

Minutes of THECA Annual General Meeting, Wednesday 25 April 2018

(1) The meeting was opened at 7.00 pm by the President, Greg Siepen, who welcomed THECA members. Greg also welcomed and thanked THECA member the Hon Jane Prentice, MP, Federal Member for Ryan and Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services, for agreeing to chair part of the meeting.

(2) More than a quorum of members attended (26 initially with some late arrivals). Alan and Sue Anderson, Roy and Annelise Machen, and Valerie, Ken and Carolyn Sandercoe sent apologies. Roy and Annelise Machen, and Valerie, Ken and Carolyn Sandercoe sent proxies.

(3) Copies of the Minutes from the previous AGM (April 2017) had been distributed by email, and, no comments or objections being raised, a motion to accept them was moved by Greg Siepen and seconded by Jane Prentice. The motion was carried *nem con*.

(4) The President gave his Annual Report, noting that it will go on the website, and that the Secretary could email it to those who asked. It is appended to these Minutes (Attachment A). The president thanked the committee and all those who had volunteered during the year. The report covered the various THECA activities during the year, including the inaugural wildlife art show (thanks to Christine Zupanc and sub-committee), Open Sundays (thanks to Linda Cartmill and sub-committee), children's activities (Rachel Griffiths and volunteers), birdwalks (Dawn Muir), bushcare groups (Sameer Punde's Hilltopping group and Annelise Machen's Mother-of-Millions weeding group), the library (Ray Carman), Wild West Calendar (Andrew Taylor and Carolyn Nowicki), Forum (Greg and others), newsletter (Margaret Palmer) and other volunteers who helped out during the year.

(5) The Treasurer Ian Ferguson summarised the audited Financial Report and thanked previous treasurer (until April 2017) Alan Anderson for his input. A copy of Ian's report is at Attachment B. Ian moved that the audited financial statement be accepted, seconded by John Blackwood. Carried *nem con*.*

(6) Jane Prentice then Chaired the election of the Committee for the coming year. Nominations were received for all positions, one for each. Accordingly, the following, who had been nominated, were elected unopposed:

President: Greg Siepen

Vice-President: Justin Watson

Secretary: Margaret Palmer

Treasurer: Ian Ferguson

Committee members: Jocelyne Bridier, Sameer Punde and Christine Zupanc.

Mrs Prentice invited nominations from the floor, leaving the way open for others to volunteer for the committee.

(7) The President then gave special thanks to three THECA members who retired from office at the AGM: John Blackwood, membership secretary for many years and a volunteer in other capacities as well, Margaret de Wit, longterm THECA supporter while in office at the Brisbane City Council, and longterm Committee member and sometime President, and Rachel Griffiths, a

key leader in THECA from its inception as well as founding President and committee member (further detail in President's Report). Greg also expressed thanks for the contribution of two deceased THECA members, Jane Scragg and Pamela O'Brien.

The Annual General Meeting was declared closed at 8.00.

Margaret Palmer
Secretary
THECA

Greg Siepen
President
THECA

*At a general meeting of members on Wednesday 27 June 2018, the meeting endorsed the appointment of Arabon Audit and Assurance as THECA's auditors for the next financial year.

Attachment A

THECA 2017-18 Annual President's Report

Welcome to the AGM. There are copies of my brief report scattered amongst the audience. So, share one after you have read it.

We have had an energetic Committee this year and I would like to thank each for their hard work – Justin Watson (VP), Margaret Palmer (Secretary), Ian Ferguson (Treasurer) and Committee members Christine Zupanc, Margaret de Wit, Jocelyne Bridier, Rachel Griffiths and Sameer Punde.

Firstly, I would like to say that the 2017-18 Committee has achieved a great deal during the year in providing activities and events that meet THECA member needs.

Finance: Our financial position remains strong and Ian will present his report separately. Needless to say we have still won Brisbane City Council grants to assist with the administration and activities of this Not-for-profit organization.

