

## Annual General Meeting elects new committee

**M**ORE than fifty members attended this year's Annual General Meeting, held at the club on 27 September.

President Anne Murray welcomed members before delivering her fifth President's Report, thanking the 2003-4 committee and group leaders for their hard work.

She particularly thanked Administrative Officer Umar Bourke for many hours' work outside his official duties; Santos Giuliano for "fixing" so many problems; Lesley Hindley for fund raising activities; and Muriel Pearce for her voluntary office work.

She also thanked two non-members - John Hempenstall for maintenance work and Peter Murer for readily agreeing to direct bridge on Tuesdays when the group lost its director.

Anne also drew attention to the many unpaid hours of work by consultants Graeme Hellyer, Alan Hodges and Marcus Mackay.

Anne said Marcus Mackay's comments, on his completion of an administrative review of the club, were important when considering the club's future:

"The club is facing a serious challenge in moving from what has been a small community organisation, run previously by volunteers, to an organisation run on a more professional basis with effective governance, executive management and operational performance of the club's activities, with clear separation between these three levels."

She particularly noted the grant by Chief Minister John



*The new committee. From L to R: Sue Marks, Helen Jarrett, Patricia Bodegraven, Peter Witting, Margaret Wright, Gail Giuliano, Barry Hogan, Graeme Shoobridge, Anne Murray. Other members absent.*

Stanhope's Office of \$30,000 for renovation work and said progress in club activities had been communicated to members through *Meridian*, group leaders' forums and general meetings.

She said a partnership application for a Community Inclusion Grant had been completed. The club's pursuance of funding through this and other means emphasised the committee's resolve to ensure the club continued to receive consideration from the ACT Government.

The Treasurer, Barry Hogan, reported that member numbers had increased slightly, the fete and raffle had raised \$3,000, and the Hellenic Club and Sadil Quinlan had continued to pay *Meridian's* printing and mailing costs to the value \$5,500.

Office expenses had risen by five per cent, maintenance costs by \$7,800, and a new dishwasher had cost \$3,800.

However, revenue from hiring facilities was down considerably and would need to be increased.

The club had contributed \$15,800 to the \$40,000 grant

obtained for the Strategic Planning Project.

Barry ended by saying the auditor had stated that the club was in a sound financial position.

Members were invited to comment on the reports, and ask questions. Spirited discussion followed.

Several members raised concerns about lack of communication about the club's financial commitments, one requesting a monthly financial report to all members.

Anne indicated that minutes and reports were displayed in the club hall, said regular reports were published in *Meridian*, and drew attention to the club's website. She noted that all members received the *Meridian*.

Some members were concerned about renovating the club if its future was uncertain. Anne said the Strategic Project was foremost about future options for a changing demography rather than an immediate change to the building structure, and that renovations were needed for the

*Continued page 2*

## Editor's comments

One of the most over-used word in recent times must be "elite". I'm weary of hearing and reading of "elite" sporting figures. And weary of their impossible commitment to "give 110 per cent".

### DAMN DAMN DAMN

"One thousand homes will be added to Canberra's boom town of Gungahlin after the ACT Government's purchase of 133ha of Commonwealth land . . ." We'll need an awful lot of water-efficient showerheads to save sufficient water to provide for those!

### BILL OF RIGHTS

"When we speak of right, we ought always to unite it with the idea of duties; right becomes duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy becomes my duty to guarantee it to another, and he to me; and those who violate the duty justly incur a forfeiture of the right". - *Thomas Paine*.

### RIGHT TO BE A WIFE?

Recently Iris and I took part in a survey. Iris was asked her relationship to me. She could be my daughter, or sister, or mother, or aunt, or niece. But not my wife. So, I've lost a wife and gained a "partner"!

