

Victoria Branch Report

Period: September 2010-January 2011

Looking After Our Members

Social Events

September: Annual reception for new Award recipients was held at the Melbourne Town Hall with ninety members and guests in attendance. Guest speaker was Andrew Macleod the CEO for the Committee for Melbourne.

October: The Annual Dinner was again held in the Banquet Room of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria with over one hundred members and guests in attendance which was significantly down on attendance in previous years. The guest speaker was famed Australian jazz pianist Dr. Tony Gould AM who performed with vocalist Gian Slater.

November: Following the Annual General Meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall, one hundred and twenty members and guests attended the Annual Celebrity Luncheon. Guest speaker was Anne Unkenstein, an eminent clinical neuropsychologist, whose address and discussion focused on the human memory and how it works.

January: Planning is now well advanced for the Annual Flag Lowering Ceremony on Australia Day at the Shrine of Remembrance.

Communication

Communication with Members continued throughout the period with the quarterly Newsletter and promotional flyers for upcoming events. The Victoria Branch recognises the ongoing and generous financial support of the RACV in the publishing of the Newsletter.

The Branch maintains close links with the Australia Day Committee in Victoria with five of our Committee Members being Australia Day Ambassadors. An alliance has also been established with the other Australia Day body.....the Australia Day Council.

Looking After Our Association

The most significant achievement over the past four years has been the strengthening and expansion of the Regional Groups. We now have five metropolitan Groups and seven country Groups with the new Mallee Group having been recently launched in Mildura.

Most importantly, the National Body of our Association has been supportive in recognising the importance of the Groups and the role that they play in bringing members together at local level with functions, events and projects with a local flavour that are relevant to the interests of members and the local communities.

The driving force behind all of this has been our Deputy Chairman (Country) Kevin Howard who from his home base in Wangaratta liaises with all of the Regional Group Committees throughout the State. This includes his Chairmanship of the Regional Groups Combined Meetings held three times each year in

Melbourne. Representatives of the Regional Groups also attend in turn at the monthly Branch Committee meetings.

In line with the established annual practice of conducting a State Branch Committee meeting in a Regional Group area, the June meeting was held in conjunction with the Mornington Peninsula Group and organized by its hard working Chairman Harry McDonald who has recently retired.

Recruitment of New Members

We have also played a major role in changing the process in recruiting new members to our Association. The Chairmen of all Regional Groups are now working closely and actively with the State Branch in inviting new Award recipients to join us. This local approach on a 'personal basis' is already attracting more new members to our ranks.

Branch Committee Structure

It has been a great team effort by members of the Victoria Branch Committee. But as in all teams, changes are inevitable and at the Annual General meeting we lost three long standing members: Immediate past Chairman Geoff Neilson and Marjorie Morgan whose terms have expired and Deputy Chairman Metropolitan Geoff Christopherson who did not stand for re-election. The new Deputy Chairman (Metropolitan) is David Mann who has been an active member of the Branch Committee for the past three years. David is the Marketing Manager of radio station 3AW and brings to the Association an added dimension with his considerable skills and contacts across a broad spectrum of the Victorian community.

Visit by National Deputy Chairman in November

We again thank deputy National Chairman Peter McDermott AM CSC for his attendance at the Annual General Meeting. Peter addressed both the AGM and later the Regional Groups Meeting where his willingness to engage in discussion across a wide range of issues was greatly appreciated by Group representatives.

Report on Branch and Regional Group Finances

All functions are planned on the basis of achieving a surplus and at very least to ensure a break even situation. In addition we strive to accumulate funds in reserve to ensure ongoing financial stability in line with the requirements of sound corporate governance and the need for involvement with our members and the broader community. The attendance of Regional Group representatives at monthly Branch Committee meetings and the quarterly regular joint Regional meetings ensure that we continue to operate as a combined State operation in adhering to this philosophy of financial management. Current financial statements have been provided to the National Treasurer by Victoria Branch Treasurer Trevor Brown with whom he maintains regular contact.

D. H. Hyde AM
Chairman
Victoria Branch