



AUSTRALIAN BRAVERY ASSOCIATION

Newsletter 14

June 2010

Supporting those who risk their life to
save life, property or the environment.

Patrons
**Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor General of the Commonwealth of
Australia and His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE**

Vice-Patron
Keith Payne VC OAM

Guardian of the Brave
Mr Geoff Handbury AO

Australian Bravery Association National Executive

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Email: jameslong35@hotmail.com

Deputy National President

Adam Wilson BM

Email: adam.wilson@forbravery.org

National Secretary

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**National Treasurer/ Membership
Secretary**

Peta Wilson

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**National Vice President – ACT / Public
Officer**

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National Vice President - NSW

Tom O'Brien BM

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Bill Lowther SC

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National Vice President – VIC/TAS

Coralee Lever

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National Vice President – WA

Vic Boreham CBC

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PLEASE NOTE:

All postal mail to our National Office c/o PO Box 154, THIRLMERE NSW 2572

All of your Executive can be accessed by email on the “forbravery” addresses above.

Our new Website address is

Items for the newsletter to

www.forbravery.org

newsletter@forbravery.org

The newsletter is available on the website (password not required). The above phone numbers have been omitted.

Retiring National President John Robinson BM

Annual Report Feb 2010

Appreciation

Thanks to all attending the Canberra weekend, especially those travelling great distances. Gratitude also expressed for support of the National Executive, particularly Deputy NP, James Long and the NX Support team.

Dennis Lever Memorial Trophy

Awarded to James Long for services to the ABA in furthering our cause particularly with the RSL and Legacy; recognition of the bravery of Col Alexander White who died at Gallipoli and in significant efforts in organising the 2010 ABA weekend.

Geoffrey Boyce Youth Award

Congratulations to Daniel Johnson BM, 2010 awardee of the Geoff Boyce National Youth Bravery Award. Well done to Daniel on his selfless act of bravery; thanks to Geoff Boyce for his generous donation and thanks to Sally and the team for processing the ongoing award process.

Guardians of the Brave

Mr Geoff Handbury AO was awarded the inaugural “Guardian of the Brave” for his commitment of a quarter of a million dollars, to be paid in \$50,000 instalments annually, to the Foundation. Geoff’s considerable generosity has allowed us to set up an effective Foundation and has assisted us to gain further significant support from Fosters Brewing thanks to Vice Patron Keith Payne VC and wife Florence. Guardians of the Brave is about partnering with relevant agencies to provide support for those who, by their acts of bravery, suffer physically, emotionally or financially.

Thanks to a substantial amount of work, Adam Wilson supported by John Thurgar have achieved the milestone of the ABA becoming a registered charity enabling us to fund raise and all donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

RSL & Legacy engagement

We have successfully engaged with the Vic branch of the RSL via a supportive MajGen David McLachlan. Through him we have been offered the expertise of the Veterans Affairs Psychology Unit and Royce, James Pam and I met with Professor Mal Hopwood who heads that unit. The RSL is looking in the near future to ‘adopting’ ABA members within their organisation and I look forward to when we march on Anzac Day under our own banner.

Action Plan

One of our initiatives was the creation of an Action Plan as a guiding document for the ABA. That plan has been formulated and progressively updated throughout the year. All significant activities of the ABA are listed with current status and each AGM needs to endorse the directions in the Plan, thereby ensuring that all members have a say in our affairs.

Gateway

Last year we transitioned to a new website – a well used and most public gateway. I thank webmaster, John Straskye and John Thurgar for their efforts.

Changing of the Guard

I took on the position of National President 5 years ago after putting a paper to the national executive on what I saw as a way forward for the ABA. It has been an incredible journey for Sue and I and I thank you all for your confidence and support.

Much of what I proposed has been achieved or is in train. These achievements are a result of dedicated members working together for the common good. This focus has positioned us whereby the Governor General and her husband accepted patronage of the Association.

Last week I retired from Victoria police to take up a position as CEO. The workload and travel that looms with my new position diminishes my capacity to be effective as your National President. The ABA has a succession plan in place and in accordance with that plan I am most happy to nominate our deputy James Long BM as our new President. James is well positioned, well connected and very committed and has just retired as Mayor from a prominent council in Melbourne. I look forward to acting in support of the national executive and you the members.

