



Meridian



Volume 3 Issue 10

The monthly newsletter of the Woden Senior Citizens' Club

October 2001



Overheard in the Bridge Room

*"How come you and your husband get on so well when your backgrounds are so different. He has a degree in Communication Theory and you went to a drama school."
"Simple. He communicates beautifully, and I act as if I was listening."*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(For the benefit of those who were unable to be present at the AGM, the following is the gist of the President's report to that meeting - Ed)

It is my pleasure to present to you my second annual report as President. I have asked myself: did we achieve the goals which were set 12 months ago. These were to improve the administration of the Club, to raise funds for the benefit of members and to introduce activities and events which meet members' needs.

Obviously these goals are meaningless unless they are set within the context of the Club's objectives, as set out in the Constitution and according to our tradition of caring and sharing.

We raised \$21,000 during the year and this will allow us AT LAST(!) to address Stage 1 of the car park upgrade. This should happen before the end of October, barring circumstances beyond our control such as heavy and continuous rain. We will also be able to do some essential maintenance work and improvements to this facility such as screens on the windows, sanding and resurfacing the parquet floor, blinds

mended and carpets cleaned.

It is estimated that the population of the Woden Valley over 60 years of age will rise to 30% over the next 10 years. This Club will therefore be even more important in serving the needs of this region. We must manage the Club efficiently, our administration must be streamlined and effective, our programmes must be interesting and challenging. I believe we must work cooperatively with other organisations in the region. One strong link now being formed is with the Canberra Mothercraft Society, and another with other Seniors' clubs currently being facilitated by the Council on the Ageing through a project called "Clubs on the Move".

I would like to give you a brief overview of some recent initiatives. The Wednesday exercise programme with YMCA instructors has been very important - we should all be participating! Two small but exciting programmes have started, a writing group and a sing-along group. Two of our members, Robin Eaton and Anne Wallace have re-established a travel activity group through a link with a small local company called "Go Bush Tours". A social planning committee has been formed with one of the strongest teams imaginable - Jean Glanville, Sue Murray, Elsa Martinsen and Marian Ferguson. As a result of this committee's work several events have been planned on a regular basis.

We have had a strong and clearly focussed administrative team this year. I have spent time developing initiatives and procedures

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FROM THE RECORDS CLERK

I'm still trying to locate those missing Parking Permits which have slipped through the recording system. So once again, if anyone is holding (or knows who is holding) any of the following Permits, issued in late July and early August, would they please let the Office Manager know? The numbers are:

212, 214, 216 and 227

The step of dispensing with the card index system has finally been taken. There are obviously advantages in having only a single database to maintain, but as in life, nothing comes without disadvantages. In this case the disadvantage is that regularly backing up of the data becomes absolutely vital - something for the next Records Clerk to bear in mind. So far, no member of the new committee has been designated for that job, so the present incumbent is continuing, pro tem. A screed setting out the procedures is being prepared to help the next lucky holder of the position.

Records Clerk

TRANSITIONAL CARE

Those of you unfortunate enough to have needed surgery in hospital will be well aware that you may be sent home long before you are in a state to properly take care of yourself. This is acceptable if you have a devoted spouse, friend or family member to help you, but what if you don't?

To date, convalescent care facilities to aid your transition back to full health and independence have been available inter-state, but now they are available in the A.C.T. also.

From October 22nd., eleven beds at Morling Lodge will be set aside for persons assessed as needing convalescent care.

For more information, contact Ms. Joy Dizon at Morling Lodge on 62953744, or see Chris Ledger here at the Club.

CAR PARK CLOSURE

Please watch the notice boards for alternative car parking arrangements during the upgrade. It is anticipated that the rear car park will be unusable for one to two weeks, and that during that time the front area will be reserved for the genuinely disabled, drop-offs and unloading of heavy items; **BUT WATCH THE NOTICE BOARDS FOR DETAILS.**

COMPUTER GROUP

With two successive Mondays being lost (due to the AGM and a public holiday) there isn't much to report. Further to last months announcement in the Meridian, David Henderson brought in a Pentium 100 which was duly stripped down to its component parts by the group and re-assembled. Unfortunately time ran out before the final reconfiguration could be done, so we will complete that at a future date; (although knowing David he will probably finish the job at home). No one has asked for the copies of WORD and EXCEL which were being given away last month, so they are headed for the tip.

