

SeniorNet (Pakuranga) Inc
12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga Auckland 2010
Telephone 09 576 4500

SEPTEMBER 2025

Established in 1996 especially for Pakuranga, Howick and Botany residents



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SEPTEMBER HELP DAYS

Monday	1st	2.00PM
Tuesday	9th	10.00 AM
Wednesday	17th	2.00PM
Tuesday	23rd	10.00AM



**Our next Meeting,
Friday 5th September**

at 10.00am

St Andrews Church Centre

Corner Ridge Rd and Vincent St

The main entrance is in Vincent Street with parking in the grounds and disabled parking near the basement entrance.

Visitors welcome

With luck and God willing, we will have a still wounded Kate back for our September meeting.

The main speaker will be **Matthew McArthur** who is a Senior Caulerpa Advisor and Quarantine Officer with Biosecurity New Zealand. He specialises in managing the response to invasive Caulerpa species, contributing to national biosecurity efforts through technical advice, coordination, and stakeholder engagement. With a background in marine science, Matthew plays a key role in protecting New Zealand's marine environments from the impacts of this fast-spreading seaweed. Matthew grew up in Auckland so has plenty of experience boating in the Hauraki Gulf.

STARTING YOUR
DAY WITH AN
EARLY MORNING
RUN IS A GREAT
WAY TO MAKE SURE
YOUR DAY CAN'T
GET ANY WORSE
THAN IT STARTED



5 NEW MEMBERS

Keith Woollerton
Mabel Fong
Christopher Martin
Cathy McKenzie
Agnes Thomas

My personal thank you to all who sent cards, flowers and attended Jeannie's service at Purewa. Its been an intense and emotional month for our family.

The Secretary will have released the notice of our 2025 AGM to be held in October and call for nominations to the committee, an essential requirement to function within the law.

I have tutored a number of Windows Photos courses and noted that the majority of those attending take their photos with an android smartphone, store them on the phone and in Google Photos so I think it is a good idea to run a Google Photo App course alternating with Windows Photos. Likewise for those who take photos on an iPhone have the Apple Photo App and it makes sense to stay within the Apple environment. However I have had no experience with this App to run a course. Windows Photos does have a link to iCloud where your iDevices photos are stored so editing is also available on your PC.

Ramblings

Goodness me, what a month. We don't realise how good and plain sailing our lives are—until things turn to custard.

However, we are almost through the month, so I will keep my fingers crossed for a brighter September.

Maybe it is winter and the very cold days we have been having. I think people get sick more easily. A friend who had a 4 night stay in Middlemore tells me there was no heating and she had 3 blankets doubled over, on her bed. If that's the case it is no wonder people are so sick.

I hope every one of you has kept warm and well. Spring is supposed to be here 1st September. Joy of joys.

Dawn Howarth



NOT Kate's Take

Dawn

So sorry to inflict my short report on Tony Kendall's talk last week. The poor man was called to help us out when Kate had a terrible fall and was unable to talk to us or write her magnificent reports for us.



Tony highlighted heaps of stuff that I am sure all of us try to cope with every time we turn our computers, laptops or even phones and iPads on. Always something crops up that we have to work out what to do with it or how to do something that should be easy but takes hours of frustration to discover it really was easy if only we knew. Perhaps we should use the Help days more often.

Tony said his mouse clogs up—I haven't had that problem but he didn't mention that keyboards and "mouses" periodically need new batteries. I have had the renown Rein in to fix my laptop when the keyboard only needed new batteries. Who knew cordless mouses or meese (do you like that better) and keyboards even had batteries.

I love his folders idea for Photos. All I need is days and days of work and patience and I could perhaps achieve some sort of order. First find the spare days ...

