

Christmas Fair raises \$4000

The club's Christmas Fair, on 19 November, raised \$4000 for the club.

The fair was opened by Zed Seselja, Leader of the Opposition in the ACT. Zed is no newcomer to the club, and he stayed on to chat to members, and help sell raffle tickets. Colleague Jeremy Hanson, Liberal Member for Molonglo, also attended, being particularly conspicuous operating the Rotary chocolate wheel. Thank you, both. Come again.

As in previous years, we are indebted to members who gave so freely of their time and considerable effort to ensure the success of this important fund-raiser.

Much like an iceberg, there is much below the surface. The fair takes place between 9am and 12 noon, but the work that goes on before the event, and cleaning up afterwards, is considerable. So, firstly, thank you to everyone without whose considerable efforts there would be no fair.

Next, thank you to everyone who manned the stalls, sold raffle and chocolate wheel tickets, barbecued sausages, prepared and served morning tea, and helped in so many other important ways.

Thank you also to the Canberra



Zed Seselja and (L to R) Margaret Kennedy, Iris Blewett, Anne Baker. More photos p.5

Chordsmen, who entertained us throughout the morning with their accomplished close harmony.

Finally, thank you to those members and visitors who found time on a Saturday morning to attend our fair, and who spent so generously.

Occasions such as these not only raise funds for the club, but also bring members together to enjoy each other's company and remind us of the benefits of belonging to a club such as Woden Seniors.

Christmas marks end of outstanding year

Christmas is upon us once again. Where have the past twelve months gone?

The club's final opportunity for members to get-together will have been Christmas drinks (5 December). By the time members read this, the event will have come and gone, and hopefully many will have taken the opportunity.

Reflecting on the past year one recalls, as well as the ongoing weekly activities, the "special" events, such as the club's 30th birthday celebrations, Seniors in the Park, the Autumn Fair, the Winter Serenade, dedication of the Anne Murray Room, the October fund-raising concert, the Melbourne Cup afternoon and, of course, our recent Christmas Fair.

In wishing all members a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year, president Roy Parekh and the management committee express their appreciation for all that has been done to make our club so successful *this* year, and look forward to an even more successful 2012.

The club will close for the holiday period, the last day being Friday 23 December, and it will reopen on Monday 16 January.



Jeremy Hanson, Liberal MLA for Molonglo (centre), Ken Riordan, and chocolate wheel girl Matang, daughter-in-law of Rotary's Mal Ferguson, also a ticket seller.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Hard-working core of members largely responsible for continuing club success

Another good year for Woden Seniors

Woden Seniors Club enjoyed 'another good year' in 2010-2011 thanks to the work done during this period by Club committees and dedicated volunteers.

Delivering his President's Report at the Club's Annual General Meeting on 26 September, Neil Stevenson spoke of 'the hard-working core of around 30 people' who serve on the Management and other committees and who volunteer their time to help whenever they are needed. 'Without them,' he said, 'this club would not survive.'

He paid special tribute to Anne Murray who served the club as President for twelve and a half years and from whom he took over as President on 3 July.

'Thankfully, Anne's talents and expertise are not being lost to the club. She has agreed to remain a member of two committees and also to continue to liaise with the ACT Government in relation to the Woden Project,' he said.

Neil assured the meeting that although the Woden Project appears to be 'on hold' at the present time, the Management Committee is adamant that no relocation will occur unless the Club is offered 'significant improvements' in accommodation and facilities at any new premises.

Among others whom Neil named as making significant contributions to the running of the club were Raphaela Stukoff and the members of her House Sub-Committee who, he said 'work so hard to keep the clubhouse neat and clean and provide all the little touches that make it so pleasant and comfortable'.

He also paid tribute to Gail Guiliano 'our hard-working and dedicated Secretary', Polly Hong, The Club's Office Administrator, whom he described as 'a joy to work with', and the 'fine ability' of Treasurer Heike Elvers. The sound financial position of the Club is due 'in no small part' to Heike's efficiency, said Neil.

Page 2

Highlights of the year's activities included Autumn and Christmas Fairs, festivities on Melbourne Cup Day, the Grand Party in the Park when Woden Seniors combined with other Seniors' Clubs in Canberra, a Winter Concert and the 30th birthdays of both the Woden Seniors Choir and of Woden Seniors Club itself.