Conclusion

I would especially thank our Vice Patron Keith Payne VC OAM and Florence for their untiring support, wise counsel and dedication to the ABA. We are exceptionally well served by both. Finally thank you to my wife Sue and Matthew for all their support over the years.

I commend this report and the ABA Action Plan to you.

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NSW REPORT - Tom O'Brien BM



On Saturday 8 May, Udo STARKIS from the NSW branch organised a fundraising lunch at the Onda restaurant in picturesque Terrigal, located on the Central Coast just north of Sydney.

On a lovely clear sunny day ABA members gathered at the restaurant which overlooks the beach and ocean. Guests included the Payne's, Sorohan's, Cochrane's, Hewett-Lacon's, Cr Bob Graham (Mayor of Wyong), Cr Chris Burke (representing Mayor of Gosford), Tanya Bright and Trish Norris of the local Department of Public Prosecutions, the Pesudov's as well as National President James Long, National V/President Adam Wilson and Peta, NSW Vice President Tom O'Brien and Rochelle Toomey. The restaurant even catered for young Rose Wilson and Jake O'Brien who enjoyed tasting the food and desserts on offer. The food was exceptional and enjoyed along with the good company. Udo included a bottle of 1970 Penfolds Grange and lovely wine glass sets which were auctioned. Others were winners of a lucky door prize. Udo had worked hard on a large list of contacts to attend, with many making generous donations in lieu of attending. All up \$1,535 was raised!



The event also attracted the attention of other restaurant patrons, some of whom abandoned their own Mother's Day events and families to take the opportunity to talk to and have their photo taken with Alicia 'Croc Granny' Sorohan, the handsome Keith Payne and other guests and hear what the ABA was about. An outstanding effort by Udo and the team and the view is to make it an annual event. Thanks again to the Queensland contingent that travelled down, James for the day trip up from Melbourne and others that made the worthwhile trip to Terrigal.
(pictured are our NX team, Vice Patron Keith and Florence with invited councillors)

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ADDITIONS TO THE ABA FAMILY THIS YEAR

John Harry Riley Thurgar (to be known as "Jack") Born 13th of February 2010.
7lb 1oz and 49cm long. First child for Hedonna and John Thurgar.

Noah Lucas Weber – Born 4th May 2010. 8 pound 4 oz and 53cm long.
Second child and second son for Brendon and Rebecca Weber (nee Runham)
Another grandson for Jim and Jan Runham.

NATIONAL TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY - Peta Wilson

This is my first AGM as National Treasurer.

National Account Audit.

Our opening balance as at 1st January 2009 was \$66,428.85. The closing balance as at 31 December 2009 was \$158,780.00.

Our total income for this period was \$104,305.16.

Our total expenditure for this period was \$11,954.01.

The Audited Annual Statement which shows the breakdown is available for anyone who would like to review it.

I am sure that most of you know the very generous ongoing donation that Mr Geoff Handbury AO is contributing to the ABA, and I would like to thank the following people who have also kindly donated funds to the ABA in 2009 (in no particular order);-

- Mr Geoff Handbury AO
- Mr Bill Lowther
- Mrs Margaret Jardine
- Mike and Kay Williams
- Dr Geoffrey Boyce
- Legacy Co-ordinating Council Incorp
- Returned & Services League
- Our Anonymous donor

As well as the hard working National Executive, Vice Presidents and helpers who have raised tens of thousands through their fundraising activities.

I have presented the Audited National Account only today. I will have the states' audit ready in the next couple of weeks. My apologies for any inconvenience. Should anyone wish to see the audited states' accounts, please let me know and I will forward a copy to you.

Unfortunately Colin Faraday is now unable to audit our accounts as he has done since the beginning at no charge. I have approached Grosfeld Financial Services who did our audit this year who is happy to be our official auditors and have offered a 50% discount in their fees in support of our cause. I have found them competent, professional and sympathetic to the ABA.

Membership

As at 1 January 2009 we had 182 members. As at 31 December 2009 we had 197. As of today we have 207 members.

A campaign commenced last year to combat our lapsed memberships. I have received a lot of response with only one or two members electing not to renew. Even so we currently have 43 lapsed memberships. I will endeavour to continue to send reminders at the end of the calendar year. So if you are one of the ones on Sue's list please come and see me at the end of the meeting.

Conclusion

In closing I still have people who have not paid for the dinner; if this is you I would appreciate you seeing me at the end of the meeting. Thank you.