### THE BOX OFFICE

In Elizabethan times Shakespeare's plays were performed at The Globe Theatre. To get in, you put a penny in a box by the door. You could then stand in front of the stage. To sit on the first balcony, you put another penny in a box held by a man at the foot of the stairs. To sit on the second balcony, you put a third penny in a box held by a man at the foot of the second flight of stairs. When the show began, the men took the boxes to a room backstage - the box office.

### PAY PARKING

I'm in favour. Finding a spot at Tuggeranong used to be so difficult I was reluctant to go there. Now it is so much more convenient. And shoppers rarely stay long enough to attract a charge anyway.

### GOOD ADVICE

The only thing to do with good advice is to pass it on. It is never any use to oneself. - *Oscar Wilde*.

### COWBOYS' HORSES

What was the name of (a) Roy Rogers' horse? (b) Lone Ranger's horse? (c) Gene Autry's horse? (d) Hopalong Cassidy's horse?

Answers see col 3, bottom of page 8.

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## AGM

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safety and wellbeing of members.

Some members wanted to contribute suggestions as to how the \$30,000 for renovations was used. They were reminded that a survey of members had already taken place, through group leaders.

Another member requested that photographs of the committee be displayed in the club. This followed a question as to why a committee member was not in the club each day, the response being that all voluntary committee members were frequently in the club, and that the Administrative Officer was available every day.

The new committee is:

President: Ann Murray

Vice President: Robin Brinton

Secretary: Gayle Guiliano

Treasurer: Barry Hogan

Committee: Joy McDonald,

## Tell youngsters how it was in 'our day'

WHEN speaking to a group of 14-year-olds I was surprised that they could not tell me when World War II began, and finished. Where Vietnam was. What happened at Tobruk?

They were also curious. How had we grown up without mobile phones, television, the internet, and Sunday sport? How had we managed?

I spoke to other seniors, and they recalled for me personal experiences, places they had been, events they had witnessed. And they said they would be willing to talk to young people about these things, benefiting not only the young people themselves, but also raising the profile of seniors.

Then I met Phil Dodds, who runs the Community Partnerships Division at the Education Department. Phil said he would organise the schools, if I could recruit the seniors.

Graeme Shoobridge, Patricia Bodegraven, Ruth Winstanley, Peter Witting, Helen Jarrett, Josef Leasing, Sue Marks, Margaret Wright and Maureen Hansen.

Consultant Alan Hodges then presented a progress report on the Strategic Plan and its associated Action Plans. Alan will be reporting to the club through the committee on a monthly basis and indicated that the report was accessible both at the club and on the website <http://www.wodenseniors.org.au/events>

Thanks to the *Woden Senior Singers*, who opened proceedings most appropriately with a cheerful rendition of *Come to the Fair*, and concluded with *Any Dream Will Do*.

Members were thanked for their participation and invited to afternoon tea.

The new committee met for the first time the same afternoon.

*Barbara Brinton*

Volunteers would work in pairs, accompanied by Phil or myself. There are ground rules we must observe when dealing with students, and there are policy documents we need to read. Nothing deterring: just obvious safeguards.

The benefits are immense; self-satisfaction equally so. So, if you are interested, give me a call on 62861495. *Frank Millburn*

## Website praised

JUST a line to say we enjoyed your website which we found by accident while in Sydney, babysitting our granddaughter.

Checked out the *Meridian* and read it through to the end, good luck with the club and its future. It appears to be in capable hands.

Regards to all at the club who remember us, and also thank Laddie Hindley for his contribution, *Pay-back*.

*Pat and Bob Summersby*

# Computers: training at club

By Graeme Hellyer (for IT Sub-Committee)

**M**EMBERS may have noticed the computer changes made at the club. These have followed on from the Strategic Plan and the creation of an Information Technology Sub-committee to manage the club's web site and other computer issues in the club.

The sub-committee members are very keen to help club members make the most of modern technology, and feel that people without access to the internet are missing out on more and more opportunities.