The new Club President is Roy Parekh, a retired medical scientist and keen bridge player.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I get Podcasts?

Answer: Podcasts are a way to download and listen to broadcasts such as radio programs on a computer after they have been broadcast over the air. For example many of the ABC's Radio National programs (as well as many SBS programs) can be downloaded later. Many overseas services such as the BBC also offer Podcasts of their programs. You can either go to the program page, or the 'Podcast' page, on the ABC or SBS website, and click "subscribe" You may have to select the form you want it in and I suggest you select "RSS". There is no charge by the stations.

If you are using Windows Explorer— your programs will appear when you click the "Favourites" star. You can then choose to either listen to or download the program. Firefox will show the program (eg The "Morning Interview") in the Bookmarks Toolbar. Clicking on the program produces a list of available broadcasts for that Program.

Alternatively you can download another program like Winamp (a free music and video player) which has a Podcast directory and which will automatically download selected programs as they are made available.

Question: If I get one of the new smart phones like an iPhone or one of the Android ones, will it cost more to use?

Management Committee

The following were elected at the AGM to serve for one year:

President: Roy Parekh

Vice-President: Sue Allen

Treasurer: Heike Elvers

Secretary: Gail Guiliano

Committee Members: Pat Birrell,

Grahame Hellyer, Anne Murray,

Richard Hickman, Ken Riordan

Public Officer: Raphaela Stukoff

Editor, Meridian: Dennis Blewett

Answer: Probably! If you buy it on a "Plan" you will receive a monthly data allowance to access the internet (or you may need to sign up for a "Data Pack"). This is for web browsing or emailing. Be careful not to exceed the data allowance you have on your plan, as excess charges are exorbitant. If you use it within a home wireless network area or at, say, a MacDonald's wireless hotspot, then it won't count against your allowance. (Provided your phone is set to use a wireless network when available.) If you are careful it may not cost you any more. If you get a new phone with a data plan be sure to ask how you stop it using the mobile data connection.

If anyone wants more advice feel free to call me. Polly can give you my number:- Grahame Hellyer

To our mutual advantage

If a member sells property, a unit, land etc, through Luton Real Estate, and the agent is our own Noel Lane, then not only are *you* assured of quality service, but Woden Seniors will receive a donation as well.

Meet newcomers to Management Committee

There are four newcomers to the club's Management Committee - President Roy Parekh, Vice-president Sue Allen, Ken Riordan, and Richard Hickman. *Meridian* invited them to tell readers about themselves:

Roy Parekh

There is nothing remarkable about myself, I was born in Nairobi, Kenya - then a beautiful scenic green rich country. But I prefer to be known as a "foreign-born Scot".

After my primary education in Kenya, I arrived in the United Kingdom at the beginning of a typical north-west England winter, which was quite an introduction to the English climate. After an initial stay in Manchester, I moved to London where I completed my education.

I then went to work for a pharmaceutical company, before turning to cancer research.

After marrying a bright girl, we both worked in healthcare and for research organisations for a couple of years and then settled in Edinburgh, Scotland, after considering moving to the United States or Canada, and never regretted our decision for one minute.

Since 2000 we visited our family in Australia regularly, with at first no thought of settling here, but our loving family (I am proud to say two doctors and a lawyer) and grandchildren changed that some eighteen months ago.

Becoming President of Woden Seniors, which has built such an outstanding reputation not just in the ACT but elsewhere, is a considerable challenge, and Anne Murray is a particularly hard act to follow. But I am sure that with such an enthusiastic and talented committee, we will together serve our members well.

We are not going to "reinvent the wheel" but we aim to make the "ride" more smooth and comfortable. To achieve this we may remove, add



The club's Management Committee: L to R - Pat Birrell, Roy Parekh (President), Raphaela Stukoff, Richard Hickman, Ken Riordan, Sue Allen (Vice-president), Anne Murray and Gail Guiliano. Absent from photograph Grahame Hellyer, Heike Elvers.

or leave in place parts of the basic design. As you all know, seniors clubs are run by a handful of enthusiastic volunteers. We do not get any government funding. We shall welcome all suggestions of activities, and most of all we will welcome with open arms volunteers prepared to run special events and regular activities. This is *your* club: it is and will be what *you* make of it.