VIC /TAS REPORT – Coralee Lever



We in the ABA have come a long way over the past 10 years. We all need each other to reach our goals! We can, and we will achieve and it is important that we all work in harmony together.

I recently presented The Red Cliffs Primary School with a book I received from the A.B.A a couple of years ago called "ACCIDENTAL HEROES". I presented the book at their assembly, and gave a talk about the A.B.A. We made the Newsletter, plus a photo with the 2 school captains. The book now takes pride of place in their school library!

MILDURA/RED CLIFFS REUNION

This year about 50 ABA members, family and friends gathered for the ABA dinner at the Old Fire Station in Red Cliffs over the Queen's Birthday long weekend. Chefs Ash & Helen really cooked up a storm with Lindeman's Winery donating all the table wines and Punch for non drinkers and beer was also included in the fare. The evening was a big hit in a very relaxing, family friendly venue. I had only a few raffles on the night but am continuing selling tickets in my shop.



The dinner topped off a great day discovering Mildura – Sunraysia Farmers Market, Trentham Estate Winery, Varapdio Estate olive farm, Murray River Salt and the Murray River paddleboat cruise. The Friday night Mildura Council welcome and the

Sunday Bar-b-q lunch at my home was well attended and enjoyed by all. Jim Preston, chef extraordinaire cooked the feast to perfection. Well done Jim!
I look forward to seeing you at Mildura next year! Coralee

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S.A REPORT – Bill Lowther SC

Greetings from Adelaide.

In April, Gillian and I attended the half yearly Investiture ceremony. The awards were presented by H E Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC CSC RANR at Government House. There were 3 medals and one citation awarded. Recipients were given a card and a letter of congratulations from the ABA. We were able to talk to each recipient and tell them about the ABA. They all have information, and hopefully during the year they will become members.

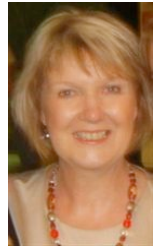
We have just spent 3 days in Mildura, for the annual Victorian Dinner. Once again Coralee put on a wonderful weekend. On the Saturday we all had a great day of fellowship with a coach trip to different places of interest. After a great lunch we finished the afternoon with a cruise on the Murray River on Paddle Steamer "Melbourne".

Our evening meal was a great event, wonderful food and great company, with a family atmosphere. Roy Ferguson entertained us with a tune or two on his trusty mouth organ and a moving poem, which was much enjoyed by everyone.

The weekend was finished off with one of Coralee's now famous BBQ's at her home; this was cooked by the infamous chief Jim Preston. It's this type of event that shows what a close knit family everyone in the ABA has become. Bill and Gillian.

AGM - Report 2010

Pamela Davidson BM Honorary Psychologist to ABA



Since accepting the position to the ABA I have represented the organisation in my capacity as a psychologist on a number of occasions. Firstly, as a member, I was the subject of a television show and was able to discuss the role of the ABA in supporting those recipients, not doing so well after their act of bravery. It would seem that such attempts are starting to get through and draw desired attention that can only forward the organisation.

In August I was fortunate enough to attend a meeting with fellow executive members and Professor Malcolm Hopwood (Austin Hospital), a very caring psychiatrist working particularly with Veterans experiencing PTSD. He was unaware that recipients of Bravery Awards (particularly civilians) had no access to their own services such as Veterans have.

Of course he has a whole Government department in Veteran's Affairs, to access for resources. We would hope to develop access to our own resources one day in one form or another. This future work interests me and needs to be addressed using our connections with the RSL and other service organisations as well as the public sector.

In my capacity as Honorary Psychologist I have given support and strategic advice to a number of members and executive. This has broadly involved approaches to media relations, advice to members in regard to helping others experiencing a range of traumatic stress reactions and attendance at Investiture Ceremonies in Queensland.

In regard to the latter, this provides me with first hand experience of how people are travelling after their event. Often I notice that recipients are not doing well. Not just young people but those of all ages and gender. And this is an opportunity for the ABA to step up and offer friendship to these people.

It is my belief now that the most effective way to help these people is to get them to this weekend where they will experience so much over the three days. Friendships can begin, advice given and practical help if appropriate. This may need an initial injection of funds to get people to Canberra who do not have the means. This could perhaps be supported by the states fundraising efforts.