For instance, have you noticed how often ABC announcers refer their listeners to the ABC website for details of music played, or for health facts, or to hear an interview they may have missed. You can also pay most of your bills on the internet without ever leaving the house or using a postage stamp, or even rent DVDs to see films you have missed or can't get out to see.

There are now two new computers in the front and back offices for club management. Four older computers have been set up on new computer desks in the committee room. These are available for training courses - as well as for general member use. They are being connected on a network and can be used free by members to connect to the internet for emailing or searching for information on the World Wide Web. We were fortunate in getting the computer systems and cabling at very reasonable prices. The high speed internet connection is courtesy of the Get Set Project.

The sub-committee is organising courses to help members become familiar with computers and with using the internet. In addition the room

will be available for members without their own computer or internet connection to just drop in and check their email or look up information on the web - or even do their internet banking. A printer is also available for just a small charge to cover costs of ink and paper.

The web site is up and running and we hope members will use it as another means of checking what is happening at the club

**[www.wodenseniors.org.au](http://www.wodenseniors.org.au)**

It also provides some useful links to other web sites with useful information for seniors.

## **STOP PRESS:**

*First course - Introduction to Computers - Thursday 4 November.  
Book at Office.*

We do need help looking after the site however. If anyone would like to become the site manager (known as the webmaster - not to be confused with Spiderman), or just be prepared to form part of a management group, please contact myself (62302480) or the chair of the sub-committee, David Griffiths (62861141).

You don't need to know how to design web pages to take this on.

The club will be running the following courses:

*Introduction to Computers* (2 hours). This is a talk aimed at taking the mystery out of computers, especially for those who have not used a computer or the internet before. You will learn what computers consist of, what computer programs do, what you can use a computer for, and what you can do on the internet. It is *not* a hands on course - members will have to sign on for the other

courses to learn how to use a computer.

*Basic Use of Computers and the Internet* (2 x 2 hours). This includes the basics needed to get started with a computer. It will also show you how to use the internet and to start a free email account if you wish.

*Using Microsoft Word* (2 x 2 hours). Word is the main program used by most people for typing on computers, and often comes as a package with new computers. This will show you how to use the software to type letters or other documents. However you won't learn touch-typing in this course! People attending this course will need to have attended the Basic Use course or have some experience with computers.

*Typing.* One of the computers will have a typing tutor program on it so that members can learn to type in their own time and at their own pace. It is not hard to learn to type with the correct fingers and once you have learnt it you will find you improve your speed every time you type something. This will be available whenever the room is open for general use.

## **ENROLLING IN COURSES**

Enrolment lists will be put up on the notice board in the club.

The number of courses run will depend upon the interest shown by members and whether we can get any volunteers to help with the courses. (You do not have to be an expert to run the Basic Use or the Word courses.)

As the number of participants in the hands-on courses are limited by the number of computers and the number of volunteer trainers, we hope members wanting to get on courses will be patient.

We would welcome anyone, club members or not, who would like to assist in running the courses.

Only a basic knowledge of computing is required.

# Website usage

IN the August issue of the *Meridian* there was information about the development of the club's new website. Unfortunately, the web address was omitted. It is:

**[www.wodenseniors.org.au](http://www.wodenseniors.org.au)**

Although it will obviously take some time for the website to become well known and used regularly by members, and also by others interested in the club, the statistics of use for the first month of operation are interesting.

This is what happened in September:

There were 5593 hits.

The use of "hits" to demonstrate how much a website is used is very common, but it is rather misleading as the number depends on the complexity and design of the site. The general view is that every separate page visited on a website is considered a hit. However, that definition does not provide a fair measurement as a page might contain some photos or other files that are clicked. When this occurs extra hits are recorded. A better idea of use is to consider separate visits.

The average number of visits was four per day with each visitor looking at an average of five pages. Over 600 of the website pages were read during the month by all users. Peak usage was 22

visits on Wednesday 29 September with the next highest of 14 on Thursday 9 September. Weekend use is very low.

The most popular times for visiting the site were 10am to midday, 2pm to 6pm and then from 8pm to 10pm.