Sue Allen

Having moved from Gippsland in Victoria after retirement from teaching, some six years ago, I have come to love Canberra. The people are so friendly and yet it offers so much in the way of theatre, arts and the U3A. Canberra is indeed the best of a country town and a larger city.

In looking around to continue my T'ai Chi I chanced upon the Woden Seniors Club and the T'ai Chi run by Elizabeth Halfnights. What a welcoming group they are and through them I have come to know any number of people in Woden Seniors.

In taking on the Vice-Presidency, I have been overwhelmed with the support and encouragement offered by so many people.

I am now the Chair of the Facilities Sub Committee, which I was happy to take on due to spending many years in charge of grounds maintenance at the many schools where I taught.

So, please feel free to seek me out to discuss any issues in regard to the grounds or maintenance of facilities.

Next year I hope to start a Garden Club for members so if you are interested, please let me know or tell Polly.

I look forward to working with the club and appreciate all it offers to its many members.

Ken Riordan

Hails from Kempsey (North Coast of NSW). Came to Canberra in 1965, and worked for the Commonwealth government in a number of agencies (Public Service Board, Health, Customs) until retirement in 2003. During that time worked for five years in Brisbane and six years in Sydney before returning to Canberra in 2001.

Married to Frances, we have four daughters, two of whom live in Canberra. Another is in Melbourne and the other is in Toowoomba, Qld. I also have two very young granddaughters in Canberra.

My main interests are Rotary community service activities, bushwalking and Australian history, particularly the influence of Irish migration on Australia's development

Frances has been a member of Woden Seniors for many years and is

Continued page 4, column 1

Meet the new committee members

From page 3

a regular participant in the watercolour painting group. I joined the club in 2011, and have been a member of the Activities Committee since then. As a new member of the Management Committee I hope to play a part in further strengthening our club, and am always happy to talk to members about what can be done to achieve this.

Richard Hickman

Born in Scotland, grew up and educated in England. After National Service and university, joined the British Colonial Office and went to Kenya as a District Officer serving in various districts, later District Commissioner in Kajiado until Kenya's independence in 1963. After returning to England, began a new career as a university administrator. Came to Australia in 1970 to take up a position as an administrator at the Australian National University, retiring in 1993 as School Secretary, Research School of Physical Sciences and Engineering. A cricket 'tragic', was Secretary of the ACT Cricket Association for 15 years and later a Life Member. I am concerned to ensure that the Woden Seniors Club continues to prosper and build on the foundations laid by previous president, Anne Murray.

Seniors Choir: 30 years of community service

Well we have now come to the end of another wonderful year of singing. We have visited 50 nursing homes and venues performing one hourly concerts for them.

The residents in some of these nursing homes are Alzheimer people but they still enjoy the sound of music. You can see their fingers and toes tapping away.

It is very rewarding to know that we are making these people happy.

We just celebrated 30 years this year. So hopefully we will be going for a lot longer. If you would like to join the choir you don't need to audition. Just come along and enjoy yourself. We rehearse every Monday 10.15-12 noon. We will start again

Page 4



Maureen Hoyland (left) and Jennifer Pratten at a Monday beading session

on Monday 30 January. Please come along and join us.

On behalf of Woden Seniors, have a very merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Joyleen Litherland, Conductor and Musical Director (ph 6292 6222)

Bridge - stimulating, and challenging

Bridge is the most popular, and challenging, of all card games.

Bridge is not an easy game, but anyone can become a bridge player with *instruction and supervised practice*.

Everyone has to start somewhere, and where better to start than here at your own club?

Margaret Kennedy has been conducting very popular and successful lessons. She will be pleased to tell you more, on 6292 9636.

Do you have a key to the club?

Secretary Gail Guiliano is currently updating the club's registry of "key holders".

If you have a key to the club and/or the office or the Anne Murray Room, please confirm with Gail.

Or leave your name and phone number with Polly, and Gail will give you a call.

Have you ever wanted to be an artist?

One of the most popular activities at the club is watercolour painting. Work of our artists can be seen in the foyer and sitting room, and is also regularly on display at exhibitions and sales at other Canberra venues.

Until now, sessions - which take place on Wednesday mornings and Friday afternoons - have been restricted to club members who are also members of U3A.

