

**SeniorNet (Pakuranga) Inc**

12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga Auckland 2010

Telephone 09 576 4500

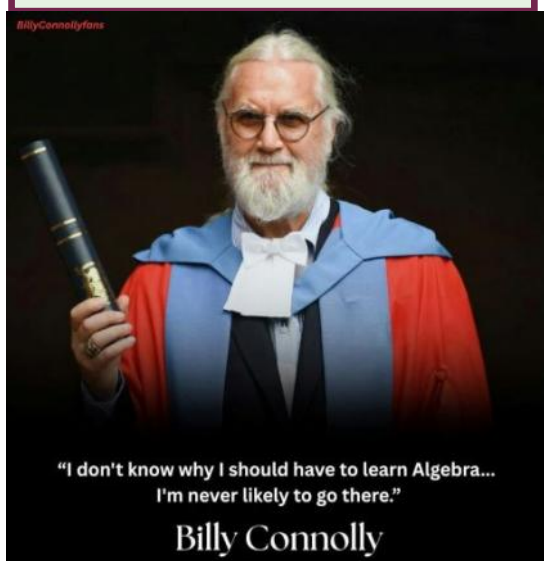
Established in 1996 especially for Pakuranga, Howick and Botany residents

## ***FEBRUARY 2026***



This issue:

- ◆ Next meeting (a **Thursday**)
- ◆ Help Days
- ◆ New members
- ◆ Bits and Bytes
- ◆ Dawn's Ramblings
- ◆ Kate's Take
- ◆ Your Committee
- ◆ How to join a course



**Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.**

Our next Meeting,

**THURSDAY**

**5 February**

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*

The early speaker will be Kate, and the main speaker will be Sara from Lion Apiaries who will talk about bees and their importance in the world and how we should protect our natural environment. Sara will also have 4-5 different types of raw honey available to purchase, including comb honey.

Note our meeting will be THURSDAY 5 February.



**2 NEW MEMBERS**

Frances Green

Paul Green

### ***FEBRUARY HELP DAYS***

Monday	02 Feb	1pm
Wednesday	11 Feb	10am
Thursday	19 Feb	10am
Tuesday	24 Feb	10am

Are you still in holiday mode, maybe if you are retired like me it's a bit of a break from local clubs etc. as you look at other pastures. I flew to Wanaka for a few days and as this was my first flight for some time I was surprised at the change in security for domestic flights. Lithium batteries have to be in cabin baggage, everything had to be x-rayed and I was pulled aside because I had a suspicious object on my shoulder. It wasn't even a chip, and after a negative pat down it was all go.

Back on SeniorNet matters, the Incorporated Society rules ask us to keep members and past members' records for a minimum of 10 years. We do this electronically with the membership system operated by Robyn Carter. The database (our electronic records) is becoming quite large and as well as sending the records to other required sites like the Learning Centre, it produces an email address list in a cunning way so that two members with the same email address only get a single email notice for meetings and courses etc. This takes the system more than a few moments, so I asked AI "how do I activate a delayed shutdown for Win 11" so that I don't have to linger while this is going on.

The answer is a bit cryptic:

Windows Key +R enter shutdown then add the script.

Shutdown -s -t 300

This is a 300 second delayed shutdown, you can make it a desktop shortcut and a taskbar icon, even choosing a nice icon symbol. You can adjust the number if you want a different delay, but it works just as AI promised.

In the Learning Centre you may have experienced a chair that "lets you down" suddenly. I have found an internet site that supplies the precise replacement for the centre gas filled column that connects the base to the seat and enables height adjustment and a soft landing, One is now repaired and I hold a second spare incase there is another, but all in all they have done duty well for about 25 years.

If you find another, please tell the tutor.

Surprise loved ones with an unexpected gift.

## *Ramblings*

*Dawn Howarth*

I hope you have had a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. Now you are ready to get back in to routine and lots of SeniorNet meetings, Help days and courses. I certainly need some classes. It is so annoying when I want to do something that should be simple but I am defeated at every turn. Hopefully I will have more time this year to stretch my tiny brain and really start to rule my laptop instead of it being the boss and having me tearing my hair out.

I have been stretching my brain for over a year now trying to master MahJong. I must admit I have improved and I'm grateful for that, but it is certainly not easy and my friends are so patient with me—as long as I keep the cherries and chocolates flowing.