The areas visited most often were to look at the August *Meridian*, the Strategic Plan and the Blueprint (a guide to other organisations of the club's strategic planning process).

Other popular areas were to download the membership form, to view the club's member activities, and to look at links to other websites of interest to seniors.

Overseas visits included United States (2%) and Mexico (1%).

So what does all this mean?

Obviously the world is not being taken by storm with the club's specialised website. But, it *is* providing information of interest to at least four people a day.

To keep their interest and to entice others to visit the club's website, it needs to be kept up-to-date.

Please pass on any information that might be of interest to website users to the Administrative Officer, Umar Bourke, or send details in an email to **[webmaster@wodenseniors.org.au](mailto:webmaster@wodenseniors.org.au)**

*Alan Hodges*

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## Appreciative audience at winter concert

By Barbara Brinton

**M**ORE than seventy people crowded into the club's main hall to form an appreciative audience for *The Troupers* who produced a marvellous winter concert in August.

*The Troupers* are familiar and popular faces in Canberra entertainment circles and members of the Woden Senior Citizens Club count themselves as special indeed to be able to enjoy their first class performances.

The performers are Denise Stephenson, Brenda Akister (sopranos), Garry Walbrook, Kit Collins, (tenors), Michael Politi, Bill Matthews, John Van de



Gail Giuliano cutting the cake

Graaff (baritones), Jenny Andrzejewski, Glenda Woolfield (altos). Shirley Cramp is the accompanist and Garry Walbrook choreographer.

The program of 20 songs was a very generous one including many favourites. The men in the audience seemed to particularly appreciate "Women, women, women" from *The Merry Widow* by Franz Lehar sung by the male ensemble.

Brenda's "Vilia" had everyone transfixed, as did Denise and Michael's powerful rendition of "Perhaps Love" by John Denver.

Many a foot could be seen tapping during Bill's performance of Gershwin's "I love Paris" and

### **MAGICIAN AND PARROT**

Magician on cruise ship. First night all going well, rabbit out of hat, all the well-practised tricks working like magic. However, the magician increasingly became aware of a parrot in the back row, watching with unwavering, calculating eyes. The magician became uneasy, but told himself not to be distracted. However, on the second night the parrot was in the front row, watching the magician's every move, and he *was* distracted. Third night, the parrot was there again, and this time took a more active role. "Up his sleeve", he would say, or, "In his hat". Disastrous night. The magician had to steel himself to appear the fourth night, and again the parrot disrupted the show until, suddenly, there was a catastrophic explosion in the bowels of the ship. The next thing the magician knew he was in the sea. Looking around he saw what he thought was an empty lifeboat, and was able to clamber on board. It wasn't empty. Sitting there was the parrot. So, for the next two days, the boat drifted on the now empty ocean, magician and parrot regarding each other without speaking. Then, finally, the parrot sighed, and broke the long silence. "All right", he said. "I give in. How *did* you make the ship disappear?"

### **GENERAL AND CARDINAL**

Jose and Manuel were intense schoolboy rivals. The Spanish youngsters were outstanding students, fiercely jealous of the other's success, and never speaking to each other. When they grew up, they became famous, Jose a general, and Manuel a cardinal. The years passed and then, one day, they found themselves on the same Madrid railway platform. Manuel approached Jose. "Porter", he commanded the resplendant figure, "put my bags on the train!" Jose steelily regarded the cardinal, and then responded, "Madam, I agree. You *certainly* should not have to carry such heavy bags. *Especially* in your condition!"

Jenny drew great applause with "Diamond's are a girl's best friend" from *Gentleman Prefer Blondes*. By the finale, "The Merry Widow Waltz", the applause was accompanied by calls for an encore.

The Southern Cross Club kindly donated a suitably large and sumptuous Black Forest cake resplendant with chocolate and cherries. The audience enjoyed this with tea and coffee as they chatted to the performers.

