor Melva Hobson or her delegate at 10.00am

AT: Capalaba Library Art Space

ON: THURSDAY 14 MAY 2009

You are cordially invited to attend this launch of a project which began in November 2008, as an initiative of Blue Care Positive Ageing and Redland District Committee on the Ageing with the generous support from Redland City in the provision of their Capalaba Library Art Space.

Every second Thursday (sometimes referred to as pension day) from 9.30 until 12 noon volunteers from Redland District Committee on the Ageing offer seniors the chance to sit and have a cup of tea or coffee, biscuits and a chat for a donation of 50 cents.

RSVP: by FRIDAY 8 MAY

To RDCOTA: by phone: 34880680 or

Email: seniors@rdcota.org.au

RDCOTA would like to acknowledge its sponsors:

**Rotary Club of Cleveland
Lions Club of Capalaba
Redlands Sporting Club
RSL Cleveland
Pilot Light Panel Christmas Wrap
Redland City Council
Mater Private Hospital - Redland
George Hartnett Funerals
Biddle Lawyers
Great Southern Garden of Remembrance**

Without our sponsors, Redland District Committee on the Ageing Inc. would not be able to reach out into the community as much as it does.

RDCOTA welcomes all contributions to this newsletter.

DISCLAIMER

Whilst every care is taken by RDCOTA in the compilation and publication of this newsletter, RDCOTA does not warrant or represent that the newsletter is free from error nor accept responsibility for any listings, entries, or articles published therein.

In particular, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, RDCOTA expressly denies any responsibility regarding qualifications, expertise and/or experience claimed on behalf of a person or entity referred to in the newsletter, including any product or service offered by any such person or entity. Should any concerns exist, then RDCOTA recommends that independent inquiries should be undertaken by the reader.

RDCOTA shall not be legally responsible for any misrepresentation, loss, damages, cost or expense as a result of any reliance, act, or omission, referred to herein or undertaken by any person or entity howsoever arising.

Do you enjoy listening to old time music?

If yes, this is the program for you!

Silver Memories is a NEW 24 hour a day 7 day a week radio program specifically designed with the older listener in mind.

Music and radio shows from the 1920s – 1950s, that no other Brisbane radio stations play, are broadcast.

There are also segments presenting information and other items of interest to older Australians as well as birthday calls and other announcements.

The aim is to provide entertainment and information to older Australians that is not available elsewhere.

Silver Memories is only available via a radio receiver tuned to the Silver Memories frequency.

If you are 60 years or older and would be interested in participating in a 3 month evaluation of the program

Please contact:

Linda Moran, Project Officer, The Australasian Centre on Ageing, The University of Queensland; Ph: 3346 9226 l.moran1@uq.edu.au



Mail: P.O. Box 1051, Cleveland. 4163

Phone: 3488 0680 FAX: 3488 0681

Office: 57 Wynyard St, Cleveland. 4163

Email: seniors@rdcota.org.au

Website: <http://www.rdcota.org.au>

Office Hours: 9.30am to 2.30pm Monday to Friday