Dennis Glanville

 * USE YOUR COMPUTER TO MAKE PERSONALISED CHRISTMAS CARDS. *
 * **A DEMONSTRATION** *
 * Monday 22nd. October *
 * 1.30 pm. Committee Room *
 * Since the festive season is once more beginning to loom *
 * on the horizon, the Computer Interest Group is planning *
 * to give a demonstration of how greetings cards unique to *
 * you can be made using a cheap scanner and printer *
 * together with an elderly computer. *
 * ALL WELCOME *
 * but since only a limited number at a time can look at a *
 * computer screen please ring me on 62812607 if you *
 * would like to come - we may have to have two sessions. *
 * Dennis Glanville *



Cynical Sam Says:

If you think there's good in everybody, you haven't met everybody.

WAY BACK THEN

Continuing our suggestions as to how well-known sayings could have had their origins in the "good old days".

Just as in many homes today, the kitchen was the social (and cooking) centre. The principal cooking utensil was a large iron pot suspended more or less constantly over an open fire. The fire was lit every day, and things added to the pot - mostly vegetables, since the lower orders could not afford meat very often. The main meal was at the close of the working day, when some of the stew would be taken from the pot, leaving the leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight. The next day it was heated up again and more ingredients added. As a result, the pot could have food in it that had been there quite some time, and the stew took on a thick consistency. Hence the rhyme: "Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold; pease porridge in the pot, nine days old".

Sometimes they could obtain cured pork, which was a great achievement and made them feel special. The joint of bacon would be hung up in view of visitors so as to "show off" that the man of the house was able to "bring home the bacon".

POETS CORNER

No suitable poetry having been submitted this month, perhaps instead you may like to read this letter written by the captain of an Australian ship, presently in the Middle East, to the head office of his Shipping Company in Melbourne. It contains a few nautical terms, but the general meaning is clear enough.

Dear Sirs,

It is with deep regret and haste that I write this letter to you. Regret that such a small misunderstanding could lead to the following circumstances, and haste in order that you receive this report before you form any preconceived notions and opinions from reports

in the Australian press. I am sure that the press tend to over-dramatise in their reports on such occasions.

We had just embarked the Pilot, and the Deck Cadet had returned to the Wheelhouse after taking down the G flag ("I require Pilot") and hoisting the H flag ("I have a Pilot on board"). This being his first trip, he was having difficulty in rolling up the G flag before stowing it. I therefore proceeded to instruct him in the correct method of rolling up a signal flag. Coming to the last part of this instruction I told him

to "let go". The lad, although willing enough, was not too bright and this necessitated my having to repeat the order in a somewhat loud and sharper tone: "Let go!".

At this moment the Chief Officer appeared from the chartroom, having been plotting the vessel's progress, and thinking it was the anchors that were being referred to, repeated the "let go" to the Third Officer who was on the forecastle. The port anchor, having been cleared away but not walked out, was promptly let go. The effect of letting go the anchor whilst the vessel was proceeding at full harbour speed proved too much for the windlass brake. The entire length of the port cable was thus pulled out by the roots, depositing the anchor and thirteen shackles of cable on the harbour bed. Whilst this was happening, the braking effect of the port anchor naturally caused a sheer to port - right towards a swing bridge which spanned a tributary to the river on which we were navigating.

The swing bridge operator showed great presence of mind by promptly opening the bridge to my vessel. Unfortunately, he did not think to stop the vehicular traffic. The result was that the bridge opened and deposited a Volkswagen, two cyclists and a cattle truck on the foredeck.

My ship's company are at present rounding up the contents of the cattle truck which, I gather from the noise outside, are pigs.

In his efforts to stop the progress of the vessel, the Third Mate dropped the starboard anchor, too late to be of any practical use as it fell

directly on to the swing bridge operator's cabin, a poor reward for his quick action in opening the bridge.

After the vessel had started to sheer through the accidental letting go of the port anchor, I gave a "Double Ring" for Full Astern on the engine room telegraph. I also personally rang the Engine Room to verbally order maximum astern revolutions. I was thus informed by the duty Engineer that the sea temperature was 53 degrees Fahrenheit and asked if there was to be a movie on that night. My reply, whilst colourful, would not add constructively to this report.

It is strange, but at exactly the same time as the port anchor was dropped there was a power cut ashore. The fact that we were passing over a cable area at the time suggests that the anchor chain may have shorted something on the river bed. In any event, the loss of the town's power was fortunate for us, since otherwise the high tension cables which were brought down by our foremast and landed on the foredeck would have made the bridge "live", and I might not be now writing this report. Owing to the blackout ashore, it is impossible to ascertain where the electric cable pylon fell.