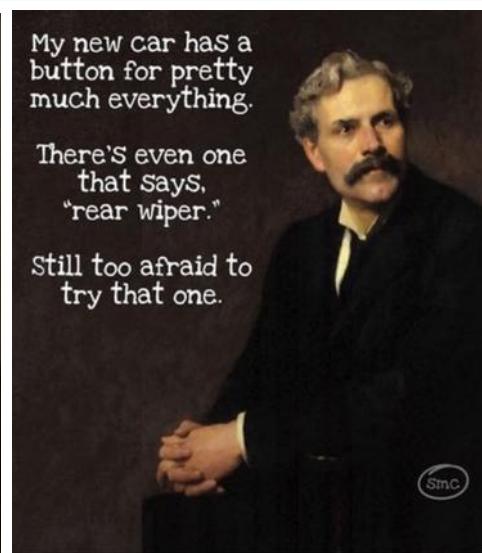
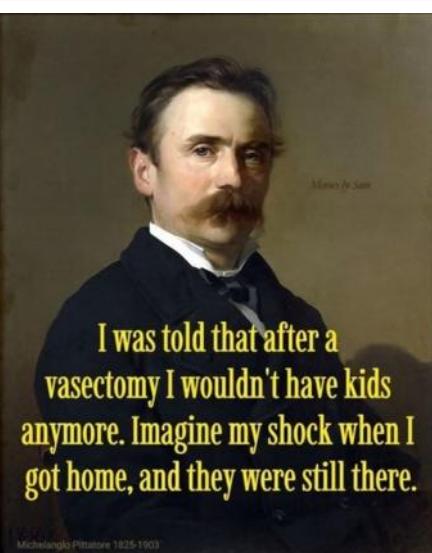
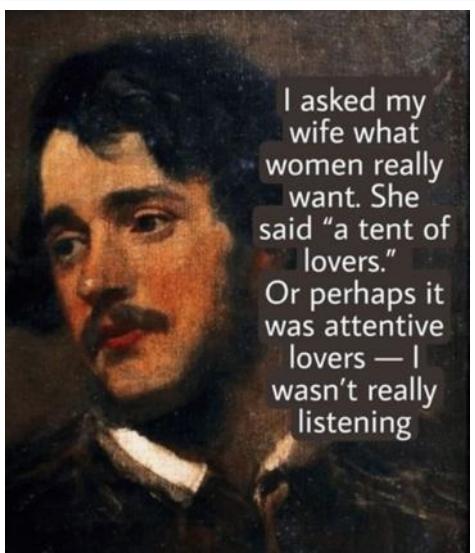
I have to agree predictive texting can cause huge headaches, especially if you don't read and check everything before you send it out. As for AI that is way beyond me and my imagination. Kate must have university degrees to get along so well with it.

Passwords which we must never divulge or write down. Ha ha. Who can survive without some written form. Tony's 2-page tiny font system sounds way too complicated for me but if it works, great. I have invented my own that works a treat but it's a secret.

As for banking online, I agree whole heartedly with the difficulties Tony encountered. In fact talking on the phone to any bank, government department, or even the doctor, is a mammoth undertaking. I feel as if I have won lotto if I can just get a real person to speak to me.

Hang in there Tony, the more we practice on our devices, the more we should improve. If that were the case though, why aren't we stars instead of staying at beginner level.

Computers, hurrumph. Can't drive them and can't live without them now. A bit like husbands really..



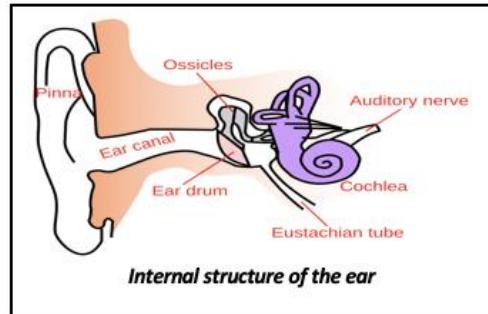


Chessie Egan

Hearing in the 21st Century

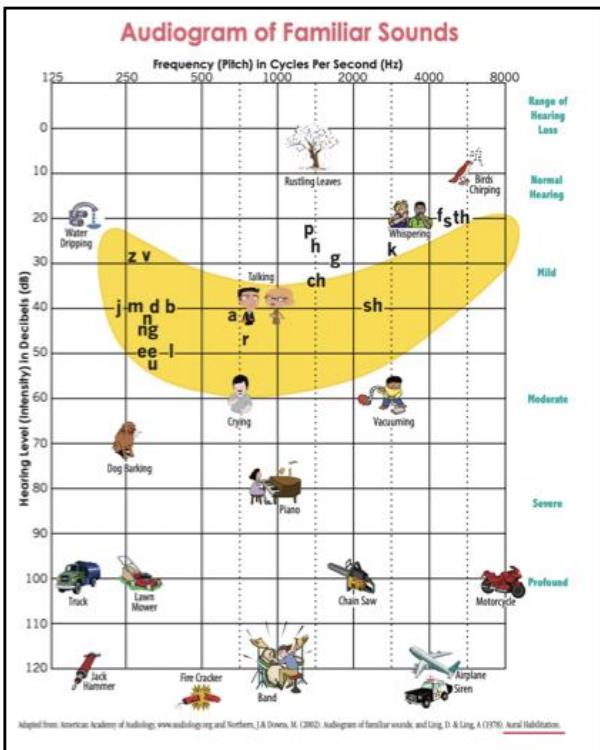
A big thank you to independent audiologist, Chessie Egan from [eHearing](http://eHearing.co.nz) Chessie@ehearing.co.nz. She gave us a fascinating talk on the ears and how effective hearing is so important to our well-being. She described the anatomy and function of the inner ear, including the cochlea and its hair cells, and explained the impact of noise exposure on hearing. She noted how hearing loss can be age-related or noise-induced, with high-pitched sounds often affected first. For those born without functional hair cells, cochlear implants can provide access to sound. She then detailed the evolution of hearing aids, from early air horns to modern digital and rechargeable models, and the role of AI in improving hearing aid functionality.