However, it has been decided that from now on it will *not* be necessary to be a U3A member to take part in *Friday afternoon* (1.30-4) sessions.

This creates an opportunity for club members to join an enthusiastic group, where they will be made welcome, and where they will benefit from a creative environment.

While there will be no formal teaching, or set exercises, newcomers *will* receive encouragement and valuable advice.

For further information, phone Sue Barrett (62816189) or Iris Blewett (62887611).

Worth thinking about?

Always remember that you're unique. Just like everyone else.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.

Images captured at club's Christmas Fair



Reflections on crossing the Atlantic on board the *Queen Elizabeth*

By Dennis Blewett

There's something romantic, and forbidding, about crossing the Atlantic. When I was a boy the Atlantic was connotative of convoys harassed by U-boats (*The Cruel Sea*), and the sinking of the *Titanic* was still fresh in grandparents' minds. So, as the *Queen Elizabeth* departed Southampton last September on her maiden voyage to New York it seemed more exciting than, for instance, the beginning of a Mediterranean cruise.

But that is where any sense of impending danger was put to rest, for while we did encounter forbidding seas for the first 24 hours of the crossing, "guests" were not discomfited. Well, you wouldn't expect them to be as (on previous cruises we have enjoyed), most were more experienced seagoers than the Ancient Mariner. Dinner companions told us they had spent seven of the past 12 months at sea and were to embark on their third round-the-world cruise before the end of the year. When an unfortunate man collapsed and died one evening, they were able to tell us that on one of *their* cruises they had lost *thirteen* guests. I couldn't help but reflect that, had Hercule Poirot been on board, he would have asked, "Do you not find this very intriguing, my dear Hastings?"

Our other dinner companions (there were six of us at the table), charming sisters both of whom had lost their husbands, had also been on many cruises together. Their energy was boundless: they were to be seen line-dancing at 11.30am, attending ballroom classes at 12.30, dancing in the Britannia Ballroom directly after dinner, and "disco-ing" in the Yacht Club from midnight.

More than other Lines, Cunard features dancing, every evening to a splendid orchestra, and employs "gentlemen hosts" to dance with ladies without partners (one host, whose dancing was deemed to be of insufficient standard, was "put off" when we reached New York). Cunard is connotative of a bygone age, with its art déco, strict dress code, afternoon tea, pianists and string quartet, and elegant, well-stocked library. The Golden Lion presents another, perhaps more accurate, face of Britain, with its English beer, fish-and-chips and Premier League soccer on satellite TV. I was making my way to the Golden Lion one afternoon to watch a delayed World Cup telecast, expecting the Wallabies to do a routine job on Ireland, when I overheard exultant Brits rejoicing in Australia's defeat, so I abruptly changed my plans.

The splendid theatre (two shows nightly to cater for first- and second-sitting diners) presented mixed fare. Comedian Adrian Walsh and singer Mark Adams received enthusiastic applause; some others more restrained approbation. The theatrical group presented a diverse selection, from *Twelfth Night* (it compared very favourably with recent John Bell productions seen in Canberra) to scenes from Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* and *Plaza Suite* (well acted but not as amusing as they would have been to

audiences fifty years ago). The dance company was very good (cast members also conducted ballroom classes), and guests were unanimous in their admiration of their ballroom-influenced choreography.

Captain Chris Wells was visible, informative and humorous. He did not fail to enlighten us when we passed close to the wreck of the *Titanic*, and was a member of the ship's team that competed, unsuccessfully, against guests in a general knowledge quiz.

Bridge was a well-attended activity, as were water-colour classes and numerous other activities such as photography, use of the internet, cookery classes, and even fencing. Lectures on our forthcoming ports of call were particularly well attended, as one would expect, guests preparing to make the optimum use of their time on shore.