I look forward to continuing to support the ABA throughout the coming year. Particularly in offering advice and support to members, who are at the frontline helping those in need including themselves and their families. The friendship and understanding offered are our most valuable assets and should not be underestimated.

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MERCHANDISE

Don't forget we have a large range of merchandise for purchase and further advertise the ABA.

All Orders to: Treasurer, Peta Wilson, ABA, PO Box 154, THIRLMERE NSW 2572

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|---|------|-----------------------------|------|
| ▪ Tie Bars/lapel pins/cuff links and brooch | \$10 | ▪ Book donation kits | \$8 |
| ▪ Men's embroidered shirts and ties | \$50 | ▪ Ladies embroidered shirts | \$50 |
| ▪ Embroidered baseball style caps | \$20 | ▪ Name Badges | \$20 |
- + \$5 postage for all mail orders**

OLD REPORT – Sally Gregory CBC

Annual Report for Queensland Branch Feb 2010

Hello everyone and welcome to the report from Queensland – The Smart State!

In 2009, 4 State Bravery Investitures were held and 28 Queenslanders received awards that included 1 Star of Courage, 7 Bravery Medals, 20 Commendations for Brave Conduct and 1 Group Bravery Citation. It was very touching to meet the rescuers and to hear their stories of compassion and courage.

Several members of the Police force were decorated and speaking with their families revealed a need for more counselling services and after care of these brave members of our society. This need sparked the question of “how we can help our members of the emergency services who encounter terrifying incidents not just once in a life time like most of our members, but often in multiples”. I hope this can become a topic of conversation at a later time.

2009 was an exciting year and a year that bought us some prime national exposure with the screening of the 9 networks series – “You saved my life” in May. The show featured the stories of 3 of our members Len Williams, Vic Boreham and Pam Davidson. Each one of them did a fantastic job of promoting the ABA and I would like to say how proud I am to have been able to see their stories in such esteemed company.

The Queensland dinner was a happy affair - on Nov 6 as reported in the last newsletter.

Channel 9 again approached us for assistance with a project mid January. 60 minutes producer Danny Keens saw the Daily Telegraph article on the plight of rescuers Emily Harrison and Terry Bocj who were struggling with the aftermath of their rescue attempts when they dragged a couple from their burning car after an horrific crash with a petrol tanker which killed 3 people just north of Batemans Bay.

Danny has begun work on a 60 minutes story on – “life after rescue”. I would also like you all to take Terry and Emily under your wing & share the load on the road they are travelling by extending your friendship & sharing your experience of life after rescue.

Many hours have been invested in the Qld regional branch in the past 12 months – comprising of letters requesting postal assistance, donations for raffles, sponsorship of functions, memberships, invitations, congratulatory letters & making presentations to Gold Coast community groups such as Rotary & View Clubs. These talks provided the opportunity for more fund raising - \$198. It's been a big and rewarding year too.

Once again, our friends at the Currumbin RSL have mentored and supported the ABA in its endeavours. I was proud to be invited to lay a wreath on behalf of the ABA at their Remembrance Day service. Other bravery award recipients attended and of course Keith and Florence Payne.

Special mention goes to Pam Davidson BM who generated a donation of \$500 by donating her professional services, to assist a Gold Coast community member after a work related fatality. And thanks also to Victor Boscoe CV who instigated a “Guardians of the Brave” Fundraising event with the assistance of Johnny Lin and the team at Hargraves Real Estate in Aspley, whose customer and staff Christmas party raised over \$2,000.

The fund raiser was attended by ABA members, Alicia & Bill Sorohan, Pam Davidson, Me and my husband Kevin, our renta crowd and Cheryl and Victor – who was not only the instigator, but also music maker in the band and percussionist in lots of great music. I assisted ably by giving the Tamborine a jolly good flogging– a fantastic night all round.

I would like to now call upon Victor Boscoe to make presentation of the donation to the “Guardians of the Brave Foundation”

As chair of the Geoff Boyce Brave Youth of the Year Award, I have had much pleasure in working with the team consisting of Jim Runham, Vic Boreham, Pam Davidson and Collin Bannister of the Royal Humane Society of Australia, in deciding this year’s winner – Mr Daniel Johnson. We welcome Daniel & his partner Tiffany to our gathering and hope that the friends they have made, and the stories they have shared, will hold them in good stead for all the years to come.