The **cochlea** is a tiny spiral inside your inner ear, shaped a bit like a snail's shell. Its job is to turn sound vibrations into signals your brain can understand. Inside, it's filled with fluid and divided into different sections. Running through the middle is a stretchy "floor" called the **basilar membrane**, which changes in thickness from one end to the other. This variation is important because different parts of it react to different sounds.



Internal structure of the ear

The **base** (near the start) is stiff and reacts best to **high-pitched sounds** like a whistle. The **tip** (the far end) is looser and reacts best to **low-pitched sounds**, like a drum. Sitting on top of the basilar membrane are thousands of tiny **hair cells**. When sound vibrations travel through the fluid, they make the basilar membrane move, which bends these hair cells. Bending the hairs makes the cells send an electrical signal along the hearing nerve to the brain. Your brain works out the pitch of the sound by knowing **which part of the cochlea the signal came from — high pitch from one end, low pitch from the other**. Over a lifetime these cochlea hairs can be damaged in various ways. If you attend a rock concert, use headphones too loudly, or work in a noisy industrial environment without hearing protection, the sound waves bend those hairs too far or too often. Just like the tread on your shoes wears down over time, the hair cells naturally wear out as we age.



High-pitched hairs, located at the "front" of the cochlea, are the most fragile, so high-pitched sounds are usually the first to be lost as we age.

Some viruses like measles, mumps, or meningitis and certain bacterial ear infections can damage these hairs directly or harm the nerve connections. A strong blow to the head or a rapid change in pressure, such as a blast wave, can shake the cochlea so violently that hairs break and their nerve connections are destroyed.

The image on the left illustrates sounds from a range of everyday things. The sounds are shown in terms of their decibels (loudness) and their frequencies (pitch). To hear speech effectively, your hearing range must at least fall within the shaded "banana" area.

Hearing loss is no longer described simply as slight, mild, moderate, moderately severe, severe, or profound. Modern day hearing tests can specifically identify the frequency ranges you cannot hear.

Kate's Take continued ...



Types of Amplification and Hearing Aid Evolution

Chessie outlined the development of hearing aids from the simple ear trumpet that can be traced back to the 1700s to modern digital hearing aids. Analogue hearing aids provided a direct one-to-one relationship between input and output sounds. They increased volume but lacked signal processing to improve frequency clarity.

Digital hearing aids, introduced in the 1980s, allowed for miniaturisation and improved functionality. The addition of rechargeable batteries and connectivity features has made hearing aids more user-friendly.



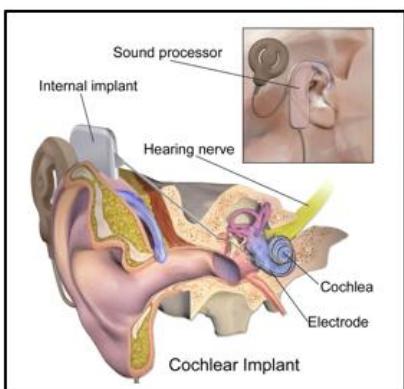
German designs from 1920-1950



Oticon Bluetooth wireless

Children born with defective cochlea may still have functional auditory nerves to the brain but will be profoundly deaf. Inability to hear inhibits speech development and leads to social isolation.

Chessie shared the story a client who, before receiving an implant, could only understand 3% of speech. Twelve months after the implant, they could discern 97%.



A cochlear implant has two main parts. The **external sound processor**, is worn behind the ear which picks up sound through a microphone and converts it into a digital signal. This signal is sent to a transmitter coil, which wirelessly sends it through the skin to the **internal implant** which includes a thin electrode array surgically inserted into the cochlea.