Open Sundays: Open Sundays have grown in popularity this year thanks to Linda Cartmill and others. People seem to be attracted to these events when specific topics are hosted such as Foxes that Fly, Birds, Bees and Butterflies and Native Bees. The Weed Identification Open Sunday attracted quite a number of people who wanted specific information about weeds on their properties. Just look out for reminders on theca website and in your newsletter.

Hut Maintenance: The one action of note this year was the installation of a hose cage for watering plants, and the security video system.

Monthly meetings: All monthly meetings with guest speakers attracted an average of 30-40 members. We are very lucky to have such a wide range of speakers and topics available in Brisbane and we will continue to try and attract interesting and entertaining speakers each year. Don't forget that on Member nights YOU can give short presentations on topics of interest. Just let a committee member know.

Children's Activities: Rachel and Cara have continued to run activities for children, which are so desired that we usually have waiting lists for each one. This activity is under a cloud as we NEED more volunteers to help organise these children's activities.

Inaugural Art Show: THECA's inaugural Art Show was held in October and attracted plenty of pieces of artwork. Many were sold. We need to thank Christine for coordinating this successful event as well as Margaret de Wit and Margaret Palmer. We are planning for another Art Show for October this year.

FORUM: Organisation of the 2018 Forum on Citizen Science is progressing well. It promises to be a very interesting forum with keynote speaker, Griffith University Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe discussing Citizen Science at State and National levels. We also have several very interesting speakers on the program.

Registration opens on 1st May with 70 places sponsored by BCC and Healthy Land and Water. So, register on May 1st at the theca website!

Bird walks: Dawn Muir continues to lead these informative walks with Dawn Beck standing in when Dawn M is unavailable. Its probably too early in the morning for most of us to go walking around the bush looking for birds, but these walks are well attended and the lists of birds seen or heard is rapidly increasing. All sightings are gradually being posted on the theca website and in THECA NEWS. We may even get a handle on the changes in birds due to differences in seasons soon. The 2018 program is up on the Board and in the back of THECA News.

Bushcare:

a) Hilltop: This project started a few years ago and now has a new lease of life with Sameer winning a new grant to study butterfly responses to weed removal using various methods. The aim is to show that revegetating the top of the hill near the end of the Honeyeater Track will provide food and habitat suitable for the mass-meeting of moths, butterflies and other insects that fly to certain hilltops to mate.

b) Mothers of Millions Club: This group of willing workers continues to remove this nasty plant on a weekly basis. If you want to help, see contacts in the back of the newsletter.

Drop-in Morning Teas: These get-togethers are still attracting people and a few new members. They are excellent opportunities to discuss environmental and non-environmental issues out on the verandah in a relaxed atmosphere.

Animal Care: Annelise Machen continued her herculean efforts rescuing and caring for injured and orphaned native birds. And writing up the experiences in the newsletter.

Library: Ray continues to catalogue new editions to the THECA library. Although people increasing scour the internet for factual information, libraries like this are still important. Dr Google does not know everything!

THECA News: Margaret Palmer has done a wonderful job in looking after the production of the regular THECA Newsletter. She has made some changes which I think everyone likes and it always contains interesting and entertaining articles and news. Each edition has the details of all THECA activities for the coming months. A big THANK YOU to all contributors to this year's THECA NEWS. Keep those news stories and articles coming in.

THECA Supporters: I would like to thank all the people who have volunteered during the year. I apologise if I have omitted your name but I would like to thank John and Pam Blackwood, Ray Carman, Andrew Taylor, Annelise M , Justin and Mandy Watson. I would also like to thank the following:

Brisbane Council has continued its support of THECA with the awarding of a Lord Mayor's Community Sustainability and Environmental Grant Program to assist with enhancing THECA's environmental activities; and the funding of 50 Forum registrations for Habitat Brisbane and Land for Wildlife group members.

Healthy Land and Water (HLW) have sponsored 20 Forum registrations for members of landcare and other environmental groups.

CSIRO, although losing staff and funds has continued to make their conference room available for the 2018 Forum.

