

From the Committee

We are now well and truly into the cold and it is more important than ever to make the effort to get out and about.

When the days become shorter and the nights longer and you find yourself sleeping more than usual but still feeling the tiredness in your body and you lack the energy to carry out your usual activities. It all comes down to Seasonal Affective Disorder (most commonly known as SAD).

Thirty-five percent of Australians experience depression during the winter months. Compared to other mental health disorders, SAD is harder to diagnose. It might take you two years of experiencing the same symptoms during a specific season before you get diagnosed with Seasonal Affective Disorder.

But what causes SAD?

SAD is thought to be caused by shorter days and less daylight shifting the body's circadian rhythm (its body clock), which may trigger chemical change, with the body releasing less hormones such as melatonin (a sleep hormone) and serotonin (a mood hormone), which affects our sleep and mood.

How does SAD affect you?

- Losing interest in normal activities
- Triggering bad eating habits
- Finding it hard to wake up in the morning.
- Sleeping too much
- Feeling tired all the time
- Lack of energy

Coping strategies

- **Light Therapy:** Spend time outside during daylight hours. Even on cloudy days, natural light can be beneficial.
- **Exercise Regularly:** Engage in regular physical activity, such as walking, jogging, yoga, or any other exercise you enjoy. Exercise can boost endorphin levels and improve mood. Try to exercise outside during daylight hours to maximize your exposure to natural light.

- **Healthy Diet:** Eat a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains. Avoid excessive sugar and refined carbs which can cause energy crashes. Consider a vitamin D supplement, especially if sunlight exposure is limited, as low levels of vitamin D have been linked to depression.
- **Sleep Hygiene:** Maintain a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day. Ensure your bedroom is conducive to sleep—dark, quiet, and cool. Avoid screens before bedtime as blue light can disrupt sleep.
- **Stay Connected:** Maintain social connections with friends and family. Social support is crucial for mental health. Participate in group activities or clubs that interest you, either in person or virtually.

*This advice is from the
Mental Health Association of Victoria.*

U3A Membership Policy

When a member pays the required membership subscriptions they become a member of Creswick & District U3A and must follow the Terms and Conditions of membership.

Listed below are some of these conditions. The complete list of Conditions and Policies is available on the [website](#).

1. Always act in the best interests of the U3A and never do anything to bring the U3A into disrepute.
2. Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution.
3. Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy at all times.
4. Comply with and support the decisions of the elected Committee.

Age-Less

Remember the essential pillars of living well:

- **Attitude** (how we choose to feel)
- **Grub** (what we eat and drink)
- **Exercise** (aim for at least a mile's walk each day)
- **Love** (family, friends, neighbours—and importantly, yourself)
- **Environment** (the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the chemicals we keep in our homes and gardens)
- **Sleep**, and sensible use of...
- **Supplements.**

These are the seven foundations of healthy ageing — accessible to all, without prescription. (And perhaps the most powerful of all is love.)

But Age-Less also serves as a reminder of what to avoid, particularly as we grow older: alcohol and anger; complaining and negativity; envy and excess (moderation in all things); loneliness and inactivity; overconsumption; a sedentary lifestyle; and, above all, stress and smoking.

To give ourselves the best chance of living longer, and better, we must actively embrace the first list and consciously reject the second. The choice, ultimately, is ours.

Why not begin today?

The Oxford Longevity Project is pleased to introduce [Living Longer, Better](#), a publication shaped by the combined knowledge, experience, and perspectives of the OLP founders and board members.

Launched at the Smart Ageing Summit 2026, the report reflects many of the ideas, conversations, and scientific insights that have emerged over the past five years of bringing together researchers, clinicians, entrepreneurs, and thought leaders in healthy ageing and longevity.

This report is available [online](#) and the above is part of it, if it contains the latest information from a distinguished group of experts some in the form of podcasts.

Sir Christopher Ball



Sir Christopher Ball is a teacher, philanthropist and poet. He has been a Fellow, Tutor and Bursar of Lincoln College, and Warden of Keble College, Oxford, Director of Learning at the RSA, and Chancellor of the University of Derby; and is now a patron of the National Campaign for Learning, Vice-President of Autistica, and adviser to a number of charitable organizations in health, education and development.

Following a long career at Oxford University, and in public life, and consultancy in the UK and overseas, his current interests include 'early learning', core skills, disability, brain science, motivation and self-esteem – and now also healthy longevity (the OLP), and climate change (he was selected as Oxford's 'Climate Action Champion in 2025'). He also runs marathons, writes poetry, teaches the art of fundraising, and gives lectures on land and at sea.



Spider
-A.Harris

The spider in your shower
is a funny little beast -
Those drain flies that you call a pest
are what she calls a feast.

So why not leave her to it?
Please don't squish her like a brute.
She's helpful. And she's harmless.
(And she told me that you're cute.)

Ray Ryall's Sawmill, Armstrong Street, Creswick

Ray started his saw mill in 1935 with his two companions, Arthur and Ben Burrows.