The club always appreciates artists who give so generously of their time and talents and extend their thanks to *The Troupers*. The raffles were drawn as the delightful afternoon drew to a close.

# Do you need two copies?

THIS month I'd like to write about how you receive your copy of the *Meridian* and other documents mailed to you by the committee.

Under the present system, when the committee wishes to distribute a document to members, the membership database automatically prints an address label for every financial member. The labels and documents are then farmed out to another organisation for despatch, with the result that every member receives, by mail, his or her own individual copy of the document.

Now although this system is ideally suited to the delivery of documents which are specific to each individual member, such as the annual renewal form, it has been criticised by some members on the grounds that it can also lead to the distribution of more copies than may be absolutely necessary in cases where the document is of a general nature, such as the *Meridian*. For example, where two members share the same address,

they may, in some cases, be willing to share a single copy of the *Meridian*.

Similarly, a growing number of our members are "on line", and some of these may be willing to forego a hard copy version, knowing that they can read and print it from our website.

The criticism of the "everybody receives a copy" process is generally based on two factors: the extra postage cost to the club, and the unnecessary use of a forestry product (paper). The first of these is a fallacy, since the distribution of the *Meridian* by post is fully covered by our sponsors and does not cost the club a cent. The second is valid however, and the question then arises: is there any advantage to be off-set against the use of these extra sheets of paper and envelopes?

The committee believes there is.

It is a sad fact that very few members read the club notice board, which means that the *Meridian* is the *only reliable* medium by which members can be informed of important matters of policy and procedure affecting them. No decision to change the system has, so far, been made.

Nevertheless, if such a decision was made, I have been asked how difficult it would be to have two

address label modules on the database, one which includes *all* members and one which omits specific individuals.

The answer, of course, is that it can certainly be done – *provided* the database can be told which ones to omit!

The message for this month is therefore very simple:

*If you are absolutely certain you can do without your personal copy of Meridian and other general information documents, either because you can read them on-line or because you have access to someone else's copy in your household, please let me know so that you can be dropped from the routine mailing list but be retained on the personalised list.*

You can contact me directly on 62812607 or leave a message for me in the office.

Be aware however that this is not a decision to be taken lightly. If you remove yourself from the distribution list, the committee will still be entitled to assume that their responsibility for getting the information to you has been discharged.

*Dennis Glanville  
(Records Clerk)*



*Good Times*

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# Craft group helps others

THE craft group has met at the club on Thursday mornings since February 1981. The choir and Tuesday's bridge group can also lay claim to be "originals". Tuesday dancing is also long-standing, commencing with the enclosure of the veranda.

Originally the craft group met in what is now the committee room, with its sink and heating facilities, but within two meetings our group had grown so much we had to move into the main hall. With the enclosure of the veranda area, we settled there.

Often our craft activities give way to "talk and chatter", with our members entertaining each other with accounts of their adventures and misadventures, and jokes they have heard.

If anyone is hesitant about joining us, we say, "Look in your bottom drawers and boxes, find that half-finished jumper or embroidery, bring it along, and we will help you finish it, even if it is 20 years old".

Our previous social worker



organised eight-week courses in teaching different crafts, expanding our knowledge and enthusiasm. We always have someone with the ability to help with a wide range of skills.

At present we excel in all types of knitting, crochet tapestry, bead-work, embroidery, soft toy making, card making, patch work and the latest fad - Form-A-Lines cards. One of us will usually be able to patiently help you with most clever ideas.

Our equipment includes a sewing machine and knitting machine, but not kilns for pottery and china painting. People are most generous in providing us with oddments of all types - wool, embroidery cotton, fabric and partly worked odds and ends.

We sell our goods to members throughout the year and at the annual fete to boost club funds.

We always have in mind helping others. We knitted many squares for rugs to give to bushfire victims, and made trauma teddies and plain cloth dolls to which trauma kiddies in hospital add faces and hair using coloured textas. It is so rewarding when a

child accident victim handling her own doll suddenly "opens up", and begins to talk about how she feels and where it is hurting.