And so, after seven days at sea, we arrived in New York, the iconic Statue of Liberty and the serrated skyline lit by the early-morning sun. Then, like Frank Sinatra and Gene Kelly in *On the Town*, we went ashore, almost bursting into song:

*New York, New York, it's a helluva town,
the Bronx is up but the Battery's down.*

We had two busy, rewarding days, determined to go everywhere, see everything. We cruised on the Hudson, and went to Manhattan, the Bronx, Greenwich Village, Brooklyn, the Chinese and Italian quarters, and Ground Zero. We ascended the Empire State Building at night, and afterwards took in Times Square until midnight. We shopped at Macy's (well, one has to), and visited Grand Central Terminal (familiar from so many movies - "meet me under the clock"), and glimpsed Radio City Music Hall (remember bobby soxers in the '40s queuing outside to see Sinatra?), and Madison Square Garden (Joe Louis Street runs alongside it). Unfortunately, it was not possible to go to the theatre (the two big shows in town were *Mamma Mia* and *Mary Poppins* - hardly ground-breaking, I would have thought) and nor did we buy hotdogs from a street vendor like George Clooney and Michelle Pfeiffer would surely have done.

Over all too soon, and the following day we were tendered ashore at Newport (Rhode Island), to see the houses that the rich had built for themselves before income and property taxes and labour safeguards spoil things. Clarendon Court, for instance, where *High Society* with Sinatra and Grace Kelly was filmed. Less happily, some years later, "socialite" Claus von Bulow was sentenced to 30 years gaol for murdering his wife "Sunny" in the same house, but subsequently acquitted on appeal. The story was told in *Reversal of Fortune*, with Jeremy Irons playing Claus and Glenn Close playing "Sunny". Next, the house where *The Great Gatsby* (Robert Redford) was filmed was pointed out to us.

At Boston we joined a walking tour of the old city and were told much of its claim to be the birthplace of American independence and of the ride of Paul Revere, before making our own way to Quincy Markets and then, on a lovely, balmy evening, we ate lobster and drank beer at an open-air restaurant before being driven back to the

Queen Elizabeth through neon-lit Boston scarcely less impressive than New York.

Next stop Portland. However, we had only a cursory look at the city, opting instead to spend our day at Kennebunkport, a fishing village and holiday resort, where we lunched on clam chowder and cruised on a boat from where we watched lobsters being taken from the sea. Kennebunkport is where former President George Bush Snr has his summer home, evidenced by security measures - agents, cameras, electrified fences. Guarding ex-Presidents doesn't come cheap. The next day we visited Bar Harbour, where we lunched on (you guessed it) lobster, and mussels, and drove through Acadia National Park to the summit of Cadillac Mountain.

On to Halifax, a delightful stop, and a perfect day to tour the city, lingering over coffee in the splendid park before visiting the Maritime Museum which features a *Titanic* display (survivors were landed at Halifax). Halifax is also the scene of the largest accidental explosion ever. In 1917 the *Mont Blanc*, loaded with explosives, blew up, killing and injuring more than 11,000 people and destroying everything within 2 km. The city had suffered another blow the morning we arrived, awakening to the news that one of its young men had been killed in the "war" in Afghanistan, but it did not deter the city from being particularly hospitable.

Quebec more than lived up to our high expectations. The *Queen Elizabeth* docked some 200 metres from the old town, with its cobblestone streets and heritage buildings, and funicular providing easy access up the escarpment to the Chateau Frontenac, which dominates the skyline. Quebec has preserved its French culture, and the language is spoken almost exclusively. On our second day there we ventured into the hinterland, touring the Ile d'Orléans, with its orchards and farms and 18th- and 19th-

century houses. After lunch we drove to Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, the most impressive basilica we have seen outside Europe, and then to the Montmorency Falls, 30m higher than Niagara, albeit considerably narrower.

Our one regret on leaving Quebec was that our visit had not been longer, especially as our last stop, Corner Brook, Newfoundland, although surrounded by imposing wilderness and approached through the scenic Bay of Islands, had little to offer in itself. One charming touch was provided by a group of girls who came to dockside to sing as we departed. Our captain, ever informative, told us we were to take the northern route around Newfoundland back to Southampton. In another few weeks this would not be possible because of ice, but he had opted to head north because of a hurricane to the south. Another reminder that the Atlantic is not the Mediterranean.

So we settled down to six days at sea, the clocks winding relentlessly forward as we travelled eastwards to meet the rising sun. The *Queen Elizabeth* met up with neither hurricane nor ice, in fact it was sunny enough for guests to work on their tans by the pools. For our part, we enjoyed lazy days, perhaps taking in a movie (we saw *The King's Speech*, well worth a second viewing, and the latest refilming of *Jane Eyre*), attended interesting lectures, and made good use of the library and media room (keeping in constant touch with loved ones in Australia) and then, in the evening, enjoyed cocktails before dinner, and the theatre (singer David Shannon was a big hit) and dancing afterwards.

