

Our History 2008-2009

In 2008, the club started with a membership of 93. The presidency was taken on by Vivienne Nash with Alex Wilkins continuing his scribing role and Geoff Brierly again being entrusted with the club's finances. This year, projected and actual budgets were presented in glorious colour, the result being the committee was told they were looking down the barrel of a projected loss of over \$1,000 this year

The year started with a very successful trip to Warwick which included an overnight stop at the historic Abbey of the Roses. Members also went to the former convict island of St Helena; the controversial Tugun desalination plant; the Picasso and Sidney Nolan exhibitions at the Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA); the silent film cinema and restaurant at Pomona; the Samford Valley and Museum; and Fort Lytton. Because of ongoing losses on trips, a cancellation policy for last minute cancellations was developed.

However, in mid-year, the issue of declining participation in events had become an issue and a paper was presented to the committee to discuss a number of issues. The sudden death of Sel Bosel had left the club with no one willing to take over the role of organising events, so the role was undertaken by a sub-committee of four from September. A survey was undertaken to determine members' interests, preferred forms of travel and types of trips. This also resulted extensive list of events being identified and a new policy on refunds and booking fees being proposed.

Speakers continued to be informative and enlightening and included Peter Hollingsworth on the city's new north-west tunnel; Lawrence Smith on landscaping; Rick Milne (known as the "guru of garbage") on antiques and their value; renowned landscape architect Lawrie Smith on the development of the Roma Street Parklands; Sgt Richard Symes on community policing aims and strategies; and Noel Hoole on his round-the-world sailing trip.

The special interest groups continued to be well-attended and included dining, book club, writer, bridge and BBQ groups.

Risk Management rose as an issue this year, with meetings held in private homes presenting a specific challenge. There were also a number of changes to the Probus constitution.

A grant was sought from the Qld State Government through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund for the acquisition of a data projector package to also include a laptop computer, screen and stand. In November a grant of almost \$3,000 finally came through

Despite the beginning of the year concerns about losses on trips, the club's financial position continued to be sufficiently strong to allow the term deposit to be rolled over in June and the club to be a modest \$200 over budget by July.

July was also the month the club reached its maximum membership of 100 comprising 62 women and 38 males with one member on a leave of absence. But this highlighted the fact that there were a number of members who were not coming to the number of meetings required each year by club's constitution.

The annual Melbourne Cup sweep was organized by the club's horse guru and Christmas subsidized by the club with Irish singers providing some rousing entertainment.

2009

The year opened on a rather sad note, with the death of one of our former presidents, namely Terry Sherman. Also our inaugural president, George Allen resigned from the club. At the AGM in March, Malcolm Lewis who was a relatively new member very bravely took on the role of president, whilst Malcolm's wife, Gill, volunteered to handle the onerous responsibilities of events organizer. Joan Matheson, another newcomer, was elected to handle the dual functions of secretary and vice-president. Thanks went to Vivian Nash, our retiring president, and Alex Wilkins for their excellent work whilst on the committee. Vivian had co-opted Malcolm Lewis into undertaking the lengthy procedure of organizing a grant from the Community Gambling Benefit Fund for \$2959 for the purpose of computer and data projector; whilst Alex had been heavily involved in ensuring that members were adequately insured whilst involved in Probus activities. The financial position on 31 December 2008 showed an excess of income over expenditure of \$2394.59 and total assets of \$5074.41. Particular items to note were a grant of \$450 from Brisbane City Council towards our Xmas lunch and a reduction in our Suncorp investment of \$1000. The annual membership

fee was increased from \$20 to \$25 per member. This year we introduced a small medical card which could be folded to put in your wallet. Its purpose was to record any medical conditions or medication that you are on which could be vital in the case of an emergency

The year started with 99 members with 62 females and 37 males. The previous year we had dropped to as low as 89 members due to the resignations and illnesses. The club instituted a membership waiting list. During the course of the year we lost the following members, Brian and Jocelyn Catchpole, Ann Foster, Carmel and Pam Drysdale, Frank and Valerie Taylor, Bob and Lorraine Graham. On the positive side new members were Gwen & David Smith, Alan and Gwen McFarlane, Kevin and Catherine Hesse, Peter Hallett, Alex, McKenzie, Margaret and Peter Hollingsworth and Jan McCabe.

The premier trip of the year was the three day visit to the Granite Belt and this was complemented by a range of other day visits which are detailed below. In keeping with increasing trends in litigation, members signed a special participation declaration at the commencement of each trip.

Our speaker season started with a talk from Keith Schafferius who was a private investigator who had been involved in some rather interesting situations. This was followed by Marjorie Greene, whose topic was "Beyond Maturity Blues". Spencer Howsen from ABC 612 extolled the virtues of digital radio to us in June. Following a further visit from Keith Schafferius in August, Jim Hammond spoke on his subject, entitled "Angel Flight", which concerned the care and transport of people from remote areas to where there were medical facilities. A talk by Rosaline Delau on Feng Shui which means wind and water was interesting and there were some searching questions. Next on the agenda was Professor Ian Godwin who spoke about molecular plant improvement and molecular genetics and finally our last speaker of the year was Di Ellis whose subject was genealogy.

Our sub groups consisting of Terrific Tennis Players, Relaxing BBQers, Book Worms, Writers Ink, Beginners Bridge and Movie Goers continued to attract participants. Most pleasing was that a young man who from a distance, saw the friendly atmosphere and enjoyment our barbecue group was having in each in each other's company, enquired as to who we were. He left and a short time afterwards came back with a box of chocolates for the group. It was very gratifying that our fellowship of friendship was approved was apparent to someone from outside.

From the 19th to the 21st of May a large contingent of our members enjoyed a three day trip to the Granite Belt, centred on Stanthorpe. On arrival in the area we had morning tea which was followed by a visit to an apple orchard where we picked our own apples. The days were extremely busy and although it rained all the time it didn't dampen our spirits. From liquors to wines to cheeses and jams at the Bramble Patch it was all go. Two of the highlights were the visit to the Tourism and Hospitality College where their wine making skills were demonstrated and had lunch which was served to us by the students and the visit to the vegetable farm. This was agriculture on a large scale with their own trucks to deliver vegetables to Rocklea Markets. An old bus took us around and we saw the automated planting of seedlings and the large fields of produce. They relied heavily on backpackers during the picking season. With purchases at most of the foregoing venues plus cheese, olives and lavender our luggage on the way home was very heavy.

Our accommodation during our stay was at the High Street Motor Inn in Stanthorpe. This was very hospitable with a roaring fire in the lounge/dining room in the evening. We thought perhaps the hospitality had gone too far when one of our single lady members found a pair of men's shoes outside her room door one morning.

Unfortunately when we returned to Cubberla Creek in Brisbane the heavy continuous heavy rain had flooded the area and two of our members cars had been under water and were write-offs.

Visits during the year were varied, with visits to St. Johns and St. Stephens Cathedrals, the visit to Shafston College with lunch afterwards at L'Academie, cruise on the Brisbane River, "Springtime on the Mountain" at Mount Tamborine. The Crucible Theatre in Ipswich, the Queensland Art Gallery for the American Impressionists and Realists exhibition and a tour around Old Government House.

Xmas Lunch was held on the 7th December at the Jindalee Hotel which was a repeat venue. Arthur Walters came up trumps and borrowed a keyboard which Norm Pugh played for us. After a long session of drinks, snacks and socializing we sat down to an excellent lunch. Economy dictated that we find entertainers from amongst our

members. Whilst Con McCormack acted as M.C., Arthur with monologues and Geoff Brierley with a song kept the party going. The committee who had organized the event then led everyone in the singing of carols.