



# Newsletter

December 2022

[www.rotoruasenior.net](http://www.rotoruasenior.net)

Member of NZ Federation of SeniorNet Societies

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## From the Chairman

Hello members

This is our last newsletter for 2022. Elsewhere you will find an item by Bert Harris looking back on the year's activities. Looking forward to next year, we could see some changes.

The national SeniorNet federation is currently going through a major review to decide what its role is in supporting Learning Centres. Once this review is complete, we will need to consider whether it prompts us to make any changes. Across the country, several SeniorNet Learning Centres have closed and some have seceded from the Federation. We don't imagine that we will need such drastic action.

Over the last two or three years, we have evolved from the traditional SeniorNet role of being a society providing formal classes about PCs for our members in a fixed classroom. We now operate more as a community service offering help to the wider population about all forms of IT.

As you are probably aware, Parksyde is in the process of developing plans for a new "Senior Hub" building to complement their present Activity Centre. This is intended to be a shared hub for various organisations providing services to seniors in Rotorua. We see this as a logical future home for SeniorNet Rotorua. We are in early discussions with Parksyde about how we might participate and contribute. We will have more to say about this at the AGM in February and will be seeking your ideas.

All this means that our AGM may have a lot to discuss and we may need to make some important decisions about the future. As always, we will be seeking people willing to join the committee and seeking helpers to assist in our community activities.

Unfortunately, we have recently lost long standing member Reg Wellington. Our sympathies to his family.

Best wishes for the holiday season

Keith Garratt

Chair

*Rotorua SeniorNet is just one of 75 local groups in the New Zealand Federation. If you would like to know more about what goes on elsewhere, OR what discounts or services are available to members, go to the Federation website.*

[www.rotoruasenior.net](http://www.rotoruasenior.net)

# Next members' forum 2023

## Watch this Space!

Our monthly members' forums are at Parksyde Centre, Tarewa Place, on the second Monday of each month at 2 pm, with interesting talks followed by afternoon tea. Visitors are welcome.

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From Bert, Activities Co-ordinator



**2022** has been a tumultuous year. We hear a lot of talk about the 'new normal' which is meant to describe all the things that have changed or are still changing post Covid. We are told that Covid has not been eradicated but has reduced to a point where most of us can resume more or less normal lives.

SeniorNet has seen a lot of changes since 2020 and we have learned to adapt and improvise in order to survive and we are looking forward to a busy 2023.

Our "drop in" sessions at the Rotorua Library are very popular and the enquiries keep rolling in. We could use some more volunteers particularly from our lady members. Most of our members these days are pretty confident using their phones, tablets and laptops. A lot of the people who consult us are frustrated by their lack of the ability to do a particular task. We meet and greet people as they arrive and find out from them what problem they need solving, and then allocate them to someone with that particular expertise. Some just want advice on the most appropriate contract for their phone usage. Some want to find out if it is safe to download a particular app or piece of software. The point I am trying to make is that you do not have to be an expert in everything, mainly because no such person exists. Sometimes people come in with a problem that has all of us scratching our heads and we have to consult Doctor Google. So come on folks, give us a hand!

Our Tech Talks will resume in the new year. They were very well attended and the management of Parksyde are very enthusiastic about these talks. We hope to build up the numbers because many of the people who we saw there last year were from the Parksyde community and I believe that some became SeniorNet members.

Speaking of Membership, one downside of the Covid lockdowns was a fall in our total membership. SeniorNet is not alone in this and many voluntary organisations are reporting reductions in their memberships. We are slowly recovering but it would be comforting to have good viable membership numbers. Word of mouth is the best advertising I know of so

please tell your friends about us, especially those people who you know who may have good computer skills. New members add to the versatility of our club and bring in new ideas.

Next year, Statistics New Zealand will be organising the National Census. The last Census was not a recognised success story. An attempt was made to gather the census data via the internet and in truth it was a bit of a disaster. It was a combination of insufficient planning and lack of consultation with organisations like SeniorNet to help people with the process of filling in their Census forms online.

The good news is that Statistics New Zealand has already been in contact with the SeniorNet national office and plans are in place for us to help seniors to fill in their census forms online.

We will be looking for volunteers when the time comes so if you would be interested in helping please contact us. This appeal goes out especially to our lady members. We found during the last census that the ladies we helped would have been happier talking to a lady. This is completely understandable when you have read through the census questionnaire.

It just remains for me to wish all of you and your families the very best for your Christmas and New Year celebrations, and we hope to see you all enjoying the fellowship of SeniorNet at our meeting and forums at Parksyde in 2023.

**Bert Harris**

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## **FYI/FYE** (For Your Information/From Your Editor)

Christmas, spending and credit cards ...

Most of us do it. Christmas shopping, supermarket shopping, clothes shopping, vehicle expenses, holidays ... all on the credit card. And isn't PayWave just wonderful! So easy and convenient! But, like most things, it can be too good to be true.

Many of us have also had our cards 'hacked', stolen, or just plain mislaid. Mislaid cards are often found in a pocket, wrong part of the handbag or left on the kitchen bench. Stolen cards tend to surface when the 'finder' attempts to use them but can't actually get the pin right - unless it's PayWave, and we haven't yet reported its loss! When a criminal acquires your card details by using a false front on a card reader, they are able to use that information without even having the card.

This happened to me a couple of years back, on a trip back to Auckland. I used my card to buy dinner and the machine (at a McDonald's) looked perfectly normal, except my card wouldn't work! I mentioned it to the assistant at the counter and got a blank look. About five hours later, halfway back to Rotorua, on a Sunday night, I was filling up the petrol tank at Te Rapa, when I got a phone call from my bank. Had I, a couple of hours earlier, ordered material (that sounded very suspicious; best not to go into details!) from a Chinese web site, and set up a payment of around \$3,000 on my Visa card? Absolutely not! Luckily, my petrol had just been paid for, so that was let through, but my credit card was cancelled on the spot and I was told a new one would be issued when I visited my local ASB branch. That happened, and the only inconvenience was a couple of days without a credit card. I survived!

Apart from having to remember a new PIN (horrors!), there were absolutely no issues and have been none since. So, the message here is, if you are concerned at all, or if you think someone has hacked an account, talk to your bank. Even if you just have a question about these things that you want to ask - do it. That's why we pay bank fees, for them to provide a service. And, especially, unlike an acquaintance of mine, if you suspect your own family of dishonesty, don't let them near your cards and, if necessary, talk to your bank! It's better than being a victim or letting a family member think they can defraud you.

On that note - have a lovely Christmas!



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