Eating cherries has been a lovely part of the summer holidays. I suppose they will be finished soon, now that they are affordable. It's a good job chocolate is available all year—long live Whittakers. I keep a thermal bag with various chocolates that I give to the village handymen who help me with various jobs, or people I visit for coffee (or gin), etc. Just now I have just been rooting through it to see if I can find any that is past its "best before" date—sadly there is none. Drat it. Now I will; have to make something healthy for my dinner instead.

Keep smiling, and enjoying chocolate.

PS: I must add that I think Kate did a great job at our Christmas meeting, telling us about some of her Christmas misadventures. Bee invasion, broken plumbing, the dog eating the turkey - all true, and she is still smiling and cooking Christmas dinners. Incredible.



## NotebookLM goes from strength to strength

In the October 2025 newsletter there was an introductory discussion of Google's NotebookLM. This article is Part 2 and features the same software. Almost every week since that original discussion, new functionality has been added.

The October article outlined how to create your own notebook using material you have sourced yourself. The free version allows you to upload up to fifty sources. Using one or all of these sources, NotebookLM then summarises the material into clear, easily understood prose.

The original article also demonstrated how the source material could be taken into the Studio section and reformatted. At the time, there were six customisable options, including an **Audio Overview** that allowed you to interrupt the discussion to ask a question. The response was then incorporated into the **Audio Overview** itself. By December 2025, two additional options had been added. Although labelled beta, they were already producing some outstanding material.

### Grill Master Safety: Your Guide to a Perfect BBQ



The infographics to the left and below were generated as the single infographic shown above.

To demonstrate these new functions, ChatGPT was asked to supply guidelines for a group of young people preparing to set up and run a barbecue for the first time. These guidelines were then copied into NotebookLM, where a synopsis was generated almost immediately.

In the Studio section, the **Infographic** option was selected and, using the custom prompt box, NotebookLM was asked to create a colourful, fun graphic that would appeal to young people. It generated "**Grill Master Safety: Your Guide to a Perfect BBQ**" in about eight minutes.

Using the **Slide Deck** option, it also created a set of slides suitable for a PowerPoint presentation in roughly the same amount of time.





## Kate's Take continued ...

### The Story of a Flawless Barbecue --- A Slide Presentation

**Every Great Story Has a Beginning, a Middle, and an End.**

We'll walk through the entire lifecycle of a perfect barbecue, chapter by chapter. Follow these steps in order, and you can't go wrong.

- Chapter 1: The Setup
- Chapter 2: The Art of Prep
- Chapter 3: The Heat is On
- Chapter 4: The Grand Finale
- Chapter 5: The Aftermath

**Chapter 1: The Setup**

Building your foundation for a flawless event.

**Secure Your Site, Sanitize Your Station.**

**Find Your Spot**

Keep the barbecue to the ground. Position it well away from overhanging eaves and roof rafters.

**Start with a Clean Slate**

Wash your hands thoroughly. Clean all surfaces and utensils before you begin.

**Chapter 2: The Art of Prep**

Prepped the ingredients, and they'll expect you back.

**The First Rule of Raw Meat: Stay Cool.**

**5°C**

Keep all raw meat in the fridge and properly sealed below 5°C until the exact moment it goes on the grill.

**Create Separations: The Golden Rule of Prep.**

Never let raw meat or its juices touch anything that will be eaten without being cooked.

**DO THIS**

Use separate chopping boards and utensils for raw and cooked food.

**NOT THAT**

Prevent raw meat juices from touching cooked food or utensils.

**Master Your Marinade.**

Marinating meat is great for flavor, but the liquid touches raw meat. Handle it with care.

Always marinate in the fridge. Never on the counter.

Never reuse leftover marinade as a sauce on cooked food **UNLESS** you boil it vigorously first to kill any bacteria.

**Chapter 3: The Heat is On**

Mastering the cook for delicious and safe results.

**Know Your Numbers, Trust Your Eyes.**

**The Magic Number**

**75°C**

Cook chicken, sausages, and mince products to an internal temperature of at least 75°C. This is the surest way to know they're safe.

**The Chicken Check**

When you cut into the meat, juices should be clear, not pink.