Wild West Calendar: Another big year in which we made a profit from calendar sales to offset administration costs. Once again, I would like to thank Carolyn Nowicki for her design talents as each year the calendar looks great. Also, I would like to thank Andrew Taylor for coordinating the selection of photographs. We are grateful to have such great photographers in the western suburbs who give their photos free of charge for the calendar. Start taking photos NOW as we will be calling for photos for the 2019 calendar soon.

Committee Jumpers:

Tonight, we farewell Rachel Griffiths and Margaret de Wit from the Committee.

John Blackwood, though not on the Committee, has been Membership Secretary for more years than he or I can remember. He has done a marvellous job ensuring all the new members are recorded accurately so they receive their regular newsletters etc. John also has done a great job organizing the wines that we regularly sample at monthly meetings. Thank you, John.

As you all know, Margaret de Wit has been a THECA mainstay for many years. Firstly, as BCC's Pullenvale Councillor, she represented the local community on a range of issues, especially the environment. Margaret has been with THECA since the very beginning – 1998. At that early time there was a tussle with the Gould League about who was to control the Hut and Margaret was a crucial guiding light in resolving the issue.

She has been on the THECA Committee from 1998 until now, except for a two-year bid for freedom in 2012 and 2013. In 2016 there was a mild hiatus on the Committee with no-one prepared to be President: Margaret took on the position of Acting President for the year. So tonight, we say farewell to Margaret from our Committee. Thank you very much for your contributions over the years.

Finally, Rachel – the face and symbol of THECA since its inception has finally decided to step down from the Committee. But she says, she is still available to help when needed. We will definitely keep that in mind, especially with the Forum coming up in August.

We have been extremely lucky that Rachel has been involved at the Committee level for so many years. Many organisations tend to lose their 'Corporate History' as people retire. Not only on the Committee, Rachel found time to help in the Gap Road Fauna survey (initiated by

Griffith University's Darryl Jones) and was on the Council's Biodiversity Review panel until it was disbanded. Rachel's main initiative has been the Kids Time, the Butterfly Track self-guided walk and signage, plus the Drop-in Morning Teas.

Outside of THECA Rachel has helped REPA with their activities and has done her fair share of travelling overseas (as evidenced by her Members Night talks on South Georgia and fossils in England.

I would also like to thank John Griffiths who has also helped THECA on the Committee as well as done many necessary 'jobs' and assisted Rachel.

I am not sure but I think Rachel is the only Brisbane resident to be awarded TWO Lord Mayor Achievement Awards – 2006 and 2016.

Best wishes for the future. You may receive a phone call soon if we help for the Forum.

Vale:

I would just like us all to remember two members who passed away this year – Jane Scragg and Pamela O'Brien. They were very well liked and contributed a lot to THECA. Jane even left a bequest to THECA. Details in a future newsletter.

Greg Siepen
President
25th April 2018

Treasurer's Report to the THECA AGM Wed 25 Apr 18

Copies of the audited annual financial statements and asset register are available here at the meeting for perusal.

On the screen is a summary of the Income & Expenditure Statement for 2017.

To give you a brief synopsis, total income for 2017 was \$41,359 compared to \$16,483 for 2016. This was primarily due to a bequest of \$8,000 from the estate of the late Jane Scragg, grants from the Norman Wettenhall Foundation and the Brisbane City Council, new initiatives such as the art show, improved Hut hire and calendar sales, even though we didn't stage a Forum in 2017.

Expenses were \$27,203 compared to \$31,395 in 2016. We had less phone & internet costs, building expenses, less repairs & maintenance and less depreciation on our assets, and only slight increases in cleaning, insurance and printing, with only small expenditures on art show and advertising. We renewed the lease on The Hut from the Brisbane City Council for another three years.

In all, our operating surplus for the year was \$14,156, as against a deficit for 2016 of \$14,912 – so you could say we broke even. I am happy to report, though, that our cash reserves rose from \$41,473 as at 31 December 2016 to \$53,876.

Our challenge this year is to spend it.

I move acceptance.

Ian Ferguson
Treasurer THECA
25 April 2018