Up to now I have confined my report to activities at the fore'ard end of my vessel. Down aft they were having their own problems. At the moment the port anchor was let go, the Second Mate was supervising the making fast of the aft tug. The sudden braking effect of the port anchor caused the tug to run under the stern of my vessel - just at the very moment the propeller was answering my double ring of Full Astern. The prompt action of the Second Mate in securing the inboard end of the towing spring delayed the sinking of the tug by several minutes, allowing the safe abandonment of that vessel by her crew. The actions and behaviour of foreigners during a moment of crisis never fail to amaze me. The Pilot is huddled in the corner of my dayroom crooning to himself after having drunk a bottle of whiskey in a time worthy of inclusion in the Guinness Book of Records. The

Tug Master, on the other hand, reacted quite violently and had to be forcibly restrained by the steward. He is presently handcuffed in the ship's hospital where he is telling me to do impossible things with my ship.

Enclosed with this report are the names and addresses of the drivers of the vehicles and bicycles that fell from the swing bridge onto my foredeck, together with the details of their insurance companies. These particulars will enable you to claim for the damage they caused to the railings, coamings and deck around No.1 hatch when they landed there. To conclude this report I wish to point out that, had the Cadet not been a "First Tripper", and had more experience, he would have realised that it is not necessary to fly the Pilot Flag in the dark and none of this would have occurred.

Yours faithfully,

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Master



(continued from page 1)

on a one-to-one basis with the entire team - initially Werner Friedrich, Audrey Williams, Doreen McKie and Umar Bourke, and more recently Umar, Audrey, Doreen and Dennis Glanville.

I wish to say thank you to the members of the outgoing committee. One of those members is Barbara Sutcliffe who has been a member of the Club for almost 16 years and has been a committee member for almost all of that time. Barbara is not seeking re-election. Audrey and Doreen have been wonderful colleagues, often working under considerable pressure but always with grace and good humour. Dennis Glanville has been a tower of strength, taking responsibility for the production of The Meridian and as the membership clerk.

Eric Chalmers was a very professional Public Officer who continues to assist us. It is my very great pleasure to introduce our newly appointed Public Officer, Mrs. June Healy, who is a respected community leader in Australia, having been, amongst other things, national president of the Council on the Ageing and also its ACT president. She is currently the national president of the War Widows Guild.

I want to publicly express my thanks to Umar. In the relatively new position of Administrative Officer, Umar has demonstrated much commitment and dedication to the welfare of the Club and its members, both as an employee and a volunteer. He undertakes a multiplicity of tasks, he constantly identifies policy and procedural shortfalls, he always is willing to go the extra distance. For him, second best is not good enough!

2001 is the International Year of the Volunteer, and there are so many members who have made, and continue to make, a great contribution to our Club. There are the activity group leaders, members who quietly undertake tasks which benefit us all without being asked; for example, cleaning the refrigerator, keeping the driveway swept, selling raffle tickets in shopping centres, managing the entire process of organising a raffle, tidying cupboards, bringing in the milk, arranging flowers etc.

Thanks also to Chris Ledger of Woden Community Services who has helped many members with their problems.

Finally, my thanks to you all for your friendship and support. It has given me much strength and a determination to meet the challenges ahead.

Anne Murray

Editor's Note: The President's report to the AGM also contained additional information on the contractors, suppliers and costs for the development of the grounds and car park. In the interests of conciseness these details have been held over until next month's Meridian.

In the meantime, members are reminded that the work will render the car park inaccessible to members for at least a week - possibly as long as two weeks. Please watch the notice boards for details of the interim arrangements.

Ed.

CONGRATULATIONS, CRAFT GROUP!

Have you noticed the prize-winning sticker on that magnificent piece of patchwork on the wall just outside the Committee Room? This was a combined effort by the members of the Group, and is just one of the five prizes carried off by the Group at the recent Southern Districts Craft Exhibition. The Group reports as follows:

The Craft Group proudly display five trophies won at the Thirtieth Annual Southern Districts Craft Exhibition. Bill Stefaniak MLA officially opened the display, congratulating the exhibitors on the variety and excellent craftsmanship of the various items.

Our Craft Group won the Group Activity trophy for a patchwork wall hanging. In addition, trophies were awarded to:

Margaret Barker - "Koalas", a longstitch item;

Margaret Cannons - "Country Cottage" - an embroidery and longstitch canvas work;

Jeanette Bradley - a patchwork Knee rug;

Phyllis Pierce - a baby's jacket (Best Knitted Article category).

We appreciate the help given to us by Club members with a steady supply of wool all kinds of materials that we can use - thank you.

Myra Hickey

Members are reminded that this hardworking group will be running a stall and selling raffle tickets on election day, Saturday 20 Oct. at Melrose High School. Helpers are urgently needed - see the notice board to volunteer an hour or two of your time.