At first he had one saw bench under a pine shelter and the partners agreed from the start that they would work a regular eight hours every day, five and a half days a week, in contrast to some of the prospectors who only worked when they felt like it.

He got jobs building two bridges in Creswick for the Forestry Commission, made fruit boxes and later rifle boxes for the army. They also cut scantlings from the mill waste.

Although the mill struggled at first, it eventually became one of the main employers for the town, with about 33 local workers, and was a national asset during the war.

With his engineering background, Ray built a steam driven pine logging mill and, with hard work and patience, eventually founded H.R. Ryall & Co.

In 1941, a son was born, Keith and in 1945 a daughter, Evelyn. Ray started work on a family home, built in two halves, and taking seven years to complete the job.

During World War 2, 1942 Ray was made a District Warden with responsibility for black out procedures, air raid sirens in various places and had air raid shelters dug out. He was also making ammunition boxes at the mill.

Then, disaster! In 1953 the Saw Mill was burnt to the ground and demolished, meaning a loss of 45 permanent workers, a devastating loss for a small town.

Later that year, Ray set up a temporary building made of burnt iron sheets and began the tedious, heartbreaking job of rebuilding the mill, a program that took five years.

From the ashes arose a fully automatic, and one of the most up to date mills in Australia. All the equipment was built by employees on site and even the fork-lift was made from an old armoured personnel carrier.

Ray Ryall also looked to the future. To ensure that the mill would never suffer from a shortage of timber, he planted fifty acres of forest.

He never used mains power; but made his own power with diesel and steam. All waste was recycled, off-cuts went through the boiler and sawdust was fed through a hopper onto grates, to create heat to drive the kilns to dry the timber. Then the generator created the electricity to drive the motors.

Ray sold the Mill in 1978 after 43 years of timber milling.



Above: Old A2 boiler at Creswick was used at the old mill. Photo Frank Hinde, Victorian Railways Facebook.

Below: Another shot of A2 boiler at Creswick. The estate buildings include a sawmill with a rather elderly looking vertical engine and two very different boilers. The one next to the sawmill engine is a Cornish boiler set in quite a high setting. In the yard is a Babcock and Wilcox water tube boiler that is largely devoid of its fire brick casing.



Stop the scammers!

Online clues give scammers access to your accounts.

In an increasingly connected world, the smallest details shared online can carry unexpected risks.

What may seem harmless on social platforms can be pieced together in ways that compromise personal security.

New concerns are emerging around how digital information is being used to access private accounts with greater ease than ever before. Your birthday. Your dog's name. Your suburb. For many Australians, these are the building blocks of passwords.

For scammers armed with artificial intelligence (AI), they're an open door.

The Department of Home Affairs has warned that too much personal information is now freely available online.

Many Australians share details on social media such as birthdays, family names, email addresses and suburbs, often without realising how visible they are. This affects about 64 per cent of users.

The report also found that personal details are commonly reused when setting passwords, with around 30 per cent of Australians relying on this kind of information.

Cybercriminals are now feeding those details into AI tools. The result? Modern brute-force AI tools can guess a 10-character password in seconds. This isn't just a young person's problem. Australians aged 65 and over, who make up about 17.1 per cent of the population, accounted for 26.5 per cent of total Scamwatch losses in 2025.

People over the age of 65 reported \$88.8 million in overall losses.

The reason is straightforward. Retirees often have more savings and superannuation at stake. Scammers know this.

Daniel Garcia, vice President of Kaseya's Asia-Pacific region, puts it plainly. "AI has certainly changed the game," he says.

He also warns that many Australians 'reuse their passwords for multiple services'. One cracked

password can unlock bank accounts, email and government portals in one sweep. The good news? You can make life very difficult for these AI tools. The trick is length, not complexity.

The Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) encourages people to use passphrases instead of traditional passwords. A good passphrase contains at least four unrelated words and is 15 characters or longer.

For example, 'crystal onion clay pretzel' may seem unusual, but that randomness is what makes it effective.

While easy to remember, a 20-character passphrase made up of unrelated words can take billions of years for a super computer to crack

It also offers far stronger protection than a short, complex-looking password such as 'xP@55w0rd!'.

Here are the essential steps to protect yourself:

- Use a passphrase, not a password. Four random words strung together beats a short, complex jumble every time.
- Turn on multi-factor authentication (MFA). This adds a second step, like a code sent to your phone, when logging in.
- Stop reusing passwords. If one account is breached, every account using that same password is compromised.
- Audit your social media. Remove birthdays, pet names and other personal details from public view.
- Consider a password manager. The ACSC recommends using a password manager to store unique passwords for every account.

Australia recorded 1.1 million leaked accounts in just the first quarter of 2026.

The scale of the problem is enormous, but individual action makes a real difference

A few minutes spent updating your passwords today could save you thousands. If you'd like help, call the ACSC hotline on 1300 292 371.

From Your life Choices 13 June 2026.