Behind the ear processor

The implant converts the incoming signals into tiny electrical pulses delivered to specific electrodes. Each electrode stimulates different regions of the auditory nerve, corresponding to different sound frequencies, mimicking the cochlea's natural frequency map.

The brain interprets these nerve signals as sound. While the sound quality is not identical to natural hearing, with training the user can often recognise speech, environmental sounds, and even enjoy music. Cochlear implants are most effective when implanted early in life or soon after hearing loss.

For those with no ear canal or outer ear, bone conduction hearing aids are an alternative, transmitting sound through vibration in the skull.

Words of wisdom from Chessie

- Have regular hearing tests especially, if you are over 60 or notice you are asking people to repeat themselves, misinterpreting sounds, experiencing ringing in the ears or having difficulty hearing in background noise.
- Addressing hearing loss can improve quality of life, reduce social isolation and help avert cognitive decline.
- Never use cotton buds for wax removal, as it can cause more harm than good.
- Syringing with warm water for wax removal is no longer used. Micro suctioning is now recommended.

Hearing Statistics Globally, 1.5 billion people live with hearing loss. By 2050, it's projected to reach 2.5 billion.

COMMITTEE

Chairman	Brian Erikson brian@senpak.nz
Treasurer	Mervyn Coward mervyn@senpak.nz
Secretary	Dawn Howarth dawn@senpak.nz
Membership Secretary	Robyn Carter robyn@senpak.nz
Publicity	Warren Taylor warren@senpak.nz
Course Co-ordinator	Mike Empson mike@senpak.nz
Website Assistant	Keith Erikson keith@senpak.nz
Guest Speaker Co-Ordinator	Maggie Burrill maggie@senpak.nz
Asst Guest Speaker Co-Ordinator	Fay Mullins fay@senpak.nz
Newsletter Editor	Dawn Howarth dawn@senpak.nz

Every time we try to eat healthy, along comes Christmas, Easter, summer, Friday or Tuesday and ruins it for us.

REMODEL July

Last year I replaced all the windows in my house with those expensive, double-pane, energy-efficient kind. Today, I got a call from Home Depot who installed them. The man complained that the work had been completed a year ago, and I still hadn't paid for them.

HHHelloo.....just because I'm blonde doesn't mean that I am automatically stupid. So, I told him just what his fast-talking sales guy had told me last year... that these windows would pay for themselves in a year.

Hellooooo, it's been a year, so they're paid for, I told him. There was only silence at the other end of the line, so I finally hung up. He never called back. I bet he felt like an idiot!!!

SOMETIMES YOU MEET SOMEONE AND YOU KNOW FROM THE FIRST MOMENT THAT YOU WANT TO SPEND YOUR WHOLE LIFE WITHOUT THEM.



COURSE TIMETABLES, HELP DAYS AND COURSE BOOKING INFORMATION

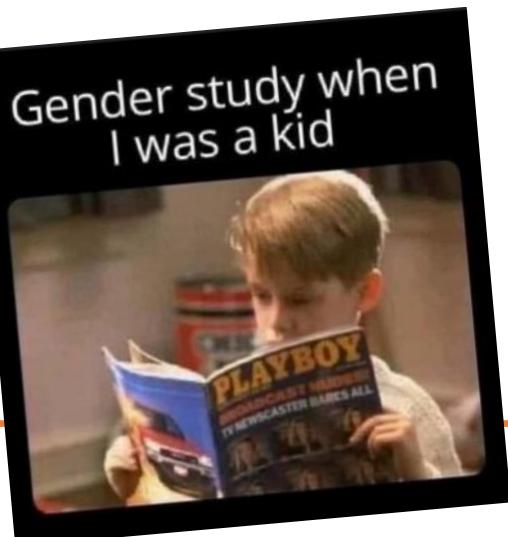
To view all SeniorNet courses and timetable, click here
<http://www.senpak.nz/courses/>

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NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY

The official sports drink when I was a kid..



Course Booking Information

- * You need to be a member of SeniorNet to take part in our classes.
- * If you need assistance in deciding on a course, please contact the Tutor who will answer any questions and also take your booking.
- * We require you to pay a course fee to cover the cost of notes and other expenses. Please bring the correct cash to the first session.
- * Our Courses are all held at our Learning Centre at
12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga.
- * Please park on the road or in the Gym carpark across the road as no parking is permitted on site. **If you use the gym parking (not available Monday or Thursday mornings) it is important that you park on the left, next to the gym. You can printout the parking advice from our website (under the Courses tab) or write your own and leave on the dashboard of your car.**