

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The challenges continue and increase, both in size and in type! While we entered this year with a full committee, we had some changes throughout the year.

During the year we were, however, able to co-opt both Bryan McGrath of Henry Kendall, Wyoming, and Bill Plant of Alloura Waters, both on the Central Coast. They have already made valuable contributions to our operation, and we are very appreciative of their involvement.

Now, with two members, **John Cooper** and **Hugh Bell**, not re-nominating, the incoming number will be 10, from a possible 12.

As the Secretary has intimated in her report, those two have been wonderful contributors, and they will be greatly missed by all our members, as well as the committee!

John has agreed to maintain his interest in being Master of our website, for which, we are extremely grateful! His contribution to our Association has been fantastic, and his knowledge of the RV Act etc. exemplary. He will be sorely missed!

Hugh likewise, has been our Strata-Title expert, as well as reviewing the RVRA hard-copy records, and his efforts in this area are much appreciated.

Legislation: We have been disappointed that there was no opportunity to discuss with the previous State Government, the replacement of Sub-Clause 5 1(a) of the Regulation 2009, and one item on our wish list to place before the new State Government, will be suggestions for its replacement.

The Minister for Fair Trading has invited me to serve on an expert committee to form a policy on the standardisation of village contracts.

Following the successful financial seminars held last year, a more general treatment of the revised legislation was the subject conducted this year, and attended by over 1200 residents and intending ones, which has been very gratifying. Our Secretary Jan Pritchett's expertise in writing and compiling the booklet, earns our deep appreciation, as do the presenters who participated in the seminar's execution.

Stakeholder Meetings have again been held bi-monthly, with an improving dialogue having been achieved. While presidents of state resident associations were granted free registration to the National RVA Conference in Brisbane, both your secretary and I were accorded that courtesy to the NSW-ACT State Conference in Canberra, where we participated in a panel discussion on the current status of the CTTT - Retirement Village Division. Although joint attempts at resolving village issues with the RVA have been unsuccessful in two instances, there is an increasing awareness of the effectiveness of good communication between residents and operators, and at least two of the major corporate operators have indicated their wish to hold regular talks with our representatives as well.

Honorary Solicitor, Peter Hill, has again been of tremendous assistance, and we are very grateful for his presence again at this Annual General Meeting. While his advocacy in the recent Queens Lake Village case was entirely directed by that village's residents committee, the resultant effect will, no doubt, be felt and appreciated by village residents throughout the state! As a result of that case, our members felt the necessity to contribute to a Legal Support Fund which the Committee established, in case of further legal challenges, where villages could not afford the legal costs. Almost \$12,000 has been raised by June 30 this year!

Study Groups: Their work comprises a 57 page discussion paper, on how to prepare an application to the CTTT. This is available for on our RVRA website, as is information about the installation of solar panels.

The Study Group plans to investigate exit fees, and costs of sale in a village, were stalled due to ill health of the leader. They hope to pursue this in the coming year.

CTTT Involvement: Judith Daley has acted in an advocacy role for one village, as have John Wheeler, and Bill Plant. Also several of the committee attending various hearings. As president, I attended the RV CTTT Consultative Forum meetings and, with the Secretary, compiled a joint submission, with the RVA, to the CTTT Administration, listing our unhappiness with various cases that we had observed.

Village Visits have again been a feature of our activities, although they have had to be somewhat curtailed due to the seminar events.

Other Organisations: The Secretary and I have attended several COTA forums, the Property Council of Australia Conference, where we were joint panellists, and meetings with two property groups.

Also, I have been a member of the Fair Trading Minister's Retirement Village Advisory Council, the CTTT Consultative Forum, and The Minister's Expert Committee studying the standardization of leases.

Village Contacts: Our Association would not succeed without our wonderful Village Contacts, and we must never forget that they are our lifeblood!

So, a great big "THANK YOU" to you all. As Jan has indicated, we have arranged for software changes to be made, to improve the efficiency of the distribution tasks, which you so willingly carry out in your village.

Secretarial Help: As you are aware, this was commenced last year, following a recommendation at the previous year's Annual General Meeting. It has had to increase markedly, to cope with the number of queries, software problems on the membership data-base, and relieving the pressure on the office-bearers, so that we are still able to function effectively. This has, fortunately, been funded by the increase in our subscriptions.

Membership: While we have, in our membership records, some 5,500 members, this is probably less than 10 per cent of the total number of village residents in the state! We have to keep striving to maintain our numbers, as

natural attrition, with members moving to 'higher care', is continually reducing our "available" market!

The Future: To have a stronger voice in the 'Aged Community Sector', we shall require further paid staff in the future, to effectively carry out the continual lobbying, advocacy and participation in the various activities that sector demands.

Your committee has increased subscriptions by 50% this year, which needs your ratification at this meeting, as required by the RVRA Constitution.

Another strategy has been to investigate sponsorship. This has proved difficult for a variety of factors. We are still persisting with Aussie Farmers Direct, in the hope that, eventually, their small commission will become a more worthwhile source of funding.

One source of finance is to apply for Government Grant/s, and we intend to pursue this avenue vigorously while not compromising our 'aims and objectives!' This was considered some time ago, but not pursued. We now believe it could be worthwhile reconsidering.

Conclusion: I cannot end without thanking all the members of the Committee, and particularly, Jan Pritchett your Secretary, who has through her telephone and email contact, built up a huge following from the huge workload she has undertaken, in addition to her presentations at seminars and other member events. As she is willing to assume the President's role, I offer my congratulations, and assistance at all times.

Malcolm McKenzie