Please know that you are now part of a unique family that belongs to you and all the rescuers of Australia. We’re proud of you Daniel and we are delighted that we were all able to witness your special investiture from our patron H.E. Ms Quentin Bryce AO – what an honour.

Special thanks also to our generous supporter Dr Geoffrey Boyce for his ongoing contribution to this fine project supporting the youth of Australia.

Before I finish, I would like to take the opportunity of mentioning the generous support of a fine Brisbane identity Gail Austen who has once again donated a \$200 gift voucher for us to raffle here today. She has the largest surf shop in the region and a great web site so, so all of you “Non Brissos” can visit it on line and use the voucher to take care of your Christmas shopping. It’s called Goodtime! And it is just as good as it sounds.

And now for some parting words of wisdom

Normal is – just a setting on the clothes dryer (Barbara Johnson),

Smooth seas do not make skilful sailors (Confucius) &

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage. - Anais Nin.

I am very proud to be part of your courageous family the ABA and on that happy note, my report draws to its conclusion.

Thank you for the privilege of being your representative in the state that gave you Kevin 07.

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COMING EVENT - Queensland Bravery Weekend

The venue has been booked and the dates set for this year’s Queensland Bravery Weekend here on the Gold Coast. September 17 is the bravery dinner and a fun filled programme is being set to give you more fun in the sun over the weekend.

Now is a good time to put that date in your diary and get your frequent flier points organized too.

Early birds can book their accommodation at the Estuary Motor Inn on

07 5534 5566, which is located near the Currumbin RSL and is opposite the beach, Park and coffee shop. It books out pretty early so I suggest you make your reservation ASAP. I will post more info on our ABA Face book page, as it comes to hand. It’s always good for a quick visit as it has interesting links and updates too.

Keep smiling everyone and drop us a line anytime – sally.gregory@forbravery.org

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BEST WISHES

To Robbie Robinson who has been recovering from surgery and anybody else who has not been firing on all cylinders. We do hope you are well on the way to recovery.

Notes from your editors – Brenda & Alan Cochrane OAM



It was a great privilege to meet up again with old and new members in Canberra in February. To say we have formed some wonderful friendships over the years we have been ABA members would be an understatement. And isn't this what the ABA is all about? Supporting one another – sympathizing, laughing and teasing one another – whatever works at the time!

This newsletter includes reports from the AGM for those unable to attend.

The Terrigal Fundraiser in May, whilst not on a huge scale, was a huge success. The



restaurant lived up to its reputation and provided such fine cuisine – some of the best we have experienced. Together with the guests, the food, service and ambiance – it was top notch! If Udo undertakes this task next year – make sure you list it on your calendar to attend!

←Here he is preparing for the lucky door.

Mildura - What can we say! If you haven't been to a Mildura bash – it's time you did! This year we car pooled with Alicia & Bill Sorohan. 4200 kms and 2½ days travel each way is a big effort but well worth it. The good weather was turned on for us with just a wee bit of a chill early morning and evening. The Red Cliffs and Mildura people are friendly natives and the whole weekend is fun packed. Coralee has a fantastic repoire and backing from the Mildura/Red Cliffs community and the Council who hosted the Friday night welcome – with very tasty finger food and drinks. This is a great start to the weekend. Next year when your invite arrives from Coralee, we would recommend you give it serious consideration. Congratulations to Coralee for all her hard work in putting the weekend activities together and sharing her home. Well done to all who travelled long distances to join in the fellowship – including baby Jack Thurgar much to the delight of all. Both functions were also attended by our Vice Patron Keith Payne and wife, Florence whose company we all enjoyed.

We would urge new members to attend Bravery functions were possible. We're sure you won't be disappointed. Enjoy the ride!

Kind regards, Alan & Brenda

(Articles appearing in these newsletters appear in no particular sequence. Layout is dependant on maximising use of space)

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Honorary Professional Support Team

A special thanks to our professional support team for their services to the members of the ABA.

Honorary Chaplain The Venerable Air Commodore Dr Royce Thompson Ph:0416 265 600 Email: royce.thompson@forbravery.org	Honorary Psychologist Pam Davidson Ph: Mobile: 0422 238 641 Email: pamela.davidson@forbravery.org
Honorary Web Master John Straskye Email: webmaster@forbravery.org	Honorary Historian Anthony Staunton Email: Anthony.Staunton@dva.gov.au
Honorary Advisor National Executive Support Peter Billings	