

OGG AGM

President's Report

Introduction

In an age where “disruption” has become a current buzzword, the last few months have seen things disrupted in an entirely new and significant way.

The measures adopted to slow the spread of COVID-19 have caused us to approach our activities as an alumni association very differently. The restrictions on public gatherings mean that reunions and events have had to be postponed or redesigned.

Indeed this AGM is noteworthy for the fact that it is the first OGG AGM to be held exclusively by teleconference.

Business lunch

A similar teleconferencing event was held two weeks ago in place of the annual OGG Business Lunch. While those who joined the event did not have the pleasure of lunch at our usual venue, Florentino's, the format had the advantage that OGGs from around the globe could join to hear our guest speaker, former OGG Vice President, Nina Anderson.

In a Q&A session facilitated by Andrew Burgess, a current member of the OGG Committee, Nina spoke about:

- Steps to take following sudden job loss;
- Leaving University with no work in your chosen field; and
- Steps to take in developing a strong personal brand.

All pressing questions for many OGGs in these uncertain times. Around 100 OGGs attended the “lunch” and it was particularly pleasing to see a large number of younger OGGs logged into the “Zoom” teleconference, as well as OGGs located in ten different countries.

The feedback on the event was extremely positive, particularly from overseas OGGs who would otherwise have been unable to attend.

Reunions

One of the objectives of the OGG Association is to unite former students of GGS, the Hermitage and Clyde, and this is something we seem to do well. OGGs attend reunions at higher rates than most other alumni associations, a fact that is more remarkable given the national and global spread of our community.

The Tower Lunch is held annually in the main dining hall for GGS, Clyde and Hermitage students, who left school 50 or more years ago. We were fortunate to have Tamie Fraser AO as the guest speaker at the 2019 Tower Lunch. Tamie, who gave a wonderfully entertaining talk about her childhood and later life with Malcolm, attracted one of the largest Tower Lunch turnouts we have seen, despite a cold and blustery day.

Aside from year group reunions, other OGG events attract good numbers across all age groups, so that there is always a nice mix of generations at the golf day, the business lunch, the interstate and overseas branch functions and the motoring event.

While there is uncertainty about when this year's decade reunions and other OGG gatherings can proceed, we hope that these will be held later in the year.

OGG wellbeing

We continue to look for ways to help support the wellbeing of OGGs. These include:

- The OGG mentoring program, and I encourage anyone interested in being a mentor or a mentee to register through the OGG website.
- We are also developing OGG Connect, a rural initiative that encourages OGGs to assist other OGGs experiencing hard times due to drought, floods or fires.
- The OGGs are also looking at ways we can assist the school in supporting those OGGs who suffered sexual abuse at school.

Supporting OGG wellbeing can be as simple as calling or messaging a former classmate who you are concerned may be experiencing hardship or anxiety and just letting them know that you are thinking of them, and checking up on them.

I encourage OGGs to reach out to old friends who may be vulnerable, particularly during these unusual and challenging times.

Committee and branches

In closing I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their support and contributions during the year:

- Annabel Bainger and Simon Kemp (Vice Presidents);
- Will Richardson (Treasurer);
- Susie Donald (HOGA representative);
- Margie Gillett (COGA representative);
- Andrew Burgess;
- Tristan Dwyer;
- Bill Ferguson;
- Elly Grace;
- Sandy Mackenzie;
- Rob Perry.

I'd also like to thank and acknowledge the contribution of:

- Lucinda Bordignon who recently retired from the Committee and who initiated the OGG's casual drinks.
- Douglas Campbell, who recently retired as President of the OGG's Queensland Branch.

I'd also like to thank those involved in the various OGG Branches and their committees (throughout Australia and overseas) and those who have contributed their time to organise and assist with various OGG events and initiatives.

And finally I wish to thank Katie Rafferty, Honorary Secretary of the OGGs, who, as always, has worked tirelessly and found some remarkable solutions to unite OGGs in these challenging times.

Ian Coltman (A'77)

OGG President