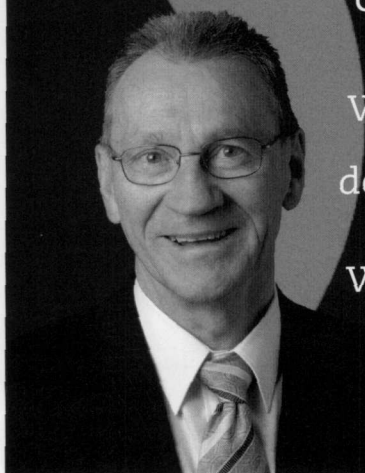
We arrived in Southampton on an overcast "English" morning, but the sun appeared as we drove through the green English countryside towards Heathrow, and Australia via a six-day "stopover" in Singapore.

SELLING YOUR PROPERTY!

If you plan to sell your home or other property, you are welcome to contact Noel Lane of Luton Properties (LUTON), for a confidential and informative discussion.

We offer Members of Woden Seniors special low selling fees and make a substantial donation to Woden Seniors for each property of a Member that Noel sells.

We are a major supporter of Woden Seniors.



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LUTON

High quality concert a musical treat

We attended the wonderful fund-raiser concert on Sunday 23 October featuring the U3A Warrani Chorale, Con Bio U3A and the Canberra Men's Choir. What a feast of lovely music performed by some very talented ladies and gentlemen of the three choral groups.

As if that wasn't enough we were also treated to a performance of concert standard of the very spirited Beethoven "Ghost Trio" by the talented string trio of Rose and Meg Holcombe and Sarah Davis..

While the audience was reasonably large and very appreciative, it was made up mostly of visitors to the club and friends of the performers. Quite disappointing to see so few of the Woden Seniors members in attendance, particularly as this was a club fund-raising function, the entry fee for which (\$10) was more than reasonable, considering the quality of the performance and the sumptuous afternoon tea (provided by the ladies of the U3A choral groups) which followed.

For those who didn't catch this concert - you missed a treat. Hopefully, another concert of this calibre can be arranged next year with a more representative turn-out of appreciative Seniors members.-

Two happy members

10 Stories High: life experiences

On Thursday 1 September writers from the Woden Seniors Club joined their friends and family, project sponsors and supporters to attend the launch of the anthology *10 Stories High*.

The project, led by immediate past President Anne Murray, was a special initiative of the Woden Seniors Club and offered members the opportunity to begin the journey of writing their life story.

Beginning with a facilitated writer's workshop held over eight sessions, members then selected excerpts of their work to be printed in individual booklets to share with their families and be included in an anthology. *10 Stories High* captures the

wisdom, creativity, spirit and rich life experiences of these senior writers.

The project received significant support through a community grant provided to the ACT Writer's Centre by the Canberra Southern Cross Club, which also sponsored the launch event.

In addition, Kwik Kopy Phillip provided free design and layout of the anthology and individual booklets as well as a contribution towards printing costs.

The anthology is available on the websites of the ACT Writer's Centre and Woden Seniors, at www.actwriters.org.au and www.wodenseniors.org.au

A Yorkshireman and his dog . . .

A Yorkshireman's dog dies and as it was a favourite pet he decides to have a gold statue made by a jeweller to remember the dog by.

Yorkshireman: "Can tha mek us a gold statue of yon dog?"

Jeweller: "Do you want it 18 carat?"

Yorkshireman: "No I want it chewin' a bone yer daft bugger!"

. . . and new drug craze

Police have just released details of a new drug craze that is being carried out in Yorkshire nightclubs. Appar-

ently, Yorkshire club goers have started injecting Ecstasy just above their front teeth.

Police say the dangerous practice is called "e by gum".

Library remains popular thanks to donations

The Club's Library continues to prosper, despite the growing popularity of e-books, thanks to the generous donations of books from members. - Sue Marks

HELLENIC CLUB MEMBERS ONLY

ACT H 09/00008.1

TUESDAY - 11:00am • Total Prize Pool \$5,200

WEDNESDAY - 7:30pm • Total Prize Pool \$5,200

SUNDAY - 2:00pm • Total Prize Pool \$6,000

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