**The Mince Check**

When you cut into the burger, there should be no pink meat.

**Don't Let Good Food Go Bad**

Avoid cooking food very early. If you must, you have to keep it hot.

**ABOVE 60°C**

Once cooked, food must be kept at or above 60°C until it's served. The zone between 5°C and 60°C is the **Danger Zone** for bacteria growth.

**Chapter 4: The Grand Finale**

Serving your masterpiece with style (and safety).

**Shield Your Spread**

Once the food is served, the final line of defense is how you present it.

**Keep it Covered**

Use food covers or foil to protect the spread from birds, flies, and jays.

**Separate and Serve**

Keep cooked meats separate from salads and drinks on the serving table.

**Use tools for everything**

Provide tongs and spoons for every single dish to prevent people from using their hands.

**Chapter 5: The Aftermath**

Managing leftovers and leaving no trace.

**Beat the Clock.**

**The Safe Zone**

Use the safe zone for food that is ready to eat. It's the only place where food can stay safely for more than 2 hours.

**The Danger Zone**

Food should never stay in the danger zone for more than 2 hours.

**A Note for the Chef**

As the food handler, you are the most important safety feature.

- Wash Hands Often: Especially after touching raw meat.
- Lock the Part: Tie back long hair and wear clean clothing.
- Stay Home if Unwell: Never handle food for others if you are sick.

**The Final Sweep.**

A clean finish prevents pests and makes the next BBQ easier.

**Wash Up**

Clean all utensils and surfaces with hot, soapy water.

**Chill Out**

Refrigerate any safe leftovers promptly.

**Bin It**

Dispose of all rubbish, properly to avoid attracting pests.

**The Flawless BBQ Master Checklist**

**THE TEMPERATURES**

- 5°C: Keep raw meat here.
- 75°C: Cook to this temperature.
- 60°C: Keep cooked food here.

**THE SEPARATION RULE**

- Separate boards for raw and ready-to-eat.
- Separate tongs for raw and ready-to-eat.

**THE CLEAN RULE**

- Wash your hands constantly.
- Wash your hands constantly.

**Good Food. Good Company. Great Memories.**

Stay safe and grill on.



## COMMITTEE

**Chairman** Brian Erikson  
[brian@senpak.nz](mailto:brian@senpak.nz)

**Treasurer** Mervyn Coward  
[mervyn@senpak.nz](mailto:mervyn@senpak.nz)

**Secretary** Dawn Howarth  
[dawn@senpak.nz](mailto:dawn@senpak.nz)

**Membership Secretary** Robyn Carter  
[robyn@senpak.nz](mailto:robyn@senpak.nz)

**Publicity** Warren Taylor  
[warren@senpak.nz](mailto:warren@senpak.nz)

**Course Co-ordinator** Mike Empson  
[mike@senpak.nz](mailto:mike@senpak.nz)

**Website Assistant** Keith Erikson  
[keith@senpak.nz](mailto:keith@senpak.nz)

**Guest Speaker Co-Ordinator** Maggie Burrill  
[maggie@senpak.nz](mailto:maggie@senpak.nz)

**Asst Guest Speaker Co-Ordinator** Fay Mullins  
[fay@senpak.nz](mailto:fay@senpak.nz)



Thinking back to when "a  
new hip joint" meant  
someplace I wanted to go  
on Friday night.

Most people have heard of Karl  
Marx, but few know of his sister  
Onya, an Olympic runner. Her name  
is still mentioned at the start of  
every race.



You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.

## COURSE TIMETABLES, HELP DAYS AND COURSE BOOKING INFORMATION

To view all SeniorNet courses and timetable, click here

<http://www.senpak.nz/courses/>

### FEBRUARY HELP DAYS

Monday	02 Feb	1pm
Wednesday	11 Feb	10am
Thursday	19 Feb	10am
Tuesday	24 Feb	10am

**NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY**



Know when to keep silent.

#### 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.**

WAIVER: Some of our members voluntarily and willingly give help and advice to other members on matters relating to computers, associated equipment and software. This includes information contained in the columns of this newsletter and other publications including our SeniorNet Website. This help or advice is taken solely at the recipient's risk and imposes no responsibility or liability of any kind, either on those providing such help or advice, or the newsletter Editors or SeniorNet (Pakuranga) Inc.