At present we are finishing very small caps and booties for premature babies at Canberra Hospital. Although the tiny babies are naked in the temperature-controlled humi-cribs, they always wear a cap and booties to prevent loss of heat.

Next year we hope to make suitable small blankets for the humi-cribs and, using towelling squares and velcro, provide dust, heat and smoke guards for bushfire volunteers.

At the time of going to press, the craft group was organising a street stall and raffle at Melrose High School on 16 October, the day of the ACT election.

Hopefully we will have enjoyed good support, and been able to say "hello" to friends from the club coming along to cast their vote.

*Myra Hickey*

*Pictured (top, L to R): Myra Hickey, Brigitta Kaspar and Dorothy Shea; bottom L: Rae Jenkins.*

Alan Hodges, a member of the consultative team considering the club's future, and who has been mainly responsible for the club's new website, was particularly interested to read the August issue of *Meridian*.

## *Meridian* story recalls a tale of a soldier and his snake

WHEN I read an article by Laddie Hindley on his adventures flying helicopters in Papua New Guinea memories came flooding back from 40 years ago.

At that time I commanded a troop of Royal Australian Engineers stationed in Malacca, Malaysia, while Squadron Leader Laddie Hindley was based with his helicopters further north, at Butterworth, near Penang.

On one occasion my troop undertook a demanding training exercise, to construct helipads. We needed to clear three areas in the jungle with chainsaws and explosives and then, using the felled timber, build platforms on which helicopters could land.

Only then could men be lifted out. It was tough work, especially felling rainforest trees with extremely large buttress roots.

One morning one of the soldiers, Sapper George Greenslade, found a snake. No-one knew what type it was, so George put it in a sand bag. He had recently been bitten on the hand, which was rather swollen, and the medics back at Malacca had suggested he be evacuated out for checking. George thought the snake might be helpful.

So, Laddie arrived in his helicopter, and George and his gear went on board, along with another sapper, who had put a



*Sapper George Greenslade (left) with sapper mate and snake.*

machete into his knee.

Shortly after take-off, the sappers opened George's sandbag and produced the snake. Had the pilot, Laddie, seen one like this, they enquired? An alarmed Laddie, who was fully occupied and didn't need such distractions, wanted to know what the snake was doing in his helicopter.

George, somewhat taken aback, explained that he was taking the snake to show to the doctor. It was in "the rules", he pointed out to Laddie.

No, insisted Laddie. "The rules" said if you were *bitten* by a snake, and could catch it, you should take it for identification. *Not* that you should capture *any* snake you happened to see and take it on board his, Laddie's, helicopter.

At the hospital, the snake was not immediately identified, and George needed minor treatment only. He was last seen in a taxi with the snake, to which he had become obviously attached, heading into Malacca for a night on the town rather than sweating it out in the jungle.

However, back at the hospital, further investigation had revealed that George's snake, a pit viper, was poisonous, and the military

police were recruited to find the two of them, sapper and snake.

They were unsuccessful, but later that night a fit and happy George arrived back at camp, without his snake. He had given it to another sapper who eventually turned up, also unharmed, with the snake. Albeit in a jar, pickled.

Back in the jungle, the landing pads were completed after three days of hard yakka in hot and trying conditions and Laddie arrived on cue. The men were lifted out to the trucks for their return to camp.

Subsequently, the story of George and his deadly pal became part of the folk lore of the troop.

I well recall the superb support for the exercise from Laddie, who was a master of manoeuvring his chopper in very restricted sites to test the helipads and to bring sappers out of the jungle.

Thanks to the *Meridian*, wonderful memories of professionalism and comradeship!

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## HORSES' NAMES

*From page 2*

(a) Trigger; (b) Silver; (c) Champion; (d) Topper.

And how about Tonto's horse? (Scout); and Tom Mix's horse? (Tony).