

## Is there anyone out there?

### Expressions of interest to be invited

**I**S there anyone out there prepared to enter into a business arrangement with the WSCC that would result in a bigger, up-to-date club, at the same time ensuring its long-term future?

We may be about to find out.

The club is to, initially, invite developers who have already expressed interest to expand on their ideas on how the club's site may best be developed. Subsequently, it is likely that proposals may be invited through tender columns.

Potential developers will be provided with an "expressions of interest" paper, prepared by the Development Advisory Group and approved by the club's management committee, which sets out in detail the club's requirements.

Proposals that may be forthcoming can be acted upon only with the concurrence of club members at a special meeting called for this purpose.

The Development Advisory Group was set up as a consequence of concerns about the club's inadequacies expressed by members at general meetings, in survey results, and at a day-long workshop.

A Strategic Planning Project, which has been the subject of intense discussion over the past two years, made clear the need for the club to expand, to provide



*On behalf of the WSCC, President Anne Murray accepts a cheque for \$30,000 from ACT Chief Minister John Stanhope. Story on p 3.*

the existing membership with better facilities, and to provide for a future increase in the number of seniors in the club's "catchment area".

The club has 82 years of its lease to run, on an increasingly valuable block of land.

Last year the club commissioned architects Small and Quinton to draw up a plan for an "ideal club", addressing present shortcomings and assuming that a new club could be financed.

Potential developers would need to consider the cost of satisfying the requirements of the WSCC and of changing lease conditions, in addition to development costs for its own purposes.

There are other criteria a developer would have to satisfy.

The club would need to be provided with an ongoing revenue stream (perhaps a percentage of rent charged), and alternative accommodation would need to be provided while the site was being developed. Car parking would be an important issue.

The Development Advisory Group has stressed that the club's interests should be aggressively represented. Negotiations would require skill and firmness.

The club would be represented by a solicitor, an accountant and its own experts in development projects.

The Development Advisory Group is optimistic that the ACT Government would favourably consider proposals advantageous to seniors, Chief Minister John Stanhope having commended the club on its foresight and energy.

Members will be informed at all stages, through the *Meridian*, the club's website [www.wodenseniors.org.au](http://www.wodenseniors.org.au) (on which the expressions of interest document may be found), at the annual general meeting, and at special meetings called for this purpose.

As at all stages over the past two years, members will be provided with information or clarification on request.

## Editor's comments

Forget Johnny and Dubya and Tony. I get the news *that matters* when I visit my hairdresser and read the magazines while I wait. "Meg begs, 'Take me back, Dennis!'" ; "The photo that broke Julia Roberts' heart"; "Mary Tyler Moore's facelift hell"; "My boyfriend died making love to me".

### THREE GREAT LIES (1)

When Ronald Reagan died recently, a quip attributed to him was: "I'm from the government, and I'm here to help you". Reminds me of the three great lies, of which Reagan's "I'm from the government" was one. The others? "My cheque's in the mail", and "Of course I'll still respect you in the morning".

### THREE GREAT LIES (2)

Benjamin Disraeli had another slant on the three great lies. Said he, there are lies, damned lies, and statistics.

### TELLING IT LIKE IT IS (1)

"Of Mr Glover's animal pieces we will say nothing; we are only sorry that he should so far mistake his powers as to spend a moment on their execution". - *The Times*, 14 June 1821, reviewing Glover's painting "Cattle. The last gleam of the setting sun" (1816), exhibited at the NGA as part of *John Glover and the Colonial Picturesque*.

### TELLING IT LIKE IT IS (2)

Which reminds me of a review of a performance by a Leeds amateur orchestra which appeared in *The Yorkshire Post* in the '50s. After congratulating the musicians on their enthusiasm, the reviewer ended by advising them in future to play for themselves, "behind closed doors".

### FATE WORSE THAN DEATH

*Nancy Astor* : If I were your wife I would put poison in your coffee!  
*Winston Churchill*: Madam, if I were your husband, I would drink it.

### TIMELY COMMENT

There are laws to protect the freedom of the press' speech, but none that are worth anything to protect the people from the press. - *Mark Twain*.

### THAT WOULD BE ABOUT RIGHT

"NSW is to be sluggish with higher electricity charges. Consumers will pay \$1 a week more. That's \$52 a year". - WIN news.

### WISDOM

I prefer old age to the alternative. - *Maurice Chevalier*.

## Membership renewal: herculean task

AT the time of writing 392 applications for renewal of membership have been processed. This, together with those who were already financial for 2004-05, plus a few new members, brings the current membership to 502, with a few more still in the pipeline.

My thanks go firstly to those of you who returned your forms promptly; secondly to Umar, Muriel and the other front office volunteers who have done sterling work in logging the applications; and thirdly to those volunteers who responded to my invitation to become part of the work group responsible for keying in data.

To name names, I thank Colleen Scott, Marie Mathews, Sue Barrett, Grewal Brajinda, Alma Stephenson and Vivienne Singleton.

I appreciate that simply keying in data can be a very tedious

occupation. But I believe that it becomes less so the more one understands and appreciates the inner workings of the program one is using, and for that reason alone I regret that due to constraints of time and space I was unable to give all of the volunteers as much tuition time as I (and they) would have liked.

However, if the committee's plans for additional computer facilities come to fruition, and if a time convenient to the whole work group can be arranged during the coming year, I propose to hold a short course in the construction and management of data bases, in the hope that this will add interest to the task.

But in any case I can now sleep peacefully in the knowledge that if I fail to wake up tomorrow the data base will live on!

Dennis Glanville  
(Records Clerk)

## If I may be able to help, call me!

By Stephanie Tolson

I AM working with the Home and Community Care (HACC) team at Woden Community Services for six months in Chris Ledger's position. As a case manager, I am available to assist members of the WSCC who satisfy the criteria as service users of the HACC program.

I can be phoned on 6260 5400 between 8.30 and 4.30 Monday to Friday, and I am happy to meet you at my office, or to visit you at your home.

I am looking forward to the next six months. Don't hesitate to call. I will do all I can to help, and you are assured of confidentiality.

Our programs include transport, respite and activity groups, case management for people with a significant disability or high support requirements, and the provision of advice on any matters that may concern you. If I can't help you directly, I will do



all I can to refer you to someone who can.

I have lived in Canberra for 38 years with my husband, and we have three adult children. I have worked for Woden Community Services for 23 years, during which time there have been great changes and expansion in community services.

I enjoy meeting people, travelling, showing people around our lovely city, and visiting exhibitions.

# ACT Government grant of \$30,000 to club

THE club has received a cheque for \$30,000 from the ACT Government to assist it with its strategic planning and refurbishment agenda.

Club President Anne Murray accepted the cheque from Chief Minister John Stanhope at the club on 10 August.

Anne told Mr Stanhope that the club had already decided how to spend the money, and was preparing a submission for more. Mr Stanhope responded that he would be disappointed were this otherwise. He acknowledged the club's contribution to the welfare of older people in the community, and its need for ongoing support.

"I am conscious of all the hard work club members have done", Mr Stanhope said. "My Government recognises the valuable service this club provides in encouraging its members to participate in physical, creative and intellectual activities, all of which contribute to strengthening community engagement".

Mr Stanhope said that Canberra was ageing faster than

any other part of Australia.

"In about 25 years time Canberra will have 23,000 more people aged in their 70s - nearly three times today's figure. And our 80-year-olds will quadruple from 3000 today to more than 12,000".

Mr Stanhope said seniors had made a significant contribution to the well-being of the community, and that the Government was "committed to ensuring they are able to age in an active, yet graceful way, and are provided with appropriate levels of security, and services to meet their needs".

After the presentation, Mr Stanhope stayed for morning tea and sandwiches, taking the opportunity to meet members.

Once again club members responded to the occasion. Many thanks to all those who helped in so many ways, such as preparing tea and refreshments, moving furniture and ensuring orderly parking.

## ACT Seniors Card a Canberra success story, says Chief Minister

Mr Stanhope chose the cheque-presentation occasion to also launch the Seniors Card Directory.

"The ACT Seniors Card scheme is one of Canberra's great success stories", he said.

"More than 37,000 people over the age of 60 are members of the program".

Mr Stanhope acknowledged the role of the Council of the Ageing in managing the program on behalf of the Government.

"The Directory that we are launching today lists more than

420 businesses that provide discounted products and services to our seniors, and more restaurants and holiday accommodation than ever before.

"It also identifies discounts that the ACT Government provides, including concessions at off-peak times on ACTION buses, and discounts on motor vehicle registrations, spectacles and dog registration".

Mr Stanhope said the ACT Government had recently increased funding to COTA to manage the scheme.

## Improved medical after hours service

BY next month or October an improved medical after hours service is expected to be operational in Canberra.

Members who attended the club's information meeting in June were told this by Anne Cramer (ACT Health Department). Anne said that CALMS - the after hours service run by local doctors - was to be improved and extended as a result of discussions with the Health Department. CALMS is "owned" by private practitioners.

Concern had been expressed that not everyone had access to CALMS, as about one in five Canberra doctors did not belong to the organisation. As a result people ended up going to hospital emergency departments instead, or not seeking assistance until their own doctor was available.

Anne said it was proposed to relocate CALMS clinics in hospitals, thereby making access to them easier.

Under Health First, the new "one-stop" system, all emergency calls (6207 7777) will be assessed by trained personnel to determine the degree of urgency, and action decided upon. Callers will not be referred elsewhere.

Anne said people would be made aware of the improved system, and how it operates. An important aspect would be to educate patients how to describe their symptoms more accurately.

Visiting doctors would carry a wider range of drugs, so that rather than write a prescription (which a patient would not be able to obtain until pharmacy opening hours), a patient would in most cases be immediately provided with medication.

There would be a three-tier after-hours fees system - full; concessional for card-holders; and bulk-billing, where appropriate.

# From the Committee

*By Gail Giuliano, acting secretary\**

**T**HE Management Committee has initiated important developments related to the Strategic Plan and associated issues.

For example, we have begun to revise the by-laws of the club.

Our first area of attention relates to the use of the car park. A sub-committee, with Ian Gregor, Joy McDonald, Barry Runnstrom, Brian Bush and Graeme Shoobridge as members, undertook the challenging task of identifying measures to improve the use of the car park. The club president, Anne Murray, is an ex-officio member, as the president is of all sub-committees.

The following recommendations were accepted by the Management Committee. These changes refer to by-law 11: The committee recommended that the fee for parking be reviewed (at present it is \$6 per annum) and that the parking voucher must be displayed or in the vehicle when parked. By-law 11 (iii) now

states, "Without prior consent of the committee, parking at the club is not permitted at any time unless a member is attending a club activity or is a person having business with the club".

11 (iv) now states "Parking for club members may commence up to one hour before the commencement of the activity and parking may continue up to one hour after the activity concludes".

Definition: An "activity" is a club organised event or function involving members, invited guests, or groups endorsed by the club management.

Because the car park is private property we have legal advice that cars parked illegally may be towed away or wheel clamped. Clear signs to this effect and noting other parking and traffic requirements will be erected.

We very much appreciate the work of the sub-committee and are really pleased that its members will continue with the implementation process, under the leadership of Graeme Shoobridge.

Alan Hodges has begun to assist us with the Action Plan that arose from our Strategic Planning Process. He will complete his work at the end of December.

*We remind you that the Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 27 September at 1pm.* Members interested in assisting our organisation should consider nominating for the committee.

Best wishes from the Management Committee.

*\*Sue Marks is holidaying in the UK. Gail is an enthusiastic member of the WSCC (as of course is her husband, Santo). Recently Gail received the Order of Australia for services to the community. She is particularly active in dancing and singing. Thank you for so readily agreeing to act as secretary, Gail.*

# Sadil Quinlan

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# Welcome to electronic age

By Alan Hodges

**W**ELCOME to the electronic age! The club now has a new and improved web site to keep you up to date with the latest events and matters of interest to senior citizens.

With the new website comes a new email address:

**admin@wodenseniors.org.au**

The development of this site is an exciting initiative identified in the club's recently-completed Strategic Plan. The supporting Action Plans, being used by the committee, identified a target date of August to launch the web site. This has been achieved.

Of course, as yet not everyone has access to the Internet.

The survey of members last year indicated that about 40 per cent of those who replied had used the Internet in the previous month. Over time, this is likely to increase as people who have been familiar with computers in their daily jobs join the club.

So what then is the purpose of the website? It is:

- 1 - to provide a supplementary means of information to members;
- 2 - be a source of information to prospective members; and
- 3 - be a promotional tool for the club with organisations, government and other bodies.

The club's main source of information to members will continue to be the *Meridian*; but as the magazine is issued only every second month, the club website will be a useful means of keeping up to date on news and events. You will continue to receive the *Meridian* through the mail, but there will also be an electronic version on the website commencing this issue.

An application for new membership can be downloaded from the website, but it will be necessary to bring it to the club to pay fees so as to be advised in

more detail of the club's services and arrangements.

The website has been designed so that it is very easy to navigate by clicking on tabs to see activities conducted by the club, events coming up, names of committee executive, our Strategic Plan, a list of very useful websites, and the club's contact details with a location map. Additionally, there are links to see latest news items and details for hiring facilities.

A small sub-committee, comprising David Griffiths

(chair), Dennis Blewett and Dennis Glanville, will be responsible for maintaining the content of the website.

There are many ways in which the new website may be used to further members' interests or needs. For example, it presents a marvellous opportunity for group leaders to provide current information about their activities.

If you have views on how the site can be used, or information to be posted, just contact any of the above sub-committee members, send an email to **admin@wodenseniors.org.au** or drop a note to Umar Bourke.



**O**UR Pryme Movers had a surprise visitor at their end of term morning tea - none other than Rugby League legend Mal Meninga.

The former Australian captain came along to congratulate Mary Hayes, and present her with a Certificate of Achievement for her wonderful improvement in health and fitness.

Mary had major surgery 18 months ago, leaving a large incision in her upper back. A benign tumour was forcing her spinal cord out of alignment, affecting the use of her right leg. She could hardly lift the leg and needed the support of her furniture to get around her home. She did not know what improvement she could hope for after her

operation. Mary also suffers from arthritis.

No stopping this girl. With a walking frame for support Mary joined Pryme Movers, a fitness program run by the YMCA, a little over 12 months ago. She hardly missed a class and was soon only using a walking stick for support. Mary now walks confidently and is delighted that she can walk so normally again.

Mary's motto is, "If you don't use it, you lose it!"

She attends Pryme Movers every Tuesday at the WSCC and walks regularly most days. She is now a volunteer helper at a retirement hostel.

Our Fitness Fanatics at the club are very proud of Mary, and we all congratulate her.

*"A Papua New-Guinea man has been beheaded in an horrific payback killing sparked by a dispute between two ethnic gangs in Port Moresby". - Canberra Times 20 July 2004.*

## Pay-back: shootings in Papua-New Guinea

*Club member Laddie Hindley, who was a pilot in the RAAF during World War II and subsequently for twenty years a commercial helicopter pilot, working for a considerable time in Papua-New Guinea, tells of a first-hand experience of "pay-back".*

THE village of Gumine is situated 45 miles south-west of Mt Hagen which puts it closer to Goroka than Mr Hagen. Gumine is a large village and is the centre of the Chimbu clans who are very warlike, very difficult to reason with!

The general area is mountainous with exceedingly sharp ridges making it difficult and dangerous to attempt to land a helicopter there when the police are called in to break up tribal fights.

My company had the contract for airlifting the police, and I was detailed on an occasion when there was a particularly serious outbreak. When we arrived at Gumine the fighting

was in full swing. The policemen I was carrying firstly expended their stock of rubber bullets and tear gas, to no effect, so they resorted to a double-barrel shotgun. The tribesmen were undeterred.

This was serious business.

The police commander, sitting beside me, then asked me to fly slowly past a group of about 12 tribesmen making their way up a steep slope. The leader had a very elaborate war shield and the tribesmen behind him were armed with bows and arrows.

The commander took a high-powered military rifle and fired one round at the leader, who fell and didn't move. It was evident that he was dead.

The fighting stopped immediately, and we received signals from the ground to land. The commander, however, was having none of it, and directed me to return to Mt Hagen. The dead man, he said, was most likely a senior chief, which would make the situation particularly dangerous if we landed.

It was a week later that, in the morning, I left home at Mt Hagen for a meeting at the police complex to discuss my mission for that day. As I drove through the gates I heard a rifle shot, and then a policeman ran towards me, signalling me to turn around and leave.

When I got home I phoned the police complex to find out what had happened. I was told that a senior police officer had been shot by a constable, who in turn had been shot dead by another police constable.

The senior officer was the same policeman who had shot the tribesman. And the constable who had killed him was a Chimbu from the village of Gumine.

A week after the Gumine shooting, honour had been satisfied, Papua-New Guinea style.

## Where's the rest of me?

Ronald Reagan, former President of the United States, who died recently, was never more than a supporting actor. He did, however, play one memorable role, in *Kings Row*, adapted for the screen from the book of the same name by Henry Bellamann, and nominated for best film in 1943.

The film is set at the beginning of the 20th century, in Kings Row, a small town in America's mid-west. Drake McHugh (Reagan) is loved by Louise Gordon, thereby earning the enmity of her father, the town's doctor. When Drake is injured in a rail accident, Dr Gordon seizes his opportunity, unnecessarily amputating Drake's legs.

When Drake regains consciousness, he feels for his legs and, finding them missing, cries, "Where's the rest of me?" The most famous line in the former President's movie career.

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*Reagan with, whom? Answer p 8, col 1.*

# World champions strut their stuff

I remember, years ago, enthusing over the then world champions. A ballroom teacher I much respected sniffed and said, “Yes, they are good. They should be. They practise a lot”.

As I watched Massimo Giorgianni and Alessia Manfredini, four times world professional show dance champions, strut their stuff at the AIS Arena, I wondered how much *they* had practised.

What sacrifices had *they* made? And continue to make? How many thousands of hours practising in unglamorous surroundings? How many times repeating figures that now seem - to we, the spectators - as effortless and natural as the very breath they take?

It was a privilege to be at the Arena, an experience to cherish. So graceful, flawless, as one with each other and with the music, contrasting dazzling movement with elegant lines suspended as though by gossamer thread, the cynosure of all eyes.

Worth the sacrifice and interminable practice? As Massimo and Alessia acknowledged our rapturous applause they would have thought, Yes!; a thousand times yes!

For it is given to so few to do something, anything, supremely well. If only for a few transitory minutes, for a few fleeting years. - DB.



## ‘Yes’ or ‘No’?

Readers may remember that on 3 May I emailed the ACT Police, asking whether it is legal to ride on cycle paths both ways. I have yet to receive an answer. Subsequent to my query, however, when driving on Adelaide Avenue towards the city, I saw a speed detection crew busily going about its business, and a cyclist pass by its van without hindrance, on what I will continue to assume is the wrong side of the road until I learn otherwise. But then, I suspect that were a toolled-up Osama bin Laden to pedal by he would not prove to be a diversion from the task in hand. - DB.

## Holy bloopers\*

The following appeared in church bulletins:

Don’t let worry kill you off. Let our church help.

Tonight’s sermon, “What is Hell?” Come and listen to our choir practise.

The ladies of our church have cast off clothing of every kind.

All ladies wishing to become Little Mothers please meet with the Pastor in his study.

*\*Spotted in Handyhelp newsletter.*

# Regular activities

*Group leaders should inform Meridian of changes to their programs*

Monday	Solo	10-11.45am
	Mahjong	10-12 noon
	Choir practice (Woden Senior Singers)	10.30-12 noon
	Singalong - songs around the piano	12.30-1.30pm
	Computer interest group (2nd Monday)	1.30-4.30pm
	Table tennis	2-4pm
Tuesday	Early gentle exercise (YMCA instructor)	9.30-10.30am
	Gentle exercise (YMCA instructor)	10.30-11.30am
	Australian history (WSCC/U3A)	10-12 noon
	Duplicate bridge	10-12.45pm
	New Vogue dancing	1-4pm
	New Vogue and modern sequence dancing	7.30-10.30pm
Wednesday	Tai chi and gentle exercise	7.30-8.30am
	Water colour painting group (WSCC/U3A)	9-12.30pm
	Table tennis	9.30-12.45pm
	Carpet bowls	12-1.30pm
	Recorder class beginners (WSCC/U3A)	12.30-1pm
	Recorder class (WSCC/U3A)	1.30-4pm
Thursday	Brindabella Bookies (WSCC/U3A) 4th Wed	2-4pm
	Sequence dancing	7.30-10.30pm
	Play reading group (WSCC/U3A)	9.30-11.30am
	Craft group	10-12.30pm
	500 (card game)	10.30-3pm
	International folk dancing	12.30-2pm
Friday	Duplicate bridge	12.30-4pm
	Tai chi and gentle exercise	2-3.30pm
	Table tennis	9.30-12.45pm
	Carpet bowls	12-1.30pm
	Round dancing (intermediate)	6.30pm
	Round dancing (advanced)	7.45pm
Saturday	Hydrotherapy (Canberra Hospital pool)	10-11am
	Duplicate bridge	1-4.30pm
Sunday	Round dancing (beginners)	2.30-5.30pm
(most Sundays, but ring Santo Giuliano for more information)		



# Same time, next year

IRIS and I had our “periodic dental examinations” recently. The result? A minor “composite restoration” for me - so minor it did not require an anaesthetic - and a clean bill of health for Iris.

Come back in a year’s time.

“You know”, said my dentist, “I rarely extract a tooth these days. What a wonderful thing is fluoride”.

He went on, “There are dentists these days who have no experience of dentures. When I did *my* training, fitting dentures involved perhaps a third of the curriculum”.

It got me thinking. To the days, 60 years ago, when children were taken, a class at a time, to

the school dentist. Certainly in austere northern England.

Taken?

Rather, in my case, formed into twos, before shuffling off out the school gates and being marched off reluctantly to the nearby clinic.

Sitting on wooden chairs in a waiting room, trying to be brave, or at least not to cry in front of the girls. And then being ordered, in turn, into the inner sanctum. The bright light, the gleaming instruments, the smell of antiseptic, “open wide” and the harsh whine of the drill.

No time for reassurance - there were 20 more waiting “to be done” that day and more tomorrow. And no anaesthetic for fillings: “gas” was reserved for extractions - the serious stuff. And those were the alternatives. Fill ‘em or pull ‘em.

Teeth were a problem for

people. A relief to have what few still remained extracted, and be fitted with a nice-looking set of dentures, before one was 30.

Things were no better in Australia. When we arrived, 40 years ago, dental health was amongst the worst in the world. I remember marvelling to Iris, in the early days, “So many people have nice teeth!”

“They’re dentures”, she said.

Then came fluoride. And dramatic advances in restorative dentistry and orthodontics, and a greater awareness and acceptance by parents of responsibility.

Today it has been turned around. From being near the bottom of the league, Australian dental health is amongst the best in the world. When, towards the end of the year, I see group photos of young people who are leaving school, I marvel at the rows of Julia Roberts smiles.

And dentists are able to say, as ours did, “See you in a year”.

*Dennis Blewett*

## Where’s the rest of me?

*See page 6*

Playing opposite Reagan is red-headed Ann